

BOOK REVIEWS

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The World at Their Fingertips: Eighteenth-Century British Two-Sheet Double-Hemisphere World Maps. GEOFF ARMITAGE with ASHLEY BAYNTON-WILLIAMS. London: Sylvia Ioannou Foundation and the British Library, 2012. Pp. 262, maps, illustrations. \$65.00 cloth. ISBN 978-0-7123-5877-4.

The World at Their Fingertips provides a detailed and thorough study of the peculiar flourishing of two-sheet double-hemisphere maps in British society during the eighteenth century. Bringing his vast expertise as curator of maps at the British Library to bear, Armitage explores the production and consumption of this unique cartographic style. Accompanying his extensive research are 150 color plates and maps, which serve to both support the historical analysis and dazzle the reader independent of the argument.

During the long eighteenth century, bracketed in this work by the years 1680 and 1807, a number of British publishers financed and printed double-hemisphere world maps set on conjoined sheets. Although maps of this size – more commonly identified as elephant folio – had antecedents in France, Germany, and The Netherlands, Armitage argues that two-sheet double-hemisphere maps evolved into a uniquely British style of map production peculiar to its period and place. These publishers, it is argued, identified a burgeoning market for the conspicuous consumption of such elaborate maps and produced their maps specifically for an affluent, socially rising class of consumers who sought to engage Enlightenment ideals but were ultimately indiscriminate of scientific accuracy.

The authors note that elephant folio map prints originated on the Continent with the *Atlas Nouveau* and the work of Alexis-Hubert Jaillot, but were later introduced to England by William Berry. It was Herman Moll, John Senex, and Charles Price, among others, who popularized the style in England. Especially notable is the importance of émigré engravers and printers who moved to Britain following religious upheaval on the Continent. While early examples of this style of map were scientifically accurate, plates were copied for so long that these maps lost their scientific credentials and transformed into purely decorative prints, status symbols for a curious public unable to discern the inaccuracies of these early plates some fifty years on. This is a story, as Armitage quips, of map production at a time when “money became more important than scientific and geographic accuracy” (p. 235). Curiously, Armitage also finds that while the style flourished in Britain for over a century, no long-term counterpart may be identified in Europe.

Despite Armitage’s conclusive argument, this work represents the first attempt to consider examples of this style of map as a cohesive group. Their cohesion appears somewhat naturally, however, as many of the examples are from the British Library’s collection. Armitage explains the novelty of his grouping as owing to examples being previously obscured by their inclusion within general atlases, by the diversity of examples between different publishers, and by the rarity of extant examples of the style. By tracing the evolution of the cartographic style alongside the rise of the consumer class that would create the market for these maps, Armitage effectively shows how the decorative nature of two-sheet double-hemisphere maps is a key aspect of their unique history and explains their contemporary scarcity. The cohesion is also supported through the inclusion of a fully illustrated cartobibliography of twenty-four maps.

A notable strength of the work is its treatment of the map trade in eighteenth-century Britain. This aspect of the work most clearly shows the impact of Armitage's collaborator, Ashley Baynton-Williams, and echoes findings from the previously published *British Map Engravers* (Rare Book Society, 2011). By exploring map production as a reaction to market influences, this work rightly provokes the reader to consider the commercial relationships a newly affluent class fostered with publishers. The demographic and economic growth that surrounded the port of London following the monarchy's restoration fed a market for world maps that illustrated Britain's expanding commercial and imperial reach. No less, it was this class's high demand for decorative evidence of their enlightened status, but low appreciation for scientific accuracy, which drove the trade in two-sheet double-hemisphere maps. The authors imply it was this unique relationship that developed between British map dealers and the consumer class that allowed this unique map style to find a niche home in Britain, but not in Europe. The contributions here to ongoing discussions of materiality and Enlightenment should be self-evident.

