

BOOK REVIEWS

From Peace to Freedom: Quaker Rhetoric and the Birth of American Antislavery, 1657–1761. By BRYCCHAN CAREY. (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2012. 272 pp. Notes, bibliography, index. \$35.)

This well-written and informative book, distinguished by its careful attention to rhetoric, provides historical background for the more well-known narrative of American and British antislavery work of the later eighteenth century. In this exploration of early Quaker antislavery literature, Brycchan Carey argues that the “origins of most of the arguments made in the formalized antislavery campaigns that emerged from the 1770s onward can be found throughout writings produced by Friends in the century-long debate that took place from 1657–1761” (36).

The study of historical movements often demonstrates that by the time the goals of widespread social and political change have been achieved, early and crucial voices in the emerging movements have been forgotten. Carey has unearthed early Quaker antislavery voices and has composed a compelling narrative of their discursive history. Focusing on the development of a “discourse of antislavery,” with particular attention paid to the characteristic rhetorical maneuvers and patterns of thought in the texts and traditions he analyzes, Carey explores a lineage of antislavery discourse that links together writers who have often been perceived as voices in the wilderness. Generous and judicious in his use of quotations from these seventeenth- and eighteenth-century sources, including George Fox, William Edmundson, Alice Curwen, the 1688 Germantown Protest, George Keith, and John Hepburn, Carey demonstrates that “a sustained debate over slaveholding in fact subsisted . . . from at least the late seventeenth century” and argues that by the start of the eighteenth century antislavery sentiment “had a discursive existence” (25, 105).

In articulating the social and political dominance of Pennsylvania in the development of antislavery rhetoric, Carey suggests that the Quaker community became a crucial context for the growth of antislavery due in part to its “tight organization, congenial principles, culture of debate, and propensity to share ideas” (30). Among other topics, he considers theological and pragmatic arguments against slavery, the significance of writings of Ralph Sandiford and Benjamin Lay, the impact of the structure of the Society of Friends—in particular, the embedding of antislavery thought in the Quaker ritual of queries—and the significance

of London Yearly Meeting on the formulation of antislavery thought. He discusses influential writings by John Woolman and Anthony Benezet, and he argues that the 1754 Philadelphia Yearly Meeting *Epistle of Caution and Advice, concerning the Buying and Keeping of Slaves* “recapitulates in essence almost the entire Quaker debate on slavery since 1688” (193).

In this survey of early Quaker antislavery literature, which begins with writings on slavery in Barbados, Carey acknowledges that many Quakers themselves were implicated in the brutality of slavery, and he points to the conflict of thought within the Quaker community in Philadelphia Yearly Meeting during the 1730s, for example (162). He demonstrates that throughout the period he studies, Quaker concern was predominantly with halting the purchasing of “newly imported slaves” much more than with asking people “outright to stop buying slaves” or emancipating those who were already enslaved (178).

Antislavery activism and rhetoric began to coalesce and gain momentum in the 1760s and 1770s in a transatlantic context, and a significant part of the momentum can be attributed to the development of an antislavery discourse from the late seventeenth- through the mid-eighteenth century among Quakers—and, in a particular way, among Quakers with a Pennsylvania and a Philadelphia Yearly Meeting connection. This readable and important book is a welcome addition to the history of antislavery work.

Swarthmore College

ELLEN ROSS

The Cost of Liberty: The Life of John Dickinson. By WILLIAM MURCHISON. (Wilmington, DE: Intercollegiate Studies Institute, 2013. 252 pp. Notes, index. \$25.)

The title of William Murchison’s biography on John Dickinson (1732–1808) does not reveal the high aspirations the publisher, Intercollegiate Studies Institute (a conservative “educational organization” whose first president was William F. Buckley Jr.), has for this slim volume. “It has been more than a half century since a biography of John Dickinson appeared,” the book jacket claims, promising that Murchison’s work “offers a sorely needed reassessment of a great patriot and misunderstood Founder.” An introductory publisher’s note asserts that Murchison has “correct[ed] the record at last” (x). All these statements are untrue. The author completely ignores the most recent biography, Milton Flower’s *John Dickinson: Conservative Revolutionary* (1983), and there is no reassessment or correction because Murchison, a journalist, only reports what others have already argued. Yet, even while depending heavily on secondary sources, he largely neglects the scholarship of the last forty years that could have helped him offer a convincing and new portrait of Dickinson.

