Richard Newman and James Mueller, editors. *Antislavery and Abolition in Philadelphia: Emancipation and the Long Struggle for Racial Justice in the City of Brotherly Love*. (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2011) Pp. ix, 260. Notes, index. Cloth, $39.95.

Antislavery and Abolition in Philadelphia offers an interesting collection of essays addressing the city's abolition legacy. The editors set out to provide a "broad survey of themes" that collectively illustrate Philadelphia's central role in the U.S. antislavery movement and they succeeded. Though very useful for undergraduate students and readers with some knowledge of the U.S. abolition movement, the collection might be less suited for the other half of the target audience—visitors to Independence Mall. While some of the essays offer the type of broad coverage befitting a general audience, others are more specialized and will be better appreciated by readers with some background.

The collection is broken into three sections, moving from a more general to a more specialized treatment of Philadelphia abolition. The first section features an overview essay by Ira Berlin that traces Philadelphia's antislavery movement from 1685 to 1861. This chapter gives a valuable background and introduces a number of topics on which the other essays elaborate. For the most part the following essays take up the topics introduced and do a nice job of creating a dialogue that keeps the book flowing and locks the essays together.

The second section offers a number of essays that collectively lay out the framework of Philadelphia abolition. David Waldstreicher explains the origins of the state's abolition movement and draws upon his work on Benjamin Franklin's role in the movement. He also offers a glimpse into the importance of free produce to early abolition efforts. This essay will appeal especially to anyone with some understanding of free produce. Julie Winch's essay traces the role of black activists in the city's freedom struggle generation by generation and explains their efforts in a way that gives a thorough introduction to the subject. Of all the essays in the collection her description of the black abolition and civil rights movements does the best job of keeping the general reader in mind. Gary Nash's essay follows with a thorough explanation of how the Jeffersonian revolution and eclipse of Federalism led to a state-centered republic that left the issue of slavery in the hands of state rather than national authorities and left citizenship beyond the reach of blacks throughout the country. This chapter offers exciting insight into the political climate and racial ideologies of the time. Finally, Richard

Newman's essay provides a nice overview of the Pennsylvania Abolition Society, its relevance to the national antislavery movement, and its shortcomings in terms of its failure to include black members.

The one topic Berlin introduced that should have been developed further in a separate essay in this section was the rise of immediate abolition in the city. The first national immediatist organization was founded in Philadelphia and a number of the city's abolitionists, including David Paul Brown (a gradualist mentioned in the book), founded an auxiliary society soon after. Newman and others mention the immediatists, but this topic should have been addressed on its own, perhaps by Ira Brown, the expert in this field.

Other topics that could have further enhanced the collection include the role of women in Philadelphia abolition and an overview of Quaker involvement. Some of the essays mention these issues, but if the book is intended for a general audience they should have been laid out in detail before further analysis of more specialized themes.

The third section is devoted to more specialized analytical treatments that will appeal more to readers with some background in abolition studies. W. Caleb McDaniel places Philadelphia antislavery into the transatlantic context, and Dee Andrews offers a very interesting and thorough look at the role of the various churches in the movement. Heather S. Nathans contributes an analysis of how various theater productions in the city addressed abolition and racial issues. This is one of the most analytical pieces and it will appeal to scholars of history, American studies, and English. One minor issue, however, is her assertion that the "generally respectable and well-dressed" members of the mob that assaulted Pennsylvania Hall were somehow atypical (214). A whole body of work, including Leonard Richards's *Gentlemen of Property and Standing*, shows otherwise. Finally, Elizabeth Varon gives a well-written account of the militant turn abolition took as the city's activists began to help fugitive slaves escape bondage.

The final section of the book will appeal to scholars and enthusiasts but perhaps not as much to general readers who may lack the expertise to fully appreciate them. Perhaps a better way to appeal to interested tourists would have been to include an essay on material culture incorporating artifacts housed in the city's various museum collections. Also, the editors mention that the volume "grew initially out of contemporary debates over the historical memory of slavery, race, and abolition" so an essay on Philadelphia abolition and historical memory would have made a great conclusion (vii).

Overall, however, the collection is very tightly focused, the essays are well written, and the information is useful to anyone interested in abolition, not only in Philadelphia but in the United States in general. Regardless of the intended audience, the best home for the collection would be an undergraduate class on reform or antislavery. It is broad-ranging and would give students much to discuss.

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Andrew Davis. *America's Longest Run: A History of the Walnut Street Theatre.* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2010) Pp. 424. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. Cloth, $44.95.

On February 2, 1909, Philadelphia's Walnut Street Theatre was midway through a run of a farcical play called *Brewster's Millions*. Despite being the centennial of the nation's oldest continuously running theatre, the milestone went unacknowledged (198). In many ways, Andrew Davis's *America's Longest Run: A History of the Walnut Street Theatre* is a repudiation of such neglect, and an effort to show that "the Walnut has been at or near the center of American theatrical activity since Thomas Jefferson was president of the United States" (1). In this ambitious work, Davis chronicles the history of the titular institution, a history that he asserts "is also the history of the American stage" (5). Ultimately, it is this expansiveness, as well as the nature and handling of his source material, that somewhat limits the appeal of Davis's impressive undertaking.

Over the course of sixteen chapters, *America's Longest Run* moves chronologically from William Penn's prohibition of theatrical productions in 1682 to the present. With the exception of the first (covering 1682–1809), each chapter focuses on between eight and twenty years. These divisions are determined by significant moments in the Walnut's development, major renovations of the building, the appearance of new technologies, or momentous historical events. First conceived and constructed as an equestrian arena for touring circus performances, the building did not host a "legitimate" theatrical production until the beginning of 1812, inaugurating the era of the actor managers, who handled both the creative