

BOOK REVIEWS

Sexual Revolution in Early America. By RICHARD GODBEER. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002. xii, 430p. Notes, index. \$34.95.)

During the 1980s and 1990s, an explosion of scholarship analyzing the history of sexuality in early America resulted in a vast array of books and articles. Scholarly interest in early American sexuality gained greater exposure when the Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture and the McNeil Center for Early American Studies cosponsored a conference entitled “Sexuality in Early America” in June 2001. This conference, and a special issue of the *William and Mary Quarterly* published in 2002, marked a turning point for the history of sexuality in early America as a dynamic field of study, one that can stand on its own and yet also play a vital role in colonial American history. Richard Godbeer’s new book, *Sexual Revolution in Early America*, is part of this flourishing field—one that he helped bring to prominence.

Richard Godbeer has crafted a well-woven narrative on the ever popular and riveting subject of human sexuality. The intent of this book is to examine “the attitudes, reformatory agendas, and social dynamics that shaped sexual culture in early America” (p. 10). Godbeer defines sex according to contemporary understandings, not in the modern sense as a “distinct realm of identity,” but as a “component of spirituality, cultural identity, and social status” in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century society (p. 11). Viewing sexuality as part of a larger cultural milieu is an effective method of analysis. Building on his previous work on sexual mores among Puritans, Godbeer enlarges his investigation of sexuality by spanning two centuries, covering several regions of British America, and focusing on three central themes: “an ongoing struggle among different versions of sexual morality; the role of sex in fostering and combating a profound fear of cultural debasement in the New World; and the interplay of sexual with political revolution in the late eighteenth century” (p. 13).

An important component of the book is the construct of race in early American sexual culture; the sexual intermixing of Indians and Africans with Europeans became part of the colonial project in early America. Qualms about miscegenation and the loss of civility due to interracial sex pervaded the consciousness of many English settlers. At the same time, Anglo-Americans projected ideas of savagery and licentiousness onto the bodies and behaviors of Native Americans and African Americans which justified white men’s access to women of color, whether by force or consent. Gender as a category of analysis is also a constituent element of this monograph. Godbeer demonstrates the multifarious impact of sexual ideology and practice upon women and men at different

time periods and in different regions of colonial America. The last two chapters of the book are especially good at examining the gendered meanings of courtship, sexuality, and independence during the revolutionary era. Class differences in sexual behavior are also evident in the text, especially in terms of marriage practices among the middling and lower sort. Godbeer deftly sustains the ongoing tensions between official utterances of sexual propriety and the real life experiences of men and women in terms of sexual and marital codes.

Though the strengths of this book are manifold, greater development of the multilayered meanings of interracial sexuality would have been welcome. As Godbeer asserts, Europeans feared that sexual interactions with Indians and Africans would lead them to be Indianized or Africanized; sexual encounters with “the other” would debase them and begin their descent into degeneracy and barbarism. In particular, interracial sex “imperiled” the “quest for cultural legitimacy” that colonial elites so furtively desired (p. 202). Given that many Anglo-American men regularly pursued short- and long-term sexual relations with Indian and African women, why didn’t debasement occur? How were colonials able to maintain the fallacy of racial superiority at the same time many white men engaged in sexual relations with Indian and African women? More clarity on how Anglo-Americans avoided such debasement and contained such ambivalence would have strengthened this part of Godbeer’s argument.

This quibble, however, does not take away from an impressive achievement. Godbeer presents a compelling and comprehensive overview of sexual attitudes and behaviors in early America, one that combines racial and gendered experiences of sex with cultural constructs of sexual morality and disorder. *Sexual Revolution in Early America* will stand as a foundational text for the history of sexuality in early American studies.

Rowan University

JANET MOORE LINDMAN

Quaker Aesthetics: Reflections on a Quaker Ethic in American Design and Consumption. Edited by EMMA JONES LAPSANSKY and ANNE A. VERPLANCK. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002. xiv, 394p. Illustrations, notes, glossary, list of contributors, index. \$35.)

In this collection of interesting and insightful essays editors Lapsansky and Verplank together with eleven other contributing scholars tackle the complex issue of discerning, defining, and describing a Quaker aesthetic in American material culture from the eighteenth through the early twentieth century. People expecting treatises echoing a common theme that there is a restrained, unadorned style consistently present in Quaker art, architecture, dress, and furnishings might be disappointed. Although united in working on this particular

topic, the authors don't all come to the same conclusion. While some find that there was a Quaker aesthetic as evidenced by plainness or simplicity, others disagree. And since the essayists are on different sides of the matter, it is up to the readers to use the information presented in the book to make up their own minds on the issue.

Two introductions provide vital background information on Quaker belief and the creation and development of the tenet of plainness. In the first introduction, Lapsansky explains that Quakerism contains some "contradictory values," including (among other things) "an emphasis on excellence and a focus on humility, [and] an appreciation for high-quality workmanship coupled with a ban on ostentation" (p. 3). Moreover, she states that Friends' guidelines were flexible, not static. The origins and evolution of the doctrine of plainness is the subject of the second introduction by J. William Frost. He shows that from its roots in the mid-seventeenth century in the teachings of George Fox up to the twentieth century, the concept of "plainness" had a variety of meanings. But by the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries Quakers found the old idea to be overly legalistic and stifling, so they revised it into a new principle that instead advocated moderation—"simplicity."

The other scholars' essays on plainness and simplicity in the material culture of Delaware Valley Friends are grouped into sections. In the first set, "Quakers as Consumers," the authors deal with the issue of plainness in eighteenth-century Chippendale high chests; the house, furnishings, and garden at Wyck, the estate of early-nineteenth-century Friends Jane and Reuben Haines; and colonial Quakers' portraits. The works in the second section, "Quakers as Producers," analyze architecture—both domestic and ecclesiastical—and the art and life of Edward Hicks. Lastly, in "Quakers and Modernity," contributors examine: Quaker dresses; the career of art agent Sara Tyson Hallowell; and the current state of historical interpretation of eighteenth-century Quaker life at Stenton, Cedar Grove, and the John Todd House (the homes of James Logan, Elizabeth Coates Paschall, and the future Dolley Madison, respectively). There are illustrations throughout the book and a section of color plates—all of which help the reader to appreciate and understand better the elusive nature of a Quaker aesthetic. As a number of the contributors point out, in many cases there is little difference in the material culture of Friends and non-Friends, and since Quakers were supposed to be "in the world but not of it" (p. xii) there is "tension" in how they lived. In short, the crux of the matter is that living in the material world created a challenge that faithful Friends faced every day—how to navigate through a world of fads and fashions yet embody and maintain their spiritual beliefs at the same time. The only way they could do this was to make decisions guided by the discipline and their consciences as illuminated by the Inner Light. And based on analysis of what remains of their choices—their material culture—it seems plain that the Quaker aesthetic was not necessarily

ascetic.

This is an impressive and thought-provoking book of excellent scholarship but it does have some flaws. As in any collection of essays, the writing is uneven. The entries are very well written but some contain jargon, which makes them less clear and more difficult to read. But editor Emma Jones Lapsansky recognizes the major shortcoming of the book, which is that it focuses only on the elites. She admits that this was a necessity since the “most privileged and articulate Friends” were the ones who were “in a position to leave a material legacy” (p. 15). Although not included in this study, those who were less articulate, less prosperous, and less prominent are not forgotten. In fact, she states that the material lives of rural and working-class Quakers in early Pennsylvania could be the subject of “future volumes.” Lapsansky, Verplanck, and their fellow contributors have blazed a trail and their fine work should be a source of great inspiration for further research in Quaker history.

West Chester University

STEVEN GIMBER

To Begin the World Anew: The Genius and Ambiguities of the American Founders. By BERNARD BAILYN. (New York: Knopf, 2003. x, 185p. Illustrations, notes, index. \$26.)

The dust jacket photo on Bernard Bailyn’s latest book finds this distinguished historian of early America at work in his Harvard study. The photographer captures the historian looking up, only a tad impatiently, from what might be a working paper from his Atlantic History seminar. His reading glasses dangle from his lips. He wears a suitably tweedy sports jacket, his academic uniform for the past half century, and a striped shirt rather than the tattersals that we used to call “Bud shirts” in his honor. Bailyn looks directly at the camera, but it is the quizzically cocked right eyebrow, rather than the gaze of his eye, that is arresting, combining as it does a physiological quirk with a philosophical and psychological posture.

The photo echoes several of the familiar portraits of Benjamin Franklin that Bailyn discusses in an essay on “Realism and Idealism in American Diplomacy.” Here, as in the opening piece on “Politics and the Creative Imagination,” Bailyn uses portraiture, the interior and exterior details of eighteenth-century architecture, and the bric-a-brac of Franklinaiana, to pursue the questions that animate this slender but provocative volume. How do we explain the sources of political creativity that distinguished the revolutionary generation? And how should we approach and assess their legacy, recognizing that it emerged from a world exponentially removed from our own, yet hardly alien because its legacy is so enduring?

Before discussing these questions, something should be said about Bailyn’s qualities as an essayist. The well-crafted essay is not, on the whole, a literary form

that American historians have mastered. It seems, rather, a genre that one associates with writers like those three late, great Sirs of modern English historical letters, Lewis B. Namier, J. H. Plumb, and, in a somewhat different key, Isaiah Berlin. But one has to recall that those little gems, *The Origins of American Politics* (1968) and *The Peopling of British North America* (1986), were originally presented as lectures for a university audience; that *The Ordeal of Thomas Hutchinson* (1974) was similarly given as a set of lectures at Harvard; and that the gap between the well-tempered public lecture and the burnished essay may be narrow indeed. In the cadence of these essays, one repeatedly hears the voice of the lecturer, even though many sentences and paragraphs retain the modified eighteenth-century diction that Bailyn has so often used to great effect.