Murchison is not writing for historians but for those who have absorbed wrongheaded ideas about Dickinson from popular entertainment, especially the 1969 Broadway musical and 1972 film, *1776*, and HBO's 2008 miniseries *John Adams*. In the former, Dickinson is caricatured as a "gentleman-ruffian," in the latter, as "the specter at America's birthday festivities" (2). Murchison appropriately counters these inaccuracies, agreeing with Forrest and Ellen Shapiro McDonald's assessment in *Requiem: Variations on Eighteenth-Century Themes* (1988) that Dickinson is "the most underrated of all the Founders" (2). If the goal of the book was merely to inform by pushing back against this counterfactual Hollywood Dickinson, then it offers enough evidence to do so. But Murchison's account does not add up to the promised reassessment.

In his eagerness to discard labels that can "disguise subtleties" and make for "bad history," Murchison also eschews coherence (5). His Dickinson comes from a conglomeration of outdated secondary sources, over half of which were published before 1970, and he relies heavily on Charles Stillé's *The Life and Times of John Dickinson* (1891). Thus, Murchison's Dickinson is alternately a lawyer, an historian, a philosopher, and the "American Burke," but no analysis binds these disparate strands together. When Murchison then seeks to answer the essential question of why Dickinson did not sign the Declaration of Independence, he first resorts to the historian/Burke line of thinking. "Dickinson's thought rested upon a foundation of traditional, inherited rights," Murchison explains, and, like Burke, Dickinson ultimately "failed to convince those that needed convincing" (150). Murchison then turns to Jane Calvert's *Quaker Constitutionalism and the Political Thought of John Dickinson* (2009), explaining that, as "Calvert would have it," Dickinson's actions make sense when "viewed 'in the light of Quaker theologico-politics'" (151). It is puzzling why Murchison cites Calvert here after dismissing her thesis in an earlier footnote, rationalizing: "I find it fruitful . . . to speak of Dickinson's convictions as framed essentially by his historical knowledge, legal learning, and personal love of liberty" (26n11). Here, Dickinson's "Quaker origins" are offered as a plausible explanation of his actions in 1776, but Murchison does not explain how that meshes with his alleged Burkeanism (153). The end result is confusion, perhaps because Murchison believes that Dickinson is "paradoxical," even though Dickinson himself maintained that he had always been consistent (5).

Murchison's narrative, like the scholarship on which he draws, is limited. He focuses almost exclusively on Dickinson's political activities during the Revolution, 1765 to 1787. The 1730s to the 1750s are covered in eight pages, and 1788 to 1808, a period when Dickinson was still an active political figure and author, in seventeen. Dickinson's law practice, family life, and business activities are neglected. Murchison's account of the Revolution is likewise uncomplicated by the rich historiography of the past decades, a significant portion of which has focused on Pennsylvania. Such a narrow view allows Murchison to make simplistic assertions such as: "the American colonists, in 1776, had British names; they had also

British memories" (143). Other passages reveal that the reappraisal ISI envisions is not historiographical but ideological, pulling Dickinson in line with the modern conservative values that, its website asserts, "are rarely taught in the classroom." For example, in his discussion of the Pennsylvania assembly's opposition to independence, Murchison tells us: "if the rich are slower to political outrage than are the poor, one plausible explanation is that the rich look for a higher vantage point over the conditions essential to general prosperity" (123).

Writing about a forgotten founder is an arduous task, and one that can only be accomplished by convincingly resolving the multiple historical and historiographical problems that plague the historical actor. As admirable as Murchison and ISI's intentions are, this book does not do Dickinson justice.

Nipissing University

NATHAN R. KOZUSKANICH

To Live an Antislavery Life: Personal Politics and the Antebellum Black Middle Class. By ERICA L. BALL. (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2012. 200 pp. Illustrations, notes, index. Cloth, \$69.95; paper, \$22.95.)