Armitage's study raises a number of provocative questions about map production and consumption in eighteenth-century Britain. He has identified a fascinating collection, thereby opening avenues of inquiry that are much deserving of further study. This work likely exhausts much of the interest in British two-sheet double-hemisphere maps, but the questions it raises about materiality and scientific knowledge in the Enlightenment, about the commercialization and popularization of cartography during this period, and about nationalized styles of map production may yet bear more fruit. For those interested in eighteenth-century British mapping, the lavish images alone are worth closer investigation.

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Animal Cities: Beastly Urban Histories. PETER ATKINS, editor. Farnham: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2012. Pp. xiii+279, maps, diagrams, index. £65.00 hardcover. ISBN 978-1-4094-4655-2.

Over a century ago the French entomologist Jean-Henri Fabre could lament that history "celebrates the battlefields whereon we meet our death, [but] it scorns to speak of the ploughed fields whereby we thrive; it knows the names of the kings' bastards, [but] it cannot tell us the origin of wheat" (*The Life of the Caterpillar*; Doss, Mead and Company, Inc., 1916). Nowadays, however, humanistic food scholarship is so pervasive that one may legitimately worry about an imminent dearth of alternative food movements, pastoralist countercultures, terroir traditions and heirloom varieties left to investigate.

One remaining opportunity for meaningful research, Durham University geographer Peter Atkins notes in the preface to *Animal Cities: Beastly Urban Histories*, is the past significance and eventual disappearance of urban livestock and especially the "extraordinary animal-intense districts" of large nineteenth century European and North American cities (p. 105). Building on a session convened at the 2006 European Urban History Association meeting, this collection of essays points the way forward by discussing topics such as urban animals numbers and types, the various nuisances and health problems they caused, the wide range of industries they sustained, and the reasons underlying their gradual removal from locations such as Paris, Edinburgh, Perth and Melbourne. (The book also contains two chapters on the London zoo and dog walking in Victorian and Edwardian England that tread on more familiar intellectual grounds.)

Over forty percent of the book was penned by Atkins whose nearly four decades of scholarship on the topic can be traced back to his doctoral dissertation on the historical geography

of the London milk trade. Using once again the British metropolis as his primary case study, he discusses problems ranging from the safety issues caused by large cattle, sheep and poultry drives in urban streets to zoonotic diseases. Apart from food, clothing and transportation, he reminds us, urban livestock provided a wide range of non-edible inputs to a cluster of dirty and smelly industries that included soap, glue, candle, fertilizer, comb, saddle, glove, and industrial belt makers. Urban (mostly horse) manure was also once the primary fertilizer used in peri-urban market gardens, fields, and pastures, which in turn provided much of the sustenance of nearby humans and livestock. While Atkins has previously written on some of these issues, his contribution incorporates much recent scholarship and additional thoughts and insights.

One of the most commendable aspects of *Animal Cities* is its minimal use of academic jargon. Unfortunately, its hefty price will keep it out of the hands of the increasingly large lay audience with a growing appetite for food history. Among academics, it will appeal primarily to urban and environmental historians, historical geographers, and the more down-to-earth “animal geographies” theorists. Proponents of urban agriculture as a community development strategy would especially benefit from familiarizing themselves with the book’s content, for although the authors are supportive of this approach, their evidence is not. For instance, they remind us that once ubiquitous chicken coops eventually disappeared from urban backyard not only because of public health (from salmonella to zoonotic diseases) and nuisance (from smell to their propensity to attract rats) concerns, but also because the advent of more productive agribusiness and new work and leisure opportunities for urban dwellers meant that most people were no longer willing to spend a portion of their time producing food at a loss. Indeed, several North American cities already struggle with hundreds of abandoned urban chickens because their previous hipster owners were both overwhelmed by the amount of care they required and disappointed by the fact that they only lay eggs for two years (Sarah Boesveld, “Hipster farmers abandoning urban chickens because they’re too much work,” *National Post*, 9 July 2013).