So much for style—what of substance? The five essays in this volume present both a puzzle and a perspective on the creativity of the revolutionary leaders. The puzzle involves asking how these provincial backwaters could produce both the adroit leaders and the creative thinking that allowed the Revolution to succeed and to leave its lasting legacy. The perspective involves viewing the events that followed independence in pragmatic terms, asking how Americans worked out the implications of the Revolution as they moved beyond the ideologically driven arguments that led them to 1776.

Bailyn consistently answers these questions by emphasizing the provincial, pragmatic, and quizzical quality of the American response. Bailyn measures the provincialism of American life in the gap that separated the homes and furnishings of eighteenth-century elites from their closest counterparts in mid-Georgian Britain, not the landed aristocracy but the provincial gentry. But he also detects in this provincialism, in the impossibility of fully emulating the metropolitan culture, a source of Americans' capacity to challenge the received wisdom of the age. A biographical sketch of Jefferson steers clear of the familiar condemnations of the hypocrisy of Monticello to portray its master as a "highly pragmatic, tough-minded, and successful politician" struggling "in every way he could to contain the real world in the embrace of his utopian ideals" (p. 52). Much of the genius of Franklin's diplomacy, Bailyn suggests, can be found in his shrewd recognition that his greatest asset was his own ability to capitalize on his image as a uniquely provincial yet cosmopolitan representative of a new political order. *The Federalist* is treated not as "an integrated systematic treatise on basic principles of political theory" but as a rapid-fire contribution to a raging political debate. Yet "[p]ragmatically, unsystematically, almost inadvertently," its three authors found themselves thinking freshly and insightfully about the "unexpected challenges, paradoxes and dilemmas" that the constitutional experiment had created. And the early influence of the Constitution itself, Bailyn suggests, must be painstakingly traced through its gradual absorption into the political discourse of the Atlantic world.

Reading these essays, then, one should always recall the arched authorial eye-

brow of the dust jacket photo, which provides a key iconographic clue to the remarkable sensibility of the historian.

Stanford University

JACK N. RAKOVE

George Washington: Uniting a Nation. By DON HIGGINBOTHAM. (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2002. xii, 192p. Bibliography, appendices, index. \$22.95.)

According to Don Higginbotham, the American Revolution succeeded, in part, because the former colonies had developed into a unified nation in which citizens identified themselves as Americans. When George Washington accepted the appointment as commander in chief of the Continental army in 1775, he took an important step toward becoming a vital component in the search for an American identity.

Washington's earlier military experience, his service in the Virginia House of Burgesses, and his involvement in the colonial resistance movement had fostered his "continental perspective" (p. 8) and sense of being an American. The Continental army was the most visible symbol of unity for Americans during the Revolutionary War, and an examination of Washington's general orders during the war "shows how repeatedly he preached the gospel of placing the unity of the army above sensitivities of every kind, including rank, pay, and retirement benefits" (p. 33). His deference to civilian control and his voluntary retirement from power in 1783 ensured that he would emerge from the war as a symbol of the United States.

As the fighting drew to a close, Washington was among those Americans who believed that the country needed a strong central government to survive, a conviction expressed in a circular letter to the state governors in 1783, shortly before his resignation as commander in chief. When the movement for reform culminated in the Constitutional Convention in 1787, Washington's peers urged him to attend. His contemporaries believed that his presence at the convention and his subsequent support for the new plan of government were crucial factors in achieving ratification of the Constitution.

Both supporters and opponents of the Constitution agreed that Washington was the only man who could serve as the nation's first president. Using the reputation that he had acquired during the Revolutionary War, Washington was able to allay the fears of the Antifederalists, "who retained their trust and confidence in Washington, [and] he helped give legitimacy to the Constitution and the new government" (p. 52).

As president, Washington recognized his symbolic importance. He paid great attention to his ceremonial role and employed a "vocabulary of political centraliza-

tion" (p. 81). Although Higginbotham agrees with John Adams that Washington played the roles of commanding general and president with great skill, he insists that the personal qualities of integrity and self-sacrifice were genuine and that Washington's nationalist point of view was a key component of his political agenda. His maintenance of sectional balance in federal appointments, support of religious freedom, focus on development of the West, condemnation of the Whiskey Rebellion, and insistence on American neutrality were designed to preserve national unity. In addition, his appointment of strong nationalists to the federal courts ensured that his vision of the United States continued beyond his death.

Higginbotham occasionally exaggerates the importance of Washington's every move, as when he claims that Washington's frequent attendance at plays was part of a calculated design not only to promote drama but also to deliver "a message against intolerance" (p. 60). The fact is that Washington simply enjoyed the theater. These lapses, however, are few.

Seventy-five pages are devoted to six documents that illustrate the consistency of Washington's vision of national unity and his attempts to share that vision with the American people: Sentiments on a Peace Establishment, May 1783; Circular to State Governments, June 1783; To the President of the Confederation Congress, September 17, 1787; First Inaugural Address, April 30, 1789; Farewell Address, September 19, 1796; and Eighth Annual Message to Congress, December 7, 1796.

While the identification of Washington as a strong nationalist is not a new historical viewpoint, Higginbotham's focus on Washington's role as a unifier presents a different perspective. He asserts that "George Washington, more than anyone else during the Revolutionary generation, both by word and deed, advanced the concept of an American nation and pressed for the creation of an institutional umbrella to bind America together" (p. 2).

This book offers a concise presentation of Washington's centrality in the Revolutionary War and the early republic. Moreover, the clarity and preciseness of Higginbotham's writing and the inclusion of primary documents make this small book a natural for use in classes on early American history. The author manages to show that, indeed, one person can make a difference to the history of a nation.

University of Virginia

CHRISTINE STERNBERG PATRICK

Alexander Hamilton: A Life. By WILLARD STERNE RANDALL. (New York: HarperCollins, 2003. xiii, 476p. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$32.50.)

Alexander Hamilton has experienced something of a "comeback" in recent times, and Willard Sterne Randall's book is evidence that this trend continues.

Randall's *Alexander Hamilton: A Life* is by no means a groundbreaking work of scholarship, but it does a fine job portraying the dramatic rise of the most innovative and visionary founder.

Biographies of Hamilton tend to slight his early years, including his vital role at Washington's side during the Revolutionary War. Randall attempts to fill this void by recounting Hamilton's frequent service as a surrogate commander in chief and his role as Washington's de facto intelligence chief. Hamilton was Washington's "eyes and ears," keeping the general abreast of challenges from Congress and elsewhere.

In the war's aftermath Hamilton led the call for a constitutional convention, and his participation at the convention, Randall correctly observes, was more important than is generally acknowledged. Hamilton went on to arrange the publication of *The Federalist* and authored the bulk of those seminal essays, thereby securing his place in history. As treasury secretary he launched the new nation on the path to prosperity with his financial policies, and his resistance to the populist demagoguery of the Jeffersonians allowed the infant government the time and space it needed to establish some semblance of permanence and stability.

While Randall captures both the drama and excitement of Hamilton's life and the burning ambition which propelled him into public service, the book has its flaws. The writing is occasionally awkward and overblown: "The Conway Cabal collapsed like a soufflé in a winter wind" (p. 148). In situations where the historical evidence is ambiguous, Randall routinely opts for the most dramatic or scandalous interpretation; for instance he claims that Hamilton married his wife for "money and name," that his relationship with his sister-in-law Angelica Church was characterized simply by "lust," and that Hamilton lied about his age. Far too many assertions are made on flimsy evidence for the sake of the dramatic flow of the story.

Yet Randall effectively refutes many of the myths promulgated by Jefferson and generations of Jeffersonian politicians and historians. Randall's Hamilton is far more complex than the cold-hearted elitist depicted by Claude Bowers and Dumas Malone. Randall notes that as a commanding officer Hamilton broke with tradition and appointed enlisted men as officers, opening slots previously reserved for "gentlemen" (p. 103). During the war he was a persistent advocate for mercy and leniency for captured soldiers and was devoted to the rule of law in the face of mob violence. He lobbied for permitting slaves to serve as soldiers in exchange for freedom and was an advocate of manumission throughout his life. Throughout his public career he fought the forces of provincialism and sought to build a consolidated nation with a government capable of fostering commerce and defending the nation's security. As Randall observes, Hamilton understood at a remarkably young age "the interplay of politics, finance, and war" and threw himself "again and again against the redoubts of indifference" in his crusade to "win over the common citizen to an energetic national government"

(pp. 235–36). Hamilton’s devotion to American nationalism was so complete that he deserted his adopted home state and supported moving the nation’s capital out of New York City.

Hamilton was President Washington’s indispensable man, and as a result the energetic presidency he envisioned in *The Federalist* came to pass. His doctrine of implied powers vested the national government with the tools needed to function effectively, and this earned him the lasting enmity of Thomas Jefferson, whose lieutenants engaged in one of the earliest examples of the politics of personal destruction. He was accused of being a monarchist and somehow “un-American,” and his opponents also believed him to be corrupt—with no evidence to support their charge, they were left claiming, as Senator William Maclay of Pennsylvania put it, “nobody can prove these things, but everybody knows them” (p. 421).

