chief justice (1777-1799), and three-term governor (1799-1808).

This work challenges a general view of McKean as a trimmer, an egotistical timeserver whose ideology shifted to support his single-minded pursuit of office. In its stead there emerges the picture of a man whose public life was shaped by long-held, immutable, republican convictions, many of which were not widely shared. What had the surface appearance of trimming was his defense of these less popular ideals, such as an independent and powerful judiciary, nepotism, plural officeholding, while his fellow republicans were bent on instituting a more responsive, cheaper court system and rotation in office.

McKean is an excellent example of the committed republican in public life. Like many of his contemporaries, he never credited his opponents the right honorably to disagree. In his opinion opposition sprang from corrupt, not pure motives. In advocacy or defense the republicans fought a no-quarter battle on the side of right. They were neither loving nor lovable men. They were contentious, and probably virtuous, but they certainly were not noble.

The author thoroughly demonstrates the impact of republican values on McKean's practices, but is not equally successful in showing McKean's influence on the ideology of his generation. Rowe's clarity of exposition is admirable — not a mean accomplishment, as the term "republican" had multiple meanings, and at one point three were in use at one time. Enjoyment of the narrative is marred by indications that the manuscript was not ready for press — the too frequent misspelled word, stylistic inconsistencies in capitalization, and, in one instance, the description of future Pennsylvania Governor Snyder's supporters in the assembly as "congressmen."

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In 1944, Gunnar Myrdal in The American Dilemma found the key to The Negro Problem and Modern Democracy (his subtitle) to be the clash of the idealism of white Americans' creed with their racial
attitudes. Myrdal was describing the white Americans he observed in 1944, but the central dilemma was the one faced by Thomas Jefferson for over a half century, with, in his life, the added difficulty of reconciling slavery with the "American creed" — a creed which (to follow both Jefferson and Lincoln) dedicated the nation "to the proposition that all men are created equal."

Jefferson expressed the dilemma of Americans over slavery in a statement in 1820 from which Miller has derived his title: "We have the wolf by the ears; and we can neither hold him, nor safely let him go. Justice is in one scale, and self-preservation in the other."

Slavery, Jefferson always admitted, was unjust, but he never could contemplate freedom for the slaves unless accompanied by their removal from the United States. This view was based on his belief (surely more than "suspicion") in black inferiority, on his awareness of even stronger views of most Americans, and on his certainty the blacks would never forgive the injustices of slavery. (Jefferson would never have accepted Stanley Elkins's argument that slavery turned the slaves into docile "Black Sambo" personalities.)

Miller pictures Jefferson up to 1776 as being strongly antislavery, noting that in his *Summary View* (1774) he assailed not only the slave trade but insisted abolition of slavery was the "desire in these colonies." In 1776, Jefferson suggested a method of gradual emancipation for the new state constitution of Virginia, and, of course, wrote the famous condemnation of George III for the slave trade in a passage in the Declaration of Independence deleted by Congress. Miller even suggests the "possibility" that Jefferson omitted "property" from the enumerated rights of man in order "to make the Declaration of Independence a charter of freedom for slaves."

After 1776, Jefferson had little to say publicly on slavery. The war years were, of course, no time to stir up divisive issues. In the eighties he found his suggested provision for excluding slavery in the Old Northwest (Ordinance of 1784) failing to receive the support of any others in the Virginia delegation and, indeed, of only one other Southern delegate. This, plus the cool reception of his fellow planters to the strictures on slavery in his *Notes on Virginia*, published in 1785, made him very cautious thereafter of acting or even speaking publicly.

The time was not yet ready for action. In the 1790s, his political base was still to a great degree Southern. In these years and those of his presidency he was busy battling "monocrats" and their English allies.
After his presidency, relieved of political responsibilities, perhaps the time was now ripe at least to act the elder statesman and try to influence public opinion that he believed had to be changed before anything could be done. But no, now he was too old, Jefferson told a young Virginian who had invited him to speak out in the anti-slavery cause.

Jefferson was bitter about the Northern agitation over Missouri, which threatened the Union. The time had apparently not yet come even to limit the growth of slavery, although he wrote in 1821 that he was still as convinced as it had been "written in the Book of Fate . . . that these people are to be free."

The year before Jefferson's death in 1825 Lafayette visited his old friend. Noting an increase of racial prejudice in America, Lafayette tried to persuade Jefferson to use his prestige to call for the education of the slaves as a preparation for emancipation. Jefferson pleaded his age (he was eighty-two), but did agree to support teaching the slaves to read. Writing, however, was another matter; the ability to forge passes would undermine the institution of slavery! To this the radical of 1776 had come in fifty years. Slavery was doomed, but nothing should be done to undermine the institution — to advance the moment of doom.

Only two weeks before his death Jefferson defended his policy: "A good cause is often injured more by ill-timed efforts of its friends than by the arguments of enemies. Persuasion, perseverance, and patience are the best advocates in questions depending on the will of theirs." Perhaps. But in the previous forty years Jefferson had made no public efforts at persuasion, and if he had persevered, it was in ignoring the issue.

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It is surprising that Oliver Hazard Perry has not had more biographers. His victory over the British in 1813 is the stuff of which