Also relevant for SPIN (Small Plot Intensive) enthusiasts is that the once greater productivity of peri-urban food production systems over their rural counterparts owed much not only to more intensive production practices (greenhouses, cloches, wind-breaking walls, large and specialized labor pool), but paradoxically to the much larger volumes of manure available in cities than in the countryside—a fact explained by the large volumes of animal feed imported from distant locations. Yet even before the end of the nineteenth century, the advent of superior fertilizers such as Peruvian guano and Chilean nitrates, more desirable employment opportunities for urban agricultural laborers, and new transportation (steamship and railroad) and preservation (refrigeration) technologies had essentially eradicated the economic foundations of urban SPIN. In the end, proximity to consumers and ever more abundant and cheaper horse manure (which in time became an unmitigated nuisance) simply could not overcome natural advantages and economies of scale in more distant locations. If anything, things are now probably worse in this respect than they have ever been.

Unfortunately, the contributors to *Animal Cities* only begrudgingly draw what would seem unavoidable conclusions as to the importance of economic forces (as distinct from public health considerations) in removing livestock from urban environments. For instance, after observing that in many parts of the world today “fresh animal food production in urban settings is not only tolerated but actively encouraged,” Atkins goes out of his way to point out that he “is not trying here to claim that there are strong parallels between British Victorian cities and the Third World today. But the mismatch of ‘urban’ and ‘agriculture’ in modernity came to be thought of as so strong that it is important to remind ourselves that alternative urbanisms *are* possible, where animal keeping is not outlawed” (p. 37).

And yet, urban livestock disappeared in every urban agglomeration where significant economic development took place. There was in the end nothing fundamentally peculiar or unique about the cases discussed in this book and similar chapters could have been written about other large western cities in the nineteenth century and more recent developments in East Asia. True, a new generation of enthusiastic animal keepers and some wealthy consumers are currently doing their best to reverse the tide of urban development, but the evidence provided in this book suggests rather unequivocally that the current urban agriculture craze will in the end be as socially significant as the hippie communes of a few decades ago. That the authors do not dare derive some politically incorrect conclusions from their evidence, however, does not in the end undermine the quality of their contributions.

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A Land Between Waters: Environmental Histories of Modern Mexico. CHRISTOPHER BOYER, editor. Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 2012. Pp. vii+307, maps, graphs, tables, images, index. \$55.00 hardcover. ISBN 978-0-8165-0249-3.

The environmental history of modern Mexico is one of long continuities punctuated by moments of deep structural change, writes Christopher Boyer, assistant professor of history at the University of Illinois at Chicago. For many years, it has been the colonial period which dominated environmental history of Mexico, emphasizing themes of degradation and decline associated with conquest. According to Boyer, far less attention has been paid to the “more recent and ambiguous political ecology of modernity,” a periodization which complicates traditional declension narratives (p. 3). In this edited volume, Boyer offers a critical, cyclical framework for understanding environmental change in modern Mexico which moves away from such traditional teleologies.

Human activity in the natural world is closely linked the vagaries of political organization. In modern Mexico, the centralization of power has clearly correlated to regimes of intensive, capital-driven and often state-sanctioned expropriation and exploitation which strain the productive capacities of the natural environment. On the other hand, when sources of social, political, and economic power are more widely dispersed, environmental change has been more extensive, decentralized, and responsive to local pressures. Boyer identifies the colonial Bourbon Reforms, the late nineteenth-century technocratic regime of Porfirio Diaz, and the twentieth-century Mexican Miracle with modes of intensive-centralized political ecology, while the interstitial periods of early independence, the 1910 Mexican Revolution, and our contemporary moment of “savage” neoliberalism represent periods of extensive-decentralized activity. Boyer’s introduction seeks to establish this cyclical pattern of expanding and contracting central authority as an effective model for environmental understanding change in modern Mexico.