The friendship between James Madison and Thomas Jefferson is often celebrated as the most critical relationship of the early American republic, but that relationship paled in importance to that of George Washington and his Caribbean-born sidekick. *Alexander Hamilton: A Life* is a solid introduction for general readers to the lesser-known and frequently maligned member of the unlikely partnership that launched the United States on the road to superpower status.

Miller Center of Public Affairs
University of Virginia

STEPHEN KNOTT

Citizens and Citoyens: Republicans and Liberals in America and France. By MARK HULLIUNG. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002. xiv, 250p. Notes, index. \$39.95.)

Citizens and Citoyens combines a historical argument with a historiographical polemic and has three goals. First, it seeks to clarify the place of liberalism and republicanism in American history. To this end, Mark Hulliung, the author of studies of Montesquieu, Machiavelli, and Rousseau, turns to the history of France, where liberals and republicans created rival political movements.

Indeed, Hulliung’s second purpose is to join this French battle on the republican side. In his view, two nineteenth-century liberals, Alexis de Tocqueville and Hippolyte Taine, misled Americans into equating French republicanism with Jacobinism and the Terror. Cold war scholars picked up this theme, depicting Rousseau and Robespierre as precursors of totalitarian ideologues and dictators. Disputing these interpretations, Hulliung maintains that republicans defended liberal rights in France, “first as a matter of necessity, then as a matter of principle” (p. xx). By contrast, liberals continually infringed on citizens’ rights to protect

their fragile hold on power.

Using the French experience, Hulliung pursues his third objective, which is to refute recent “republican” interpretations of American history—whether of the civic (John Pocock), working class (Sean Wilentz), or virtuous communitarian (Michael Sandel, Mary Ann Glendon) variety. Such interpretations, he suggests, are not only mistaken in fact but also politically dangerous because they provide neoconservatives such as Irving Kristol and George Will with historical ammunition to attack the liberal tradition, the quest for “rights,” and the New Deal state. Writing as a public intellectual, Hulliung advocates a procedurally neutral and institutionalized liberalism invigorated by a substantive morality of equal rights (pp. 173–93).

As a historian, Hulliung argues that the American Revolution created a republican political system that was “modern” rather than “classical.” By this he means that American republicanism was not based on the primacy of the *polis* and civic virtue but on the natural rights of the citizenry and a suspicion of government power. Consequently, the state and national constitutions balanced the power of “republican” legislatures with “liberal” restraints: Lockean bills of rights and Real Whig–inspired bicameral legislatures and independent judiciaries. Thus, the American founding produced a liberal republic based on a broad suffrage and liberal rights. American “republicanism,” Hulliung argues, was limited to antimonarchical and antiaristocratic political rhetoric and to the arguments of antidemocrats—George Fitzhugh in the antebellum South, William Graham Sumner in the Gilded Age, and recent neoconservative intellectuals; rarely did it “define the positive content of American political aspirations” (p. 127).

By contrast, the French Revolution divided republicans and liberals into warring camps. The two groups united to overthrow feudalism in 1789 but split apart after the creation of the First Republic in 1793. Henceforth republicanism stood for centralized government, political democracy, a unicameral legislature, anticlericalism, and a collectivist Rousseauian view of economic rights—“social republicanism.” Conversely, French liberals celebrated individual freedom, personal property rights, limits on legislative power, and antidemocratic and anti-socialist policies. In France, one was *either* a republican *or* a liberal—or, to include categories outside the American experience, a monarchist or Bonapartist. Only the Gaullist Fifth Republic (1958–present) reconciled liberal freedoms with social-democratic republicanism and Bonapartist leadership (pp. 81–84).

In developing these arguments, Hulliung ranges over the entire scope of United States and French postrevolutionary history. While specialists will question some of Hulliung’s judgments and emphases, his interpretations are always plausible and often convincing. Still, *Citizens and Citoyens* is less a political history of the two nations—an “explanation” of their development—than a political argument, a “critique” of how participants and scholars have conceptualized and interpreted that history.

I leave to others the evaluation of Hulliung's view of French republicanism and liberalism. With respect to his analysis of the American past, I commend his comparative approach, which illuminates the narrow bounds of postrevolutionary politics. Nowhere did monarchism survive and only in Pennsylvania, and then briefly, was there a sharp conflict between French-style "republicans," the architects of the Constitution of 1776, and "liberals," the authors of the Constitution of 1790. However, his focus on ideological categories and political philosophy may conceal as much as it reveals. Take the issue of adult male (white) suffrage, which came to France in 1848 and to the United States in the preceding three decades. Or did it? In fact, the extraordinary malapportionment of most state legislatures and the provisions of Progressive Era state constitutions effectively disfranchised millions of (white male) Americans. Because the struggle over apportionment usually took a nonideological form, it finds no place in Hulliung's account, even as it tends to undermine the validity of his conceptual scheme of a dominant American democratic-republican liberal polity.

University of Maryland

JAMES A. HENRETTA

Crime and the Nation: Prison Reform and Popular Fiction in Philadelphia, 1786–1800. By PETER OKUN. (New York: Routledge, 2002. xxi, 167p. Notes, bibliography, index. \$70.)

Prison reform and the birth of the modern penitentiary system have long captivated scholars' imaginations. Theorists such as Michel Foucault, David Rothman, and, most recently, Michael Meranze have argued that penitentiaries were unique products of Jacksonian America, dominated by middle-class anxieties, bourgeois hegemony, and systems of social control. Peter Okun's study of Philadelphia's penal-reform movement and its relationship with early national popular fiction challenges extant reform narratives and offers a refreshingly different perspective.

Between the 1780s and early 1800s the Philadelphia Society for Alleviating the Miseries of Public Prisons (PSAMPP) authored numerous letters, petitions, essays, and memorials encouraging the city to dramatically alter its penal system. In the same city and during the same time span, fictive works saturated with themes of deviance, corruption, and redemption captured the city's imagination. The reformers' texts and their relationship to the period's popular fiction have not been explored. Okun employs a poststructuralist approach reminiscent of John Bender's in *Imagining the Penitentiary* (1987). Okun subjects the works of prominent reformers and authors such as Benjamin Rush, William Bradford, and Charles Brockden Brown to intense literary analysis and succeeds in directing scholars' attention to a more nuanced cultural setting.

In the period immediately following the Revolution, city officials became increasingly concerned that public punishments had become ineffective. The crowd, rather than associating with the power of the state, had begun to associate with, and demonstrate compassion for, the criminal, a phenomenon inextricably linked to the corruption of public values. The PSAMPP was formed in this spirit and campaigned relentlessly throughout the 1780s for the spectacle of public punishment to end. Okun situates author Charles Brockden Brown's *Arthur Mervyn* within this larger discourse on spectacle, the body, and transgression. The character of Arthur is transfixed at the site of a murderer and the victim. This character is exactly whom reformers feared because he "embodied spectation and desire" (p. xix). This desire to both view the criminal and his violent acts reinforced attempts by reformers and city officials to end the spectacle.

Okun's treatment of Susanna Rowson's *Charlotte Temple* interestingly incorporates Benjamin Rush's views on the moral faculty, a concept which became of critical importance in the discourse surrounding the potentiality for individual transformation. The presence of a moral faculty allowed for one's reintegration into society, whereas its absence precluded such a path. In *Charlotte Temple* Rowson's character of Belcour dies in an act of violence while the character of Montraville lives "to suffer the reproaches of a guilty conscience" (p. 70).

Okun's treatment of *Charlotte Temple* or Charles Brockden Brown's *Ormond* is not for the literary faint of heart. Those unfamiliar with these works may find Okun's analysis dense and difficult to engage. However, those familiar with these texts will surely enjoy Okun's ability to place the works within the larger world of reform and deviance. Okun's real contribution, however, is in his analysis of prison-reform literature. Indeed, in Okun's analysis of Benjamin Rush's "Plan for the Punishment of Crime" he provocatively and persuasively argues that prisons were conceived as private domestic spaces, spaces which were used to "re-stage the family in idealized form" (p. 97). Rush believed that a prison should be a "large house" situated on an "avenue difficult and gloomy" and separated from the public with "doors . . . of iron" (p. 95). In another passage, Rush uses the word "house" three times and conceptualizes prisons as "abodes of discipline" (p. 98). While previous scholars have focused on the imaginative power of such rich prose, Okun finds a very real manifestation of domestic ideology through the reforms implemented at the Walnut Street Prison. In 1789 radical new policies emphasized cleanliness, hygiene, health, productivity, and order. Okun sees these changes as representative of the idealized family. New regulations reinforced domestic ideals such as hierarchy, sobriety, chastity, and conformity. Within this "domestic laboratory" (p. 101), Okun argues that the state fulfilled the position of authoritative father while doctors assumed the role of curative and restorative mother.

While literary analysts have recognized the value of early national fictive texts, historians have only recently discovered the richness of these sources.

Okun's analysis of these tracts will no doubt frustrate those with limited exposure to the world of literary analysis. For those interested in the intersections found in popular fiction and penal reform, a provocative new direction has been plotted.

Temple University

JENNIFER LAWRENCE JANOFSKY

Mr. Jefferson's Lost Cause: Land, Farmers, Slavery, and the Louisiana Purchase.
By ROGER G. KENNEDY. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003. xv, 350p.
Illustrations, notes, chronology, bibliography, index. \$30.)