Erica L. Ball's *To Live an Antislavery Life* is an outstanding study of the effect of black print culture on the lives and antislavery activities of "elite and aspiring" African Americans in the northern United States during the three decades preceding the Civil War. Ball seeks to challenge "three long-standing assumptions about the personal politics of the antebellum middle class" (5). First, she rejects the limitation of black middle-class politics to the politics of respectability, as well as the premise that respectability was located at the conservative end of the political spectrum. Secondly, Ball refutes the notion that messages about respectability in black print culture were aimed primarily at lower-class African Americans. Lastly, Ball finds that the promotion of respectable behavior among the black middle class represented more than either "a narrow political strategy or a public political performance" to prove African Americans' worthiness to whites (2). Importantly, though, Ball's book goes beyond a discussion of the politics of respectability and its effect on the black middle class. Instead, Ball shows the ways in which elite and aspiring African Americans conceptualized their own political activities and how these conceptualizations, in turn, became integral to the black middle-class identity. Through a creative analysis of African American print culture—represented by a variety of sources, including letters, personal narratives, convention proceedings, didactic essays, humorous stories, and sentimental vignettes—Ball demonstrates how this literature created a set of black middle-class ideals that connected personal and domestic concerns with antislavery activism.

The book is divided into five substantial chapters, each organized around advice directed toward elite and aspiring African Americans. In the first chapter,

Ball suggests that black conduct writers emphasized self-improvement as integral to the larger process of personal transformation necessary for involvement in the antislavery movement. The second chapter heightens awareness of how the slave narratives of Frederick Douglass, James W. C. Pennington, Samuel Ringgold Ward, and Solomon Northup offered positive examples of black manhood for African American men and boys. Chapter three highlights the ways in which slavery affected both the virtue of African American females and the independence of African American males and reminded the northern free black population of the precariousness of their own lives in American society. Ball reminds readers in chapter four of the vital political role of the African American family, characterized by activists as the “primary training ground” for the values necessary for American blacks to maintain independence.

The final chapter, centered around an innovative assessment of the *Anglo-African Magazine*, represents the book’s most groundbreaking contribution. Ball demonstrates how this publication helped redefine black political activity before the Civil War by helping free blacks articulate a more radical and militant antislavery life. Contributors to this publication did not limit their view to goings-on in the United States, but praised Caribbean revolutionaries such as Toussaint-Louverture and Jean-Jacques Dessalines, connecting their struggles rhetorically to the antislavery movement in the United States as well as to classical Roman and nineteenth-century European republican movements. Ball’s ingenious reading of this publication enlarges the geographic scope of her study and enriches our understanding of abolitionist rhetoric.

To Live an Antislavery Life features a strong interpretive framework that provides a new lens through which scholars may examine the black middle class and its involvement in the antislavery movement. This text is indispensable to anyone interested in free black society in the North. Perhaps the only omission in an otherwise well-structured monograph is a more thorough examination of transnational influences on the movement. *To Live an Antislavery Life* explores subjects that deserve more attention and merits the attention of scholars interested in issues of the African Americans and their role in the antislavery cause.

University of Delaware

KATRINA ANDERSON

On the Edge of Freedom: the Fugitive Slave Issue in South Central Pennsylvania, 1820–1870. By DAVID G. SMITH. (New York: Fordham University Press, 2013. 344 pp. Appendices, notes, archives consulted, index. \$70.)

David G. Smith’s *On the Border of Freedom* is a lucid analysis of the complex, fluid and ever-changing meanings of slavery and freedom on the liminal border of South Central Pennsylvania, the area encompassing Adams, Cumberland, and

Franklin Counties. In this study, which covers the 1830s up to 1870, Smith presents a newly nuanced portrait of the region, long viewed as a stronghold of abolitionist activity and the seat of the Underground Railroad. Informed by antislavery Quaker traditions, it was also marked by a tradition of slaveholding, which petered out after 1819; frequented by slave owners and slave catchers, it was also inhabited by moderates and conservatives on the state and national level who hotly debated the slavery question. Through a skillful reconstruction of this precarious physical and ideological terrain, Smith has written an important addition to the literature on the development of antislavery thought and activism in the North.