There is little question that modern scholarship has subjected Thomas Jefferson's public and private life to intense scrutiny and often found him wanting. His relationship with Sally Hemings is just part of the problem. Recent depictions of Jefferson's thinking on slavery and race, his distant and cool parenting of his daughters, and his behavior as a debt-ridden planter have challenged his iconic status as America's apostle of freedom. To be sure, some areas of Jefferson's life have largely escaped criticism. This has certainly been the case with the Louisiana Purchase, which is generally considered an incalculable boon. However, with the publication of Roger G. Kennedy's idiosyncratic *Mr. Jefferson's Lost Cause*, Jefferson's diplomatic feat is transformed into a sad tale of national decline, of slavery, ecological degradation, and bloody civil war. And Jefferson was at the very heart, the "central character," of this "descent . . . from light to dark" (p. 28).

Kennedy, who has served as director of the National Museum of American History and of the National Park Service, turns his attention not to the world of ideals and principles, but to the tactile world of land. His book is about how land was used and what it was used for in the revolutionary and early national periods. In particular, he recounts the "tragic story" of land that might have been given over to small-scale yeoman agriculture but was claimed, instead, by cotton and slaveholding planters. The process was not inevitable. It was the result of choices made by leaders like Jefferson, who oversaw the demise of his own ideal of a yeoman republic, and it culminated in the Civil War and influenced American history long after the soldiers returned home.

Kennedy contrasts the kind of farming undertaken by planters with that practiced by yeomen and Native Americans. Yeomen and Indians were kinder to the soil, replenishing nutrients and taking better care of equipment. Planters, on the other hand, engaged in an agriculture that abused the land, exhausted the soil, and paid little heed to fencing, housing, and animal care. Planter culture solved the problem of declining yields by rapid migration. The antebellum South, in Kennedy's telling, was a continuous, repetitive saga of yeomen pioneers pushed aside by rapacious slaveholding magnates. By the time of the Civil War, this process had not only ruined the eastern seaboard but desolated the Black Belt of

the Deep South.

An empire of desolation was not the intent of the founding fathers, particularly of Jefferson. But a number of political decisions, often hotly contested, enabled cotton and slavery to destroy their hopes for a republic of virtuous farmers. Especially important were the events of Jefferson's presidency, such as the Louisiana Purchase, which served the interests of plantation slavery and thereby exposed the land of the South to the "depredations of the plantation system" (p. 39). The lost ideal of a yeoman republic also meant the sacrifice of autonomy. In the period following the Revolution, the South became a "recolonized" section, economically subservient to British bankers and industrialists (p. 45).

Mr. Jefferson's Lost Cause covers a lot of ground. It contains discussions of the famous territorial organization measures of the 1780s, British industrialization, the complex trading system of the borderlands area, Indian resistance to the plantation system, and the absorption of West Florida into the Union. Vividly depicted characters dot its landscape—James Wilkinson, Fulwar Skipwith, and Alexander McGillivray, to cite a few.

But the book is a mixed bag. The author's frequent narrative excursions—into joint-stock companies, for example—are often digressive and distracting. His contrast between the ecological practices of Indians and yeomen with that of planters appears romanticized while his depiction of southern impoverishment ignores abundant historical evidence of regional economic success. Exaggerated rhetoric and scientific analogies often obscure the narrative and conflict with the author's announced thesis. Could leaders have made different choices when the spread of cotton and slavery is likened to the "swirl of invisible forces emerging from the magnets under the table" (p. 236)? And what are historians to make of the author's dependence upon and extensive quotations from secondary sources? At times, it is difficult to know whom Kennedy is quoting, whether another author or one of the characters he is examining. All in all, while Kennedy's conclusions are food for thought and his panoramic view of early American history synthesizes information often found only in specialized studies, his methodology and expression impair his effectiveness.

Tulane University

RICHARD B. LATNER

Being Good: Women's Moral Values in Early America. By MARTHA SAXTON.
(New York: Hill and Wang, 2003. x, 388p. Notes, index. \$30.)

Martha Saxton covers enormous ground in this study of women's morality in early America, largely enabled by her strategy of focusing on three different times and places: Puritan New England, the late-eighteenth-century Chesapeake, and antebellum St. Louis, Missouri. This strategy allows her to consider important

changes over the long term, as well as regional and ethnic diversity. She examines the evolution of women's moral power over this long time span, in a nuanced way, as it evolved in tension with a changing but still persistent subordination to men. She attributes to the Puritans the beginnings of an emphasis on female chastity and the moral power of mothers. She argues that late-eighteenth-century Virginia saw the further development of this morality for white women in counterpoint to negative traits attributed to African American women. In her fascinating section on antebellum St. Louis, she shows the blossoming of white women's moral power in the crucible of a society where Europeans of French and Anglo extraction observed and displayed variant moralities, all the while denying a positive morality to both Native Americans and African Americans.

This project is so complex that it is alternately rewarding and frustrating. The phrase "women's moral values" of her subtitle is a case in point. To her credit, Saxton considers all facets of women's moral lives: the values prescribed for them by those whom she calls "moralists"; women's own sense of what it meant to be good; other conditions—demographic, political, economic, etc.—that constrained women's actual morality; the ways in which women failed to be good and were therefore punished; the ways in which different ethnic, racial, and religious groups had different moralities; the fact that white Americans attributed amorality to African American women; the probable African-influenced and slavery-constrained actual moral values of black women; and, in each of these cases, the different issues over the female life cycle of the moral education of young women, the moral roles of wives, the moral teachings of mothers, and the moral example of women in old age. She also examines the way morality was at all times intertwined with women's emotions. It is terrific that she acknowledges all these iterations of "women's moral values in early America." No one has attempted to embrace all of these concerns before. But the reader sometimes gets dizzy from the kaleidoscopic results. While Saxton does offer signposting at crucial points, the reader has additional need to step back and take bearings along the way as to exactly whose moral values are under discussion.

Saxton's focus on three different times and places gives her project impressive scope, but it also begs questions of causality. Late-eighteenth-century Massachusetts women, for example, were reading the same advice books she examines for Virginia, but because her focus in Virginia is on the impact of slave society on morality, the roots and spread of changes in the advice are not fully traced. Similarly, *Being Good* is both impressively and inadequately researched. Considering the different times and places she is exploring, Saxton has looked at a great variety of evidence, from sermons, court records, and advice books of various kinds; to newspapers, diaries, and letters. She also makes use of a wide range of secondary studies. And yet, one gets the sense that she has not analyzed any one of her groups of sources systematically, especially to compare moral values prescribed for women with those prescribed for men. She does make gender com-

parisons, but one wonders whether thorough analysis of a specific body of evidence would have yielded more nuanced findings. Rather, gender difference is assumed from the start—women’s morality seems to occur in a “separate sphere.” And while Saxton shows that emphasis on the importance of “relatedness” for women has varied in degree over time; she does not seem to question Carol Gilligan’s argument that women have a fundamentally different moral voice than men.

Largely because of the vastly greater accessibility of evidence, Saxton’s analysis is richest, and conclusions strongest, in the antebellum section. While her rather dark picture of Puritan marriage seems shaded by the stingy sources for the period (mostly court records and the works of magistrates and ministers), for example; her perceptive readings of the situations of black women in antebellum Missouri are both moving and compelling.

In the end, *Being Good* is a very ambitious project. If hard to pull off perfectly, it was certainly worth the endeavor. It should be read by all students of the various times, places, and issues that Saxton takes up.

Ursinus College

C. DALLETT HEMPHILL

Stories of Freedom in Black New York. By SHANE WHITE. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002. 260p. Notes, index. \$27.95.)

Shane White and his researchers have recovered a wealth of information on African American culture from a forgotten but critical period, from July 4, 1799, when newborn slave babies were freed for the first time in New York State history, until July 4, 1827, when the last slave held in that state finally gained freedom. White argues that in New York City “black life in these awkward transition decades possessed a distinct edge, a particular kind of restless vitality” (p. 8), while to many white people black behavior was “repellant” and “curiously alluring” (pp. 197–98).

White maintains that the “resulting conjunction between black creative activity and white voyeurism was unprecedented, and would not recur until the Harlem Renaissance” (p. 5). One could also make a case that this phenomenon happened at the turn of the twentieth century when black artists inaugurated the Broadway musical scene before being shut out by white entrepreneurs, egged on by state apartheid laws upheld by the Supreme Court decisions *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896) and *Williams v. Walker* (1898). In the era examined by White, opportunities for autonomous black cultural expression afforded during the early republic were dashed by the white-supremacist values of Jacksonian Democracy.

White tells this sad story through the brilliant, but tragic career of the black actor, playwright, and singer James Hewlett, whose achievements included debuting Italian opera for racially mixed American audiences. He was, however,

renowned for playing Shakespearean roles, especially the trickster Richard III, for impersonating famous British actors of the day, as well as for presenting standard black skits and songs. He was part of the loose ensemble of black artists who built the first black American theater on the corner of Bleecker and Mercer streets in Lower Manhattan. Hewlett was able to express the collective angst of African Americans while impressing white audiences with his thespian skills.

This delicate racial balancing act ended when Andrew Jackson assumed center political stage and white people in blackface replaced actual black faces on stage. Hewlett's decade-long stage career before racially mixed audiences ended when white actor T. D. Rice began portraying Jim Crow in the wildly popular first minstrel show at New York's premier theater, the Park, in the spring of 1833, a couple of months after Jackson was inaugurated. A contemporary account recorded that audiences "thronged to an excess unprecedented in the records of theatrical attraction" (p. 218). This Jacksonian shift in audience taste rather than any diminution of Hewlett's exceptional talents rendered Hewlett's stage performances commercially obsolete.

In the end, Hewlett chose exile in Trinidad. Expatriation was also chosen by his rival and protégé, Ira Aldridge, who left the United States for a successful career on the European stage soon after being savagely beaten by white hoodlums who were not content with merely stopping a performance at the African Theater and ransacking the theater's contents with the tacit consent of city authorities. As White helpfully points out, these two men, along with boxer Tom Molineaux, were the first of a long line of black expatriates, who in the twentieth century included Josephine Baker, James Baldwin, Sidney Bechet, W. E. B. Du Bois, and Richard Wright.

Stories of Freedom in Black New York mines over two dozen newspapers, the municipal archives, and court records of New York City to give us about as much as we will ever possibly know about African American culture in New York City during the 1820s. Still, those primary sources make up only a part of the story, as White observes. Court records, for example, constitute only a fraction of slave abuse cases since most slaveholders personally meted out punishment to their slaves without public awareness of the cruelties inflicted. White's meticulous chronicle should disabuse anyone of notions that slavery's formal end brought social and political equality to the nation's most populous city. In fact, conditions worsened as blacks were virtually driven from the city by the time of the horrific 1863 draft riots, when white mobs hung African Americans from lamp posts, among other atrocities.

The Passions of Andrew Jackson. By ANDREW BURSTEIN. (New York: Knopf, 2003. xxi, 292p. Notes, appendix, index. \$25.)

He was the seventh president of the United States, the first one without the polish of Virginia or Massachusetts, a wealthy man from frontier Tennessee, and an individual of fierce beliefs and opinions. Historians have long viewed Andrew Jackson as a pivotal figure in the development of the United States, giving him an ultimate honor by naming an era of history after him. (Only Thomas Jefferson has the same distinction.)

Through the years, too, the historical debates about Jackson's exact meaning and significance have remained constant. Nineteenth-century historian James Parton's classic comment which ended with the conclusion that Jackson was "A democratic autocrat. An urbane savage. An atrocious saint" (p. xvii) has continued to reverberate through Jacksonian historiography to the present day.

Andrew Burstein, coholder of the Mary Frances Barnard Chair at the University of Tulsa, has now entered the fray with this book. He points out that the average American today really has no idea who Andrew Jackson was. Other than noticing his picture on the new twenty-dollar bill, most Americans do not comprehend his relevance to the present day, and they see no reason to find out, Burstein argues.

If this is true, then Burstein's book, which "is an attempt to make him [Jackson] more knowable" (p. xv), is a worthy project. Burstein admits that others have written books about Jackson, particularly pointing to Robert V. Remini, the leading Jacksonian biographer, but he states, ever so carefully, that he finds that Remini's treatment of Jackson is not critical enough. He promises that his book, unlike others, Remini's included, will be based on purely objective research to try to get at the historical essence of the man.

In the same introduction, however, Burstein indicates that he will be presenting only "a provisional portrait of the historic Jackson, designed not so much to ask whether he was truly great or exaggerated in stature—these are emotional determinations—but whether and to what extent we, so far removed from the values of his day, can take his measure" (p. xix). Crucial in this attempt is concentration on an area that, he argues, other historians have ignored: Jackson's many friendships. He believes that a number of key friends were crucial to helping make Jackson the individual he became.

Burstein spends most of his time on the prepresidential years. In fact, only one chapter out of seven deals with Jackson's eight-year term as president. Burstein studies the influence of the American frontier and the concept of honor on Jackson. He discusses Aaron Burr's activities, Jackson's military and governmental leadership in New Orleans, and the development of his political attitudes. He also puts a great deal of emphasis on the controversy over his marriage to Rachel, and, throughout, he deals with Jackson's many friends, saying almost

nothing, however, about William B. Lewis, the associate who lived in the White House during Jackson's administration, and saying very little, beyond his involvement in the Eaton affair, about Andrew Jackson Donelson, Old Hickory's nephew and personal secretary.

A reader will certainly learn a great deal about Jackson from this book. Unfortunately, Burstein does not match *The Passions of Andrew Jackson* with literary passion of his own. Early on, moreover, his use of the "passion" image disappears. Jackson's intriguing nature, with all its ramifications that Burstein does discuss, is somehow lost in Burstein's less-than-inspiring prose and lack of analytical focus. Burstein's attempt to make Jackson into a Shakespearean figure falls short, too. If Americans know little about their presidents, they know even less about Shakespeare.

In short, the general public will not find this book appealing enough to lift Jackson to a more prominent place in its psyche. Specialists in Jacksonian America, who already know a great deal about Jackson, will not find anything spectacularly new here. This is a thoughtful book, but it does not meet the high standard that the author himself set for it.

Mississippi State University

JOHN F. MARZALEK

Beyond Party: Cultures of Antipartisanship in Northern Politics before the Civil War. By MARK VOSS-HUBBARD. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002. xiv, 266p. Notes, appendix, essay on sources, index. \$45.)

This study offers a new perspective on the rise of the Republican Party and the North's road to the Civil War by documenting how attitudes towards political parties changed simultaneous with the well-known slavery controversy. Voss-Hubbard asserts that antipartisan outsiders to the major parties reshaped politics in the 1850s in ways that discouraged compromise on Americans' competing views of the national interest.

Beyond Party makes this case by analyzing local politics in three counties—Dauphin County, Pennsylvania, home to Harrisburg; New London County, Connecticut; and Essex County, Massachusetts. This focus on small geographic units allows Voss-Hubbard to investigate local politics during the collapse of the system of regular party competition between the Whigs and Democrats that had lasted a generation. In 1854 Pennsylvania, Connecticut, and Massachusetts supported the anti-immigrant American Party and in 1856 they switched to the anti-slavery-expansion Republicans.

Historians have blamed the fall of the Whigs and Democrats on their failure to effectively handle the issues of immigration and slavery. Know-Nothings and Republicans succeeded, so this interpretation goes, because they offered more

attractive solutions. Voss-Hubbard argues that the change involved more than a simple question of policy. The triumph of the Republican Party culminated a decade-long rise to prominence of nonpartisan activism on reform issues that in its organizational style resembled a social movement more than it did an institutional political party.

Antipartisans claimed that those who put party first were unprincipled self-seekers willing to enhance their own power at the expense of the public good. "Vernacular antipartism" found expression in local government, which held elections in the spring so as to avoid the partisan vitriol of the fall's state and national campaigns, and in nonpartisan reform associations devoted to issues like temperance that "eschewed overtly political activity that might divide their organizations" (p. 60). In the early 1850s, reformers entered major party politics by endorsing candidates for major offices who promised to promote their issues. Antiparty tactics, as much as reform issues, sapped the foundations of Whig and Democratic loyalty. Reformers used the fraternal society as the model for an alternative organizational style to formal political parties. Know-Nothings belonged to secret societies that used oaths and rituals to instill loyalty and trust. Convinced that immigrants, especially Irish Catholics, were ruining the country, Know-Nothings pledged to vote only for members of their own clubs, all of whom were American-born nativists. Fraternal organizing broke down old party ties by promoting the Know-Nothings as a "purely American brotherhood" committed to the 'common good'" (p. 118). In the early 1850s reformers also criticized partisans who blindly backed parties regardless of their stands. In 1854 and 1855 nativism's popularity along with fraternal solidarity enabled Know-Nothings to win a host of state and local elections.

In office, American Party leaders found that legislating required them to act like party politicians. They compromised with their foes, used patronage to reward allies, and equivocated on divisive issues like slavery. The same no-more-politics-as-usual populist sentiment that brought Know-Nothings to power motivated voters to reject the party once it had betrayed its promise.

While retaining Know-Nothing populism, Republicans did a better job of institutionalizing their power. They not only advanced a popular issue, free soil; they also accommodated party loyalty with antipartisan ideals. In their criticism of the Slave Power, Republicans "conflated the health of the Nation with virtues that were uniquely northern and uniquely Republican" (p. 210). Voters understood Republican Party loyalty as evidence of values antipartisans could endorse such as "personal integrity, self-sacrifice," and devotion to the national interest (p. 211).

Given antipartisan criticism of political insiders, Voss-Hubbard needs to explain more fully how veteran politicians gained top spots in the new parties. In 1855, Pennsylvania Know-Nothings unsuccessfully boosted the United States Senate candidacy of Simon Cameron, a leading Democratic whose "questionable

antislavery credentials combined with his political opportunism" (p. 173). Two years later Cameron won the seat as a Republican supported by ex-Know-Nothings. That Dauphin County Republicans praised Cameron for embodying "firm and consistent . . . American Republican principles" suggests that experienced politicians found ways to use new antipartisan tactics for traditional partisan purposes (p. 210).

For decades historians have interpreted the nineteenth century as the "golden age" of party politics in which loyalty to parties operated with nearly religious intensity. Voss-Hubbard agrees that party politics thrived, but he shows that in the 1850s the meaning of partisanship changed in ways that pushed the nation towards the Civil War. *Beyond Party* begins a new strand of Civil War historiography, and that is a major achievement.

Colorado State University

FRANK TOWERS

The War Was You and Me: Civilians in the American Civil War. Edited by JOAN E. CASHIN. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002. ix, 397p. Illustrations, tables, notes, notes on contributors, index. Cloth, \$65; paper, \$17.95.)

The War Was You and Me is a compilation of sixteen essays on "Civilians in the American Civil War." As is inevitable in such anthologies, the articles vary in quality and fit. Although none break truly new ground, several are on the cutting edge of the latest scholarship; several others reflect the current consensus on their topics; a few are disappointing and off the mark. This volume, edited by Joan E. Cashin, and with useful biographical sketches of each author at the end, is organized into three parts: "The North," "The South," and "The Border Regions." This geographic division understates the rich variety of subjects represented in the articles. Readers are better served by the categories Cashin specifies in her introduction: family and community, gender, culture, and race.