Slavery's demise in South Central Pennsylvania was slow and halting. A gradual abolition law was passed in 1780, but the institution persisted into the 1830s. The area's mixture of white ethnics, Scots-Irish, Germans, and Quakers proved a lively mix. The largest proportion of blacks in the state resided in the region, although they never represented more than 10 percent of its population. This free black community aided fugitive slaves, who utilized the region's well-known network of safe houses and varied escape routes. At the same time, the area attracted slave owners and catchers and was a fertile field for slave kidnappers.

As the national crisis over slavery intensified in the 1830s, South Central Pennsylvania emerged as a battleground of sorts. The early career of future Radical Republican Thaddeus Stevens, long viewed as a fervent supporter of antislavery causes, played out in this area. Smith shows how Stevens' politics reflected the complexity of the slavery issue in the region; his antislavery positions were initially tentative, gradually strengthening as contestation over personal liberty laws and fugitive slaves intensified in the 1840s and 1850s.

Smith also looks at support for antislavery measures in the region and the establishment of the Pennsylvania Abolition Society. As he demonstrates, the record of antislavery petitions was spotty in South Central Pennsylvania, reflecting the fractious nature of antislavery agitation in an area with liberal and conservative elements. As Smith suggests, the increased controversy over the expansion of slavery and free soil allowed antislavery advocates to frame Pennsylvania as a land of freedom. Smith examines several Pennsylvania slave cases involving fugitive slaves—including *Prigg v. Pennsylvania* (1842), the *Kitty Payne* case (1845), and *Kaufman v. Weekly* (1847–52)—illustrating convincingly that the success of antislavery proponents in these cases strengthened Southern resolve to construct a national Fugitive Slave Law, which came to fruition as a part of the Compromise of 1850.

The 1850s also witnessed physical confrontations over slavery, such as the Christiana Riot, in which slaveholder Edward Gorush was killed and his nephew severely beaten as they attempted unsuccessfully to reclaim several enslaved persons. The riot and its aftermath portended further battles. The national debate on the Kansas-Nebraska Act, the Dred Scott decision, and John Brown's raid on Harpers Ferry deeply divided the state's antislavery proponents and set

off a vociferous debate about the meanings of slavery and freedom in South Central Pennsylvania. The collapse of the Liberty, Free Soil, and Know-Nothing Parties set the stage for Democratic and Republican contestation on the issue. Meanwhile, shifts in the political atmosphere led to a petition campaign to repeal Pennsylvania's personal liberty laws.

During the Civil War, South Central Pennsylvania became ground zero for the conflict over the meanings of slavery and freedom. Lee's invasion of Pennsylvania, which culminated in the Battle of Gettysburg in 1863, had calamitous impacts on the black community. The Confederate army rounded up African Americans and sent them South. In the postbellum period, the decimated antebellum black population was replaced largely with Southern migrants, who experienced racism, discrimination, and, in 1869, an attempted lynching.

David Smith's *On the Edge of Freedom* is an important addition to the literature on antislavery in the North. By linking the antebellum and postbellum trajectories of slavery and freedom, readers can understand and appreciate the complexity of antislavery sentiment in a border region influenced by starkly opposed ideologies. South Central Pennsylvania proved neither a beacon of hope nor a bastion of freedom. Instead, it reflected and refracted the nation's uneasy and unfinished sensibilities on issues of race in the antebellum and postbellum years, residues of which are still felt in the present day.

Alcorn State University

STEPHEN G. HALL

The Philadelphia Nativist Riots: Irish Kensington Erupts. By KENNETH W. MILANO. (Charleston, SC: The History Press, 2013. 160 pp. Illustrations, appendix, bibliography, index. Paper, \$19.99.)

Kenneth W. Milano has written a local history of the Third Ward, West Kensington neighborhood (St. Michael Parish) that became the site for three days of violent clashes between nativist rioters and Irish Catholic residents in May 1844. Milano, a lifetime resident and local historian of Kensington, dedicates the book to "those Irish Catholics, known and unknown, who gave their lives for their religion" during the riots, so that "their memory will never be forgotten" (5). The book is written for readers with an interest in a street-by-street, residence-by-residence study of this neighborhood. There's much to be gained from an in-depth look at this small area (about four square blocks) where nearly all the fighting, shooting, and arson occurred during the May riots. Yet at times, this is local history with an antiquarian flavor. Readers are unlikely to acquire a greater understanding of the interrelationship of this enclave of Irish immigrant weavers to long-term developments in Philadelphia's history, but they will discover the dimensions of the Master Street School and learn that it had "detached unheated

toilets,” that a Colonel Rambo was hired as clerk of the Nanny Goat Market (which was open most days until 3:00 p.m.), and that the sister of nativist martyr George Shiffler afterward lived in Kensington with her uncle (36).

Most of the book is devoted to a meticulous retelling of the roughly seventy-two hours of violent skirmishes that took place within the blocks surrounding the market, the school, and St. Michael’s church and convent. Milano builds his narrative on newspaper accounts and the trial evidence. The book includes no footnotes, so future scholars cannot trace any of the details of his very specific reconstruction of this period of urban warfare. One of Milano’s original contributions is his claim that the violence between nativists and Irish Catholics was mostly the work of a relatively small group of about seventy-five well-armed fighters on each side. The thousands of nativists who gathered in Center City for rallies and who marched en masse to Kensington generally kept out of the fray, cordoning off the neighborhood and beating up occasional Irish residents who fled into their grasp.

By focusing his attention exclusively on the May riots in Kensington, Milano only tells one half of the history of Philadelphia’s nativist violence in 1844, bypassing the riots that rocked the Southwark district in July. Although his design was to write a neighborhood history, his intensely local focus on Kensington draws no comparisons between the violence in that district and the rioting that took place only a few months later. The riots were both a citywide conflict and a neighborhood-specific fight. Three of the eight nativists killed—and many of the wounded—in the Kensington riots lived in Southwark. This volume reminds us that a long-forgotten section of Kensington was once the site for a clash between religious bigotry and immigrant self-preservation, but it is unlikely to supplant any of the existing scholarly literature on nativism and Philadelphia’s riots.

Swarthmore College

BRUCE DORSEY

Making Freedom: The Underground Railroad and the Politics of Slavery. By R. J. M. BLACKETT. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2013. 136 pp. Notes, index. \$27.95.)

Richard Blackett has spent a decade gathering and analyzing newspaper accounts, fugitive slave advertisements, personal narratives, and other sources associated with the Underground Railroad, accumulating a massive database of information along the way. Shorter essays and presentations have appeared during that time, but this volume represents his efforts at providing a larger synthesis of his research. *Making Freedom* is a result of a series of talks Blackett gave for the Steven and Janice Brose Lectures in the Civil War Era at Penn State University. His goal is to illustrate how the actions of escaping slaves and their helpers not

only impacted local politics but had a ripple effect nationally. Blackett uses case studies of individual escapees or their supporters as the vehicles for his presentation. This slim book focuses on the stories of Henry Banks of Virginia, fugitive slave cases from southeastern Pennsylvania, and northerners, such as Seth Conklin, who ventured south to aid slave escapes.

Blackett's study reinforces the important role enslaved and free blacks played in the Underground Railroad's successes. But he focuses in this work not only on their decision to resist slavery and slave catchers but on the impact of their actions on abolitionists and slaveholders alike. He argues that the collaboration between enslaved and free blacks, as well as that between black communities and whites, influenced the national discussion about the 1850 fugitive slave law. Blackett also examines the psychological impact of slaveholders' increasing awareness that blacks and whites were joining forces to travel south to aid runaways. He suggests that the aiding and abetting of runaways by outsiders increased the tension between border state residents and profoundly impacted political discussions around this issue in the years leading up to the Civil War.

Also of importance to Blackett was fugitives' awareness of what they were doing in choosing to escape. They did not take this step lightly. According to Blackett, they "knew why they were leaving and where they were going. They were engaging in self-emancipation" (31).