The most effective articles are those on family and community. George Rable's "Hearth, Home, and Family in the Fredericksburg Campaign" offers an answer in microcosm to the question, "Why did they fight?" He speaks to both Northern and Southern experiences and emphasizes the similarities between the two. In his "We Are Coming, Father Abraham—Eventually," William Blair explores the process of delay and obstruction employed by Governor Curtin and local Pennsylvania officials as they tried to reconcile the demands of federal agents with the widespread opposition to the draft among state residents. Joan Cashin, the editor, speaks to a similar theme in her investigation of Northern deserters and their protectors in "Deserters, Civilians, and Draft Resistance in the North." Joseph Glatthaar and Amy Murrell contribute insights on father-son

conflicts and reconciliations in their pieces on the Evans Family of Ohio and on Unionist fathers with rebel sons, respectively. Peter Bardaglio contributes an excellent study on white children during the war in Maryland. Each of these articles provides useful insight on the central topic: the meaning and impact of the war.

Interesting but not always on target are the four articles that might be grouped under the heading "gender." Nina Silber's piece, "A Compound of Wonderful Potency: Women Teachers of the North in the Civil War South," confirms existing studies on this topic, framing the discussion in the new "gendered" terminology favored by many younger historians. Robert Kenzer's "The Uncertainty of Life: A Profile of Virginia's Civil War Widows" gives insight into the lives of some of Virginia's women during the war, but his perspective is somewhat skewed by the limitations of his sources: death claims and pension files. His most interesting points, such as on whether widows remarry and why, actually concern the postbellum South. In "Mary Surratt and the Plot to Assassinate Abraham Lincoln," Elizabeth Leonard tackles a still controversial subject. Surratt was the first woman executed by the federal government, and may not have been guilty. Leonard suggests that Surratt was executed as a symbolic gesture toward all the women who had aided the Southern cause and eluded Northern retribution. Matthew Gallman's "An Inspiration to Work: Anna Elizabeth Dickinson, Public Orator" is one of the problematic pieces in the volume. The relevance to the Civil War of Dickinson's amorous correspondence with her many female admirers is never fully established. It is only in the final half-dozen pages that Dickinson's stances on the war and the Republican Party are discussed.

Two articles in the volume speak explicitly to cultural themes. Ronald Zboray and Mary Saracino Zboray trace the changing nature of literary discourse in New England due to the war. The Zborays posit that the tradition of sharing literary texts and reading them aloud never recovered from the changes in public discourse caused by the war. Mark Smith's "Of Bells, Booms, Sounds, and Silences: Listening to the Civil War South" is given the place of honor as the volume's first essay. It is also one of the more problematic. It tries to portray the impact of the war and emancipation through the changing cacophony of noises that punctuate these years. Written descriptions are inadequate here. The piece cries out for an accompanying soundtrack!

Three essays address the African American experience. Anthony Kaye's "Slaves, Emancipation, and the Powers of War" traces the arrival of freedom in the Natchez District of Mississippi and the black response. It captures the skepticism and caution of these slaves as they try to discover whether emancipation is genuine. Fitzhugh Brundage's article, "Race, Memory, and Masculinity: Black Veterans Recall the Civil War," is not primarily about the war, but rather about its aftermath. It speaks to the themes of white reconcilia-

tion and the omission of African Americans' roles in the Civil War saga recently explored by historians like Heather Cox Richardson and David Blight. The third entry on a racial theme, Margaret Creighton's "Living on the Fault Line: African American Civilians and the Gettysburg Campaign," tells of Confederate kidnapping of "free people of color" and the ensuing black panic. While the topic is compelling, the essay is flawed by awkward construction and repetitive use of evidence.

This volume will please many students of the Civil War. Nonetheless, two weaknesses must be noted. The attention to the African American experience might have been better conceived and presented. Noticeably missing is attention to the very active free black communities of the North and to life within the black regiments during the war itself. A much more glaring omission is attention to religion. In a conflict during which notions of God's will were bandied about with enormous venom and vigor, failure to devote special attention to this topic in a volume like this is inexplicable.

For a general reader, the essays in this collection are a quick introduction to the burgeoning subfield of Civil War social history. To graduate students and other scholars new to the subject, the excellent endnotes accompanying each essay are wonderful bonuses. For teachers of American history surveys or Civil War courses, assignment of one or two of these essays can complement the reading list without requiring an entire extra text. This volume is a worthy addition to any Civil War library.

University of Pennsylvania

ROBERT F. ENGS

Beyond the Battlefield: Race, Memory, and the American Civil War. By DAVID W. BLIGHT. (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 2002. xi, 301p. Notes, index. Cloth, \$70; paper, \$19.95.)

David Blight's scholarly career has been largely devoted to understanding the history and memory of slavery, race, and the Civil War within the broader context of American culture. *Beyond the Battlefield* demonstrates the author's substantial contribution to that ongoing discussion. Though all but one of the volume's twelve essays have been published previously between 1989 and 2001, bringing them together in one volume enhances their insights by allowing them to inform and complement one another as they highlight Blight's arguments regarding the centrality of race to American understandings of not only the Civil War, but also the nation's larger history.

The essays are arranged in three sections. The first deals with individuals or issues not strictly connected to questions of Civil War memory, including treatments of Frederick Douglass, Abraham Lincoln, the letters of Union soldier

Charles Harvey Brewster, and contemporary African American views of the war's origins. The second and longest section squarely tackles "Problems in Civil War Memory," looking at public commemorations, monuments, documentary film, and various groups' and individuals' struggles to control the war's memory. The two essays in the final section extend beyond the boundaries of Civil War memory, assessing the historical insights and cultural critiques of W. E. B. Du Bois and Nathan Irvin Huggins as they grappled in their respective generations—as did Douglass and as does Blight—with the question of black Americans' and black history's place within the nation's history and culture. The introduction and epilogue are brief but nonetheless helpful in directing the reader toward Blight's overriding concerns: the cultural politics—and particularly the racial politics—involved in constructing historical memory; and the historian's responsibility to contextualize both past and present struggles over what is remembered (and how) and what is forgotten (and why).

The volume engages Civil War memory on numerous levels. Personal memories of the war are, in some respects, woven into all the essays, but are given most scrupulous attention in chapters on Douglass and Brewster. Brewster's letters illustrate both the horrors of battle and the heroic nostalgia that pervaded the postwar decades, and Blight ably reads into this soldier's experiences the gendered and racialized contexts which shaped his world. An essay on Douglass's autobiographies sheds light on how the abolitionist used that genre to assess and reconstruct his own past as the contexts, and his purposes, shifted. Blight's 1989 article on Douglass's memory of the Civil War epitomizes the "emancipationist" vision of the war's meaning that was shared by many African Americans during the late nineteenth century. Other essays address the enactment of Civil War memory in the public sphere through commemorations at battlefield sites and at the semicentennial anniversary celebrations held between 1911 and 1915. Blight also analyzes the ways in which the war's memory has been preserved and fixed in public memory in more enduring forms like the Robert Gould Shaw Memorial in Boston and Ken Burns's epic documentary *The Civil War*.

While essay collections often lack a unifying focus, *Beyond the Battlefield* succeeds in presenting a coherent interpretation of Civil War memory and its role in shaping our national identity. Each essay in its own way calls attention to "the politics of memory," and the ways in which "cultures and groups use, construct, or try to own the past in order to win power and place in the present" (p. 191). A related theme running through the volume involves the tension between popular and scholarly understandings of the past. As various groups in American society—Northerners, Southerners, blacks, whites—from the war's end to the present have contested the conflict's memory and meaning, scholarly interpretations seem to have had little impact on those groups' deep, durable, and competing myths. Blight argues that professional historians must embrace their responsibility

to engage and contextualize those myths in the public sphere. Given the Civil War's attraction for antiquarian compilers of trivia on the one hand, and for those driven by presentist political agendas on the other, we cannot afford to omit the historian's commitment to context and critical interpretation from popular public discourse on the subject.

Lucidly written and intellectually engaging, *Beyond the Battlefield* should be equally useful for Civil War buffs, public historians, specialists in memory and Civil War studies, and undergraduate or graduate classes. David Blight has put together a book that practices what it preaches, as he infuses a critical historical perspective into the often contentious and political public discussions of slavery, race, and the Civil War.

Western Michigan University

MITCH KACHUN

Refined Tastes: Sugar, Confectionary, and Consumers in Nineteenth-Century America. By WENDY A. WOLOSON. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002. xi, 277p. Illustrations, notes, essay on sources, index. \$44.95.)

The history of sugar consumption, Wendy Woloson argues, demonstrates how the physical desires of consumption shed light on the cultural desires of consumption. She sets out to recover not just the history of the democratization of sugar consumption in nineteenth-century America, but also how producers and consumers shaped confections' functional and symbolic meaning: "People were not satisfied merely with dissolving sugar into foodstuffs; they wanted to see the sweetness as they were eating it—as hard candy, as ice cream, as bonbons, as festal cakes" (p. 7). Ephemeral and trivial objects like confections provided a vibrant material language that conveyed social and political ideologies. Woloson argues that both the objects and the process of making them gave meaning to cultural ideas. By the late nineteenth century, advertising played an important role in integrating these meanings.