These are not necessarily new revelations, but the strength of the book is in the many new individual stories which Blackett brings to bear on these concepts. He offers insights into the thinking and experiences of freedom seekers and their abettors, as opposed to politicians and even leading abolitionists. The concept of freedom within the African American community at this time was particularly powerful, and Blackett ably illustrates how black Americans sought to gain freedom and protection for themselves and for others in their community. The compiled database from which he draws his examples is broad and rich; one hopes that at some point Blackett will make it available for other researchers to explore.

Making Freedom is a well-written and informative volume that provides valuable insights into the thinking undergirding the actions of freedom seekers and their supporters. It expands the body of knowledge surrounding the Underground Railroad and its impact on the nation through the eyewitness accounts from which it draws. Blackett's work augments our understanding of freedom and the Underground Railroad for the African American community in the years leading up to the Civil War.

George Mason University

SPENCER R. CREW

Mira Lloyd Dock and the Progressive Era Conservation Movement. By SUSAN RIMBY. (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2012. 224 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$64.95.)

The women of the conservation movement are beginning to earn their due attention from biographers and historians. To the work of Jack Davis, Dyana Furmansky, Tina Gianquitto, Nancy Unger, and others we can now add Susan Rimby's admirable biography of Pennsylvanian Mira Lloyd Dock.

Rimby argues that Dock played a pivotal role in the Progressive Era conservation movement by serving as a bridge between the male professional conservationists and the largely female urban reformers who implemented many of the experts' policies on a local level throughout Pennsylvania. As a university-trained botanist, Dock enjoyed gravitas with the professionals. She carried on an extensive correspondence with many of the leading conservation figures of her day and was particularly close to fellow Pennsylvanian Gifford Pinchot. Her appointment to the Pennsylvania Forest Commission in 1901 affirmed her standing. Dock was not mere window dressing; she conducted intensive outreach to amateur groups and made significant contributions to the success of the Pennsylvania State Forest Academy. As a circuit lecturer and influential force in the General Federation of Women's Clubs, Dock translated the concepts of the professional conservationists into the concrete reform objectives implemented throughout Pennsylvania in the early decades of the twentieth century. Her work in her home city of Harrisburg served as an inspiration in both the Keystone State and the nation.

Despite impressive credentials, gender defined Dock's life and career. The early death of her mother thrust Dock, the eldest child, into the maternal role for her siblings, a position she did not relinquish to pursue her own interests until she was forty-two years old. She possessed a hardboiled, utilitarian view of natural resource management and was on constant guard against being perceived as "sentimental," a somewhat derogatory code word at the time that implied overly emotional feminine sensibilities. Dock did not always resist gender stereotypes, however, and Rimby argues that although her subject was a suffragist, she was not exactly what we would describe today as a feminist. For example, Dock subscribed to gender-defined professional roles and believed that only men could be foresters. While she broke a glass ceiling in obtaining appointment to the Pennsylvania Forest Commission (becoming perhaps the first woman in the world to hold such a position), she was deprived a seat on many other boards, including the Harrisburg Park Commission, simply because she was a woman.

This is a solid work of primary research based on Dock's papers in the Library of Congress, various collections from the rich holdings of historical societies scattered throughout Pennsylvania, and other manuscript collections. It is firmly grounded in the current historiography of both the Progressive Era conservation movement and women of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Any

historian studying these areas would improve his or her understanding the era by reading Susan Rimby's *Mira Lloyd Dock and the Progressive Era Conservation Movement*.

Front Range Community College

GREGORY J. DEHLER

Seeking the Greatest Good: The Conservation Legacy of Gifford Pinchot. By CHAR MILLER. (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2013. 232 pp. Illustrations, notes, index. Paper, \$24.95.)

One might think this book would be a dry recital of policies, but, on the contrary, it is an engaging story of how the gift of a famous family's home and historic legacy to the US government was received and fostered over a bumpy fifty-year history. As the biographer of Gifford Pinchot, Char Miller is an excellent choice to tell this continuing story.

Gifford Pinchot (1865–1946) is best known as the Forest Service chief who created the modern National Forest system, with the USDA Forest Service to manage it, and who also helped establish forestry as a profession. In the early 1960s his son, Gifford Bryce Pinchot, was considering donating the family estate, Grey Towers, in Milford, PA, to the Forest Service, which, in partnership with the Conservation Foundation, a private conservation organization, would create the Pinchot Institute for Conservation. After long negotiations among these groups, the gift was accepted at a public dedication by President John F. Kennedy just weeks before his assassination.