Woloson locates the beginnings of public venues for sugar consumption in the 1830s. In her chapter on candy, cautionary tales about excessive candy consumption by children link a growing middle-class interest in consumption with fears about the consequences of indulgence. Too much candy for children suggested other more dangerous forms of intemperance: cautionary tales often drew a direct link to the consumption of alcohol. Her illustration of children's consumer education in front of the glass jars of jewel-like candy is very engaging. Children learned not just how to consume candy, but how to be consumers. This generational argument is very helpful in explaining why adult Americans living after the Civil War had such a developed sweet tooth. It is not as helpful in clarifying and supporting her argument about the feminization of sweetness. Almost

all her examples of candy consumers, fictional and visual, are boys. Her most vivid examples of candy explicitly marketed to children, licorice and chocolate cigarettes, let boys imitate the addictive behaviors of their fathers and uncles. If boys gave up candy for alcohol and cigarettes when they reach manhood, as she suggests, where these imitative forms of candy also an education about adult consumer preferences—training to give up sugar? Her statistics on per capita sugar consumption at the end of the century suggest otherwise.

There are other weaknesses in her argument about the feminization of sweetness. Even Woloson is not convinced that sugar was originally gendered as masculine. She links it to the activities she defines as masculine, but she does not provide historical sources that use a masculine rhetoric to describe sugar. She identifies a growing female consumer base for sugar over the course of the century, but she doesn't find a broad basis in cultural rhetoric for feminization, with the exception of the lament over excessive female candy consumption. It is important to remember that although much of this candy was intended for women, men are the primary consumers in the marketplace. This discussion would have been a great place to examine the growing rhetorical detachment of the consumption of food and the consumption of goods. Candy manufacturers played a significant role in creating the impression of female desire for candy, insisting that women wanted candy so that men would buy it for them, especially since women were not supposed to buy candy for themselves. The importance of candy in courtship rituals like Valentine's Day also suggests that a woman's access to candy might have been dramatically reduced after marriage, when her husband was no longer obliged to woo her. Women, like men, may well have had to satisfy their sweet tooth with the desserts that became an integral part of the family dinner table by the end of the century.

While her argument for a trajectory of feminization is weak, this weakness is actually testimony to the strength of her evidence and the breadth of her research. It seems more convincing, given the wonderful evidence she has gathered, to argue for a more complex relationship of the masculine and the feminine in the development of late-nineteenth-century consumer culture. In this way, Woloson's book shows us just how indispensable the history of material culture is to any understanding of consumer culture. Acts of actual consumption and their relation to production, as her chapter on sugar in the home shows, must be understood together. This is an important object lesson for historians of nineteenth-century consumer culture. The popularity of novels may wax and wane, but people are still eating Hershey bars.

University of Nevada, Las Vegas

ELIZABETH ALICE WHITE

Steel and Steelworkers: Race and Class Struggle in Twentieth-Century Pittsburgh. By JOHN HINSHAW. (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2002. xvii, 348p. Notes, index. \$25.95.)

For historians, steel industry labor has always been something of a disappointment. The passivity of the “non-union era,” the “top-down” organization of the 1930s, and the rout of the 1980s leave little room for inspiration. In *Steel and Steelworkers*, John Hinshaw makes sense of it all and finds a few valuable lessons as well. Building on recent work by Jack Metzgar, Bruce Nelson, James Rose, and Judith Stein, and nimbly juggling the balls of labor, business, and government, Hinshaw covers the industry from its nineteenth-century beginnings up to the 1990s and the arrival of the “post-industrial economy” (p. 160).

The broad outlines of what happened in between will be familiar. Nourished by high tariffs and armaments contracts, the industry rose to dominate Pittsburgh and the nation and forced the redoubtable skilled iron puddler to give way to the ethnic steel worker, oppressed by state power, pitted against workers of other nationalities, and worked—often literally—to death. Organizing efforts in 1919 foundered on red-baiting and ethnic division, but then came a remarkable convergence of factors: ethnic differences waned, employee representation plans trained activists, and the Great Depression offered an opening for a union movement supported—albeit in a frustratingly incomplete manner—by the New Deal Democratic order. The efforts of the Steel Workers Organizing Committee paid off in local politics but were eclipsed in the workplace when in 1937 U.S. Steel abruptly signed with the CIO.

A tentative peace accord held during World War II and the early cold war, but without a real government-industry-labor accord and at the “unnecessary” (p. 96) sacrifice of communist activists. In the 1950s, with the need for comprehensive modernization evident, industry opted instead for incremental improvements. Labor was left with the Hobson’s choice of seeing its ranks contract in the short run due to automation or collapse in the long run due to plant obsolescence. In the end labor got both, but not until the industry, now deprived of state support, had traveled the long road of disinvestment, along the way making its hourly employees “the best paid members of Pittsburgh’s working class” (p. 156).

Hinshaw carefully elaborates the issues that crosscut the United Steelworkers of America (USWA) during these years, covering struggles against “top-down” unionism, the organization’s acquiescence in—but not complete blame for—seniority structures that sharply limited opportunities for black workers, and its efforts to contain black activism and white backlash when a government-ordered consent decree finally tore them down.

Hinshaw’s conviction that state support rather than “natural economic processes” (p. 232) accounts for the industry’s dominance may have led him to overemphasize the role of armor contracts in forcing recognition of the USWA,

but he is on firmer ground in uncovering the roots of the industry's disinvestment policy. To his credit, Hinshaw does not raise his authorial voice over the fact that "when it became more profitable for steelmakers not to make steel, they invested elsewhere" (p. xiii). Hinshaw also covers, if more gingerly, the union's exchanging contraction of the workforce for steady wage hikes and substantial pensions, which he calls a form of "displacement insurance" (p. 186).

This is an ambitious book, and its few weaknesses stem from the fact that it overshoots its title. Race relations are well covered, but they slip in and out of the much broader narrative. More disappointing, there is simply not enough Pittsburgh here. Greater attention to how conditions changed from plant to plant and community to community would have been valuable, and it would have been worth asking how Pittsburgh differed from the Chicago-Gary area.

Hinshaw is to be commended for his refusal to fall back on easy explanations. Instead of demonizing employers, he locates the failures of steel in the broader context of global political and economic shifts and avoids the convention of blaming "whiteness" for workplace racial inequities. Hinshaw considers his book part of a "struggle for political vision and will" (p. 256). Accordingly, he defines "class struggle" generously and he may overemphasize the scope of collective action. Seniority might have begun, as he puts it, as the "institutional expression of workers' solidarity" (p. 126), but it became every steelworker's greatest personal—not collective—investment. Historians have yet to demonstrate that the rank and file, even in the 1930s, sought much beyond better pay and working conditions, suggesting that the USWA represented their aspirations more effectively than scholars would like. After all, there is evidence to suggest that both union and worker enjoyed the well-compensated ride as their proud industry slid into oblivion.

History Associates Incorporated

KENNETH DURR

Keen of Philadelphia: The Collected Memoirs. Edited by W. W. KEEN JAMES. (Dublin, NH: William L. Bauhan, 2002. xx, 371p. Illustrations, notes, appendices, index. \$40.)

A slightly younger contemporary of S. Weir Mitchell, William Williams Keen Jr. shared with his friend and colleague the unfortunate distinction of having lived through Philadelphia's decline from the undisputed capital of American medicine to one of several cities with important hospitals and medical colleges. In some ways Keen can be seen as emblematic of the last years of Philadelphia's medical ascendancy. Born in 1837, he started medical school in 1860, choosing Jefferson over Pennsylvania because the younger institution arguably had the best medical faculty in the country. Rejected in 1873 in his bid for Jefferson's chair of anatomy, Keen cultivated his private practice while

conducting an independent school of anatomy and, in 1884, accepting a position at the Woman's Medical College. In 1889 he was called back to Jefferson as professor of surgery (heir to, among others, Samuel David Gross, whose surgical clinic as depicted by Thomas Eakins remains iconic of American medicine in the nineteenth century). From then until his retirement in 1907 and even his death in 1932, Keen's local, national, and international eminence was testified to, for example, by his terms as president of the College of Physicians of Philadelphia, the American Philosophical Society, the American Medical Association, and the International Surgical Congress of 1920.

Keen was evidently a superior clinician who paid attention to and readily adopted the new developments of his era. But while he was pleased to report his interest in all aspects of scientific medicine, he also acknowledged that he himself did not contribute to it as an investigator or researcher. After the turn of the century, when he was old enough and distinguished enough to be regarded as the grand old man of the American profession, Keen perhaps became best known for his outspoken defense of animal experimentation. There may have been no better choice for this role of spokesman since Keen never himself engaged in vivisection. He could claim to have no interest in the matter except that he had applied the knowledge gained to the benefit of his patients. His unflinching intellect and his natural grace and wit complemented his unblemished reputation and added to his stature.

As displayed in his autobiographical writings Keen was a fascinating character—and a short book review cannot do justice to his Civil War experiences, his relations with his four daughters (left motherless when his wife died in 1886), his work teaching anatomy to art students, his extensive travels, his penchant for recounting amusing anecdotes, or his secret operation on President Cleveland. Keen was representative of a social type of his time, in terms of both general culture and the medical world. Before the Civil War he was a moderate abolitionist, and throughout his life he remained a Lincoln Republican. A religious man (he chose Brown for his undergraduate education because of its connection to the Baptist Church), he acknowledged in his later years that his faith was increasingly tempered by his attention to developments in science. The only lapse in moderation he seems to have displayed is the venom with which he discusses the Central Powers in the First World War. He was a medical internationalist and admirer of German and Austrian culture up to 1914, but his jingoism during and after the war contrasts greatly with his conciliatory approach to those who supported the Confederacy fifty years earlier.