The book raises the intriguing question of why an urban-oriented person like Kennedy would even be interested in natural resource conservation. The author shows how a personal relationship with some members of the Pinchot family, a desire to improve life in the United States, and raw political calculations influenced Kennedy's decision.

Almost immediately after the dedication, the problems began. Disagreements arose over what the focus of the Pinchot Institute programs should be, who should guide it, and how effectiveness and relevancy could be insured. The Pinchot family was also concerned with how the Forest Service would manage the Grey Towers estate and its priceless furnishings. During this period the Forest Service underwent tremendous upheavals in its focus and policies as the result of new environmental legislation, public protests, court decisions, and changes in presidential policy. Miller shows how each of these challenges affected Grey Towers and the Pinchot Institute activities.

Perhaps the greatest challenge of all was to find a consistent federal funding source. The lack of funding put in doubt the physical survival of Grey Towers. Fortunately, over time, Forest Service officials and sympathetic US representatives

found ways to solve the problem. Outside contributions have been a huge help for maintenance and programming. Several innovative Forest Service managers worked hard to restore Grey Towers and make it an important historical destination. The book also shows how the Pinchot Institute eventually found an effective voice promoting forest conservation.

Pennsylvania readers will find that this book offers interesting details of the lives of two-time governor Gifford Pinchot and his politically active wife, Cornelia Bryce Pinchot. It is inspiring to see how the later generations of Pinchots have continued the family's conservation activism. Efforts to conserve the Delaware River valley are also discussed.

With its warm and lucid style and important story of collaboration for conservation, this book comes highly recommended.

Penn State Mont Alto

PETER E. LINEHAN

Black Citymakers: How "The Philadelphia Negro" Changed Urban America. By MARCUS ANTHONY HUNTER. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013. 304 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$35.)

Drawing inspiration from W. E. B. Du Bois's 1899 landmark book, *The Philadelphia Negro*, sociologist Marcus Hunter focuses his study on the Black Seventh Ward, the stretch of Lombard and South Streets between Seventh Street and the Schuylkill River that was predominantly an African American neighborhood from the late nineteenth to mid-twentieth centuries. Hunter organizes the book around several "crucial historical moments": the failure of two black banks in 1925, the collapse of an apartment building on South Street in 1937, the decades-long battle against the Crosstown Expressway, the establishment in 1975 and subsequent expansion of a cultural festival on South Street known as Odunde, and the "flash mob" of 2010, when approximately two thousand black youths converged on South Street. He uses these episodes to illustrate his central argument that Philadelphia's black residents have been agents of change, challenging the dominant image of blacks as victims of urban renewal and as a politically homogeneous group. Hunter identifies four ways in which blacks used their agency and showed their political power: through framing public discourse on issues such as affordable housing and urban renewal; through voting and promoting black candidates for public office; through mobilizing residents via letter-writing campaigns, public meetings, and rallies; and through secondary migration whereby black residents moved out from the historic Black Seventh and Thirteenth Wards to transform neighborhoods in North, West, and South Philadelphia.

Hunter relies extensively on the rich primary sources from Philadelphia's many special collections and newspapers, including the *Philadelphia Tribune*, to

produce what he describes as a “historical ethnography,” a blending of historical narrative and ethnography that “helps to elucidate notions of causality emergent from the communities, people, and organizations often made invisible in the general thrust of the historical record” (222). For better or worse, what Hunter’s study is not is a conventional urban history, and reading his methodological appendix goes a long way in managing expectations of what the book does well. Particularly in the chapter about the Crosstown Expressway, which features the heroic efforts of Hawthorne neighborhood leader Alice Lipscomb, Hunter’s “on the ground” perspective works well to show what political agency looks like. Unlike *The Philadelphia Negro*, in which Du Bois speaks with a fairly detached voice and reports endless descriptive statistics, Hunter selectively offers detailed and often moving accounts of the human cost of the structural challenges Black Seventh Ward residents faced. But in doing so, Hunter gives relatively little attention to those persistent, discriminatory structures that often undermined black agency and efforts to improve social and economic conditions for blacks. Hunter chooses to focus his final chapter on the 2010 “flash mob” on South Street, an event that ultimately lacks the kind of long-term historical significance of the other “crucial moments” he features. Recent efforts to improve the public school system, including the creation of charter schools by local black leaders such as music mogul Kenny Gamble, civil rights leader Walter Palmer, and state senator Hardy Williams, might have provided a clearer example of the ongoing struggle of “Black Citymakers” to contend with structural challenges. Hunter concludes that the Black Seventh Ward inspired a new generation of black citymakers but ultimately lives on only in the collective memory of black Philadelphians. The reader is left with a more complicated picture of how the Philadelphia Du Bois visited in 1896 transformed into the twenty-first-century city characterized by growth and great optimism for some and persistent poverty, violence, and failed institutions for many others. “In this way,” Hunter explains, “we see a more dynamic city; one in which black Americans are both disproportionately disadvantaged by structural changes in the city, while also actively constructing approaches to challenge, navigate and/or reconcile such changes” (216).

University of Pennsylvania

AMY HILLIER

The Nicest Kids in Town: “American Bandstand,” Rock ’n’ Roll, and the Struggle for Civil Rights in 1950s Philadelphia. By MATTHEW F. DELMONT. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012. 312 pp. Illustrations, notes, index. Cloth, \$65; paper, \$27.95.)

American Bandstand host Dick Clark made it seem as though there was no better place and time to be a young music fan than Philadelphia in the 1950s—

assuming the fan had access to a television. Matthew F. Delmont's new book, *The Nicest Kids in Town*, argues, however, that "the real story of *American Bandstand* and Philadelphia in the postwar era is much more complicated than Clark suggests" (2). In contrast to Clark's insistence that the Philly-shot *American Bandstand* was racially integrated, and thus a pioneer of the civil rights movement when it became nationally televised in 1957, Delmont shows that *Bandstand* mirrored Philadelphia's segregation until the show's 1964 move to Hollywood.

Using an impressive range of evidence, including news reports, oral histories, and archival materials, the author deconstructs the legend of *American Bandstand*'s integration, replacing it with a powerful account of history reconfigured to mythologize the program and its famed host. Through elaboration on several thematic areas, *The Nicest Kids in Town* recounts the real racial conflicts epitomized and omitted by *American Bandstand*.

One of these themes is how physical place, including the television studio's neighborhood and the initial broadcasting region, played a role in keeping the show's dancers and in-house studio audience white. For instance, in order to appeal to local advertisers and audiences, despite rapidly changing racial demographics of the area, broadcaster WFIL-TV kept its on-camera teens white and supposedly nonthreatening to the masses. Likewise, another portion of the book explores how *American Bandstand* teen culture paralleled the segregated reality of the Philadelphia school district.

The book also explores how other local, teen-oriented music television and radio programs explicitly tackled race relations. Here, Delmont effectively demonstrates that *American Bandstand*'s segregation should not be easily excused as unavoidable, but can be understood as being generated by commercial and social forces. Through analysis of various artifacts, including Clark's own writings, a final section explores the nostalgic place of *American Bandstand* in national memory. Delmont also situates the program amid the modern works of pop culture it presumably influenced, such as the TV show *American Dreams* and the movie/Broadway show *Hairspray*.

The Nicest Kids in Town is an important study for its aim to amend perceptions of *American Bandstand*'s place in American culture. The author convincingly corrects the show's reputation and Clark's glorified characterizations, acknowledging the significance of those misrepresentations in the context of the American civil rights narrative. Eager readers may desire more analysis about the cultural impact of those misrepresentations. Nevertheless, drawing on ample historic evidence, Delmont shows that while *American Bandstand* was on the forefront of youth culture trends, it was not exactly the innovative leader of equal rights many have believed it to be. This work provides a valuable advancement in research on the history of American music television and uniquely ties this contribution to the analysis of race, civil rights, youth culture, and Philadelphia's entertainment and media industries. Academics and other curious readers inter-

ested in these issues will find *The Nicest Kids in Town* an engaging and informative book.

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