We owe a debt to Keen's great-grandson W. W. Keen James for preparing for publication the memoir that Keen wrote for his descendants in 1914–1915 and later expanded. In fact, James first published much of this material in 1990 as *The Memoirs of William Williams Keen, M.D.* After that initial publication, James, a resident of Rhode Island, began exploring the Keen papers deposited at

Brown. A decade later he decided to put out this augmented edition.

This is a delightful book about an intriguing person, full of valuable evidence for the historian. Keen was a man of good humor and no mean writing ability, but his great-grandson—much as he succeeds in giving the reader an appreciation of Keen—was not equipped to prepare a proper scholarly edition of these autobiographical writings. This then is a wonderful source of primary evidence; as such, it presents an opportunity and challenge to a more able historian who might choose to be Keen's biographer.

College of Physicians of Philadelphia

EDWARD T. MORMAN

Downtown: Its Rise and Fall, 1880–1950. By ROBERT M. FOGELSON. (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2001. x, 492p. Illustrations, notes, index. Cloth, \$35; paper, \$19.95.)

When Sinclair Lewis's fictional George Babbitt drove from his Dutch Colonial house in Floral Heights, downtown Zenith rose from the mist as "austere towers of steel and cement and limestone, sturdy as cliffs and delicate as silver rods" (*Babbitt* [1922], p. 5). His was a world of suburban residential life and center city business. Upon arriving downtown Babbitt confronted the new phenomena of traffic jams, the "drama of parking" (p. 29), and congestion on the downtown streets. Lewis was an astute chronicler of the changing American landscape: in the midst of poking fun at the pretensions of George Babbitt, he located in Zenith the physical attributes of the modern city—a place divided by neighborhoods stratified by race and class, a downtown of tall buildings and retail emporia, industrial areas, and residential suburbs spiraling outward from the center. Lewis depicts the congestion, traffic jams, difficulty of accommodating the automobile on city streets, and suburbanization, which together, as Robert Fogelson demonstrates, would ultimately spell the end to the brief period of downtown dominance in the American urban experience.

In recent years historians have paid less attention to downtown than to residential decentralization, though Fogelson, like Frederick Law Olmsted more than a century ago, presents center and periphery as interdependent parts of the evolving metropolitan landscape. More than a decade ago journalist Joel Garreau asserted that downtowns were artifacts of a specific historical time and were doomed to extinction: "these old downtowns," he wrote, "were highly aberrational. We built those huge, acutely concentrated centers for fewer than a hundred years" (*Edge City: Life on the New Frontier* [1991], p. 105). To many urban historians, Garreau's dismissal of downtown and his celebration of spiraling growth on the metropolitan fringe as the next American frontier, a continuation of the nation's pioneering tradition, was as distasteful to contemplate as the

author's penchant for the sweeping synthesis, his disregard for the complexities of the historical record, and his lack of attention to public policy in shaping city and suburb.

And yet, as Robert Fogelson demonstrates in *Downtown*, what we think of as the center of metropolitan life is indeed the product of a very brief period of time, the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. *Downtown* is an impressive achievement, named the best book in North American urban history by the Urban History Association and recipient of the Lewis Mumford Prize from the Society for American City and Regional Planning History. It has also generated controversy, most notably in Robert Twombly's essay, published in the June 2002 issue of *Reviews in American History*, which dismissed Fogelson's downtown as existing in a temporal as well as spatial vacuum.

Fogelson begins by describing downtown at the end of the nineteenth century—an area of soaring skyscrapers, department stores, incredibly high density during business hours, and a tiny residential population. But at the very moment of downtown's triumph, when the skyline of the business district in New York and Chicago and smaller cities was a uniquely American accomplishment, Fogelson finds a pattern of resistance to the very crowding and height that made downtown possible. Individual chapters deal with such pressing issues as the remarkably successful battle against elevated streetcars and subways (though Fogelson's claim that at the end of the 1920s there were around 350 miles of rapid transit tracks in the nation, more than two-thirds of which were located in New York City [pp. 108–9] is surely incorrect: Clifton Hood demonstrates that there were almost 600 miles of such track in New York City in 1925) and the attempt to impose height limitations on skyscrapers, which led to New York City's influential 1916 zoning ordinance. Other chapters trace the evolution of downtown from the 1920s to mid-century and examine such topics as the decentralization of commerce as well as residence, the impact of the automobile on downtown, and the invention of blight and the U.S. Housing Act of 1949 as attempts to use the powers of the state to restore prosperity to downtown. Each of the lengthy chapters is impressively researched both in primary sources and in recent scholarship, with the result that the notes run to seventy-six pages.

Fogelson traces downtown's decline to the 1920s. One of his most ironic observations is that the planning profession, which in the early decades of the century had been most involved in planning for the metropolitan fringe and for smaller cities and towns, became deeply concerned over the fate of downtown. Not even the most enlightened planning could reverse or even slow the decline of downtown in the Great Depression and World War II, and during the post-war era planners wielded the bulldozer and in the name of urban redevelopment destroyed much of the fabric of the nation's cities. The prosperity many large cities have experienced in recent years, while welcome, disguises the stark reality that "nowhere has the central business district regained the position it held in the

1910s and 1920s" (p. 397).

There is an elegiac quality to Fogelson's writing: he is clearly saddened by the fate of downtown in a suburban era and suggests that the central business district will only be viable in the future if enough Americans come to define the good community in terms not of suburban acres but of downtown living. What would make this commendable book more persuasive is sustained analysis of how public policies have subsidized suburbanization and adversely affected the nation's cities.

Franklin and Marshall College

DAVID SCHUYLER

The American Dream: A Short History of an Idea That Shaped a Nation. By JIM CULLEN. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003. 214p. Notes on sources, index. \$25.)

This concise, engaging, fluently written book is part of a growing trend in historical publishing—the appearance of a new breed of short works aimed at undergraduates and the lay public. These books are designed to fill a void that has developed over the past thirty years as the historical profession has become increasingly specialized and most historians have devoted their energies to producing monographs and journal articles aimed at fellow historians. Daunted and at times stupefied by this more specialized and inaccessible product, much of the lay public has turned instead to popular writers like David McCullough or to new media like The History Channel to satisfy its interest in history. Books like Cullen's can be seen as an effort by professional historians to reassert their role as public intellectuals and reclaim the place once occupied by such figures as Richard Hofstadter, David Potter, and C. Vann Woodward. By building on and incorporating the insights of specialists, yet presenting them in a discursive style that is purposefully impressionistic and open-ended, Cullen and his comrades are developing a new synthetic idiom that may enable them to enlarge the audience for serious history without flattening or compromising its complexity.

Indeed, as Cullen makes clear from the outset, the American Dream is "a complex idea with manifold implications that can cut different ways" (pp. 6–7). The attention he pays to this variety—and to the ambiguities that have marked its various expressions—is one of the book's most impressive features. There is no single American Dream, Cullen notes, but rather multiple American Dreams, "their appeal simultaneously resting on their variety and their specificity" (p. 7). In chapters covering subjects as diverse as the Puritans, the Declaration of Independence, Abraham Lincoln and the self-made man, the struggle for racial equality, the appeal of home ownership, and the emergence of Hollywood and a culture of celebrity, Cullen provides us with a vivid sense of this variety and the

different contexts that inspired it. Yet he also makes us aware of themes and concerns that virtually all of these formulations share. The most important of these is a belief in human agency, which, for Cullen, is “the very core of the American Dream, the bedrock premise upon which all else depends.” Uniting the various American Dreams he examines is a powerful faith that “individuals have control over the course of their lives,” and that from these exertions a better life and perhaps even a better world is possible (p. 10).

Cullen is especially good in tracing particular versions of the American Dream over long periods of history and focusing on specific individuals or incidents that illuminate his main points. His chapter on the Declaration of Independence is particularly good, neatly summarizing questions about the document’s ambiguities and legacy that have been widely discussed but never in so cogent and concise a manner. The document’s salience becomes even more apparent a couple of chapters later, when Cullen turns his attention to racial inequality and the efforts of civil rights activists like Martin Luther King Jr. to see that the American promise of freedom and equality was extended to non-white citizens.

The weakest chapter is devoted to what Cullen calls the “Dream of the Coast,” a yearning for fame, fortune, and personal fulfillment without substantial effort, a version of the American Dream, especially potent in our own day, that Cullen associates with the gilded life of movie stars and celebrities. Though Cullen is perceptive in linking this modern expression of upward mobility to earlier quests for riches that inspired explorers, adventurers, and gamblers, he doesn’t pay enough attention to the changing historical context that shaped the culture of celebrity and the more expressive brand of individualism that spread throughout the United States in the twentieth century. Linking this dream to Warren Susman’s now shopworn “character to personality” thesis is simply insufficient and leaves the reader wishing for the sort of penetrating analysis that Cullen displays when discussing other subjects. Cullen is certainly correct to perceive a shift in the popular understanding of upward mobility in the twentieth century and recognize its relationship to celebrity. But it may be more accurate to view this shift as part of a broader transformation in which changes in the workplace, the diffusion of population to the suburbs, and the emergence of consumerism encouraged the widespread embrace of a distinctly modernist notion of selfhood that emphasized personal autonomy and individual self-expression, ideals seemingly more realizable in private life than in the rule-bound world of work.

Nevertheless, *The American Dream* is a formidable achievement that deserves a wide audience among historians as well as the general public. If nothing else, Cullen has reminded historians of what is at stake in their work—and what they might accomplish if they took their public responsibilities more seriously.

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