Following this introduction and a pair of surveys devoted to the history of soils and water management systems in Mexico, *A Land Between Waters* is organized as a roughly chronological series of case studies between the late eighteenth century and the 1990s. The powerful link between the international market and primary product extraction, a problem tied intimately to postcolonial concerns, is a recurring theme. These chapters range widely in methodological and conceptual approach, from such mainstay topics as land tenure and sugar cultivation to the epistemological foundations of botanical gardens. Some shed light on such less-studied supply chains as turpentine and railroad tie extraction from the forests of Tlaxcala, commercial pearl

cultivation in the Gulf of California, or the short reign of “King Henequen” in the Yucatan as the now-surpassed binding material *sine qua non* of the growing US agro-industrial complex. Others bring new archival research into conversation with longstanding assumptions, such as Alejandro Tortolero Villaseñor’s study of sugar growth in Morelos. Challenging the consensus that growers were limited by the availability of land, Tortolero shows that it was only the scarcity of water which limited sugar production. He then places this scarcity of water, exacerbated by the sugar industry, within the wider agrarian struggles leading to the 1910 Mexican Revolution.

Two authors in particular offer thoroughly original understandings of the human relationship with the natural world which deserve special merit: Emily Wakild, a history professor at Wake Forest University, and Myrna I. Santiago, a professor of history at St. Mary’s College of California. Wakild’s analysis of the function and creation of national parks bring into high relief the tension between human activity and the North American notion of preservation, which precludes such activity. By reminding us that “[c]onservation and development are cut from the same cloth,” the author encourages a rethinking of the practice of setting aside land, and the terms upon which we describe such activity (p. 195). Anglo-American approaches have struggled to understand the urban hilltop complex of Chapultepec as a preserve, as it promiscuously mixes preservation of native flora and fauna with a highly curated botanical garden, food and crafts vendors, cultural and municipal buildings, cemeteries, and a theme park, among other uses. In this sense, Wakild sees in Chapultepec an ongoing conversation about the multiple, overlapping meanings and uses of space.

Myrna I. Santiago reintroduces the concept of class to the question of the human relationship to the environment, bringing a fresh approach to the topic of oil production in Veracruz. In her analysis, class reveals that “nature” is far more relational than many scholars have understood. While oil magnates experienced the clear-cut coastal jungle as a picturesque and tamed site of recreation – featuring plumbing, ice, running water, and ventilation – Mexican workers experienced a landscape of heat, disease and catastrophic danger. In between these two groups, North American engineers and managers occupied a safe but modestly-appointed space within tropical Mexico, and preferred to spend their leisure time in shaded brothels and bars. What is interesting, notes Santiago, is that Mexican workers rarely voiced environmental concerns, but instead complained of health and safety dangers. According to the author, the discourse of the Mexican Revolution and later oil nationalization in 1934 centered on labor issues because Mexican workers, North American engineers, and cosmopolitan magnates experienced the natural environment differently in their daily lives. That is, complaints about work conditions were complaints about both the danger to the self as well as the dangerous state of the environment.

Anáhuac, the pre-Columbian toponym for the central valley of Mexico, means “land between the waters,” a name applied to the Aztec imperial capital built among the lakes. And as Boyer notes, water has loomed large as a framing device in the historiography of Mexico, and there exists a longstanding tradition of careful water management across Mexico. In the various canals, ditches, dikes, dams, and reservoirs that cover the Mexican landscape, the human relationship with water has left a wealth of traces both in the earth and within the voluminous Mexican archives. The Archivo Histórico del Agua (AHA) in particular has served since 1994 as the source of a torrent of water-related scholarship in Mexico, most notably the dozens of volumes which comprise the *Biblioteca del Agua* (Water Library) series edited by Colegio de México history professor Luis Aboites Aguilar. The inclusion in this volume of Aboites, rarely published in English, represents a welcome and perhaps overdue step in broadening the conversation over the human relationship with the environment across national academies.

Indeed, *A Land Between Waters* is most compelling in its explicit attempt to cross divides. Two chapters feature the works of authors never before published in English, while nearly half

of the authors live and work in Mexico. This is indicative of a wider concern, especially prevalent in environmental history, that old national frameworks cannot effectively assess the global scales across which change occurs. *A Land Between Waters* represents the best of this impulse, offering a model for working across barriers of region, language, methodology, and conceptual focus rather than within them.

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Richard Hakluyt and Travel Writing in Early Modern Europe. DANIEL CAREY and CLAIRE JOWITT, editors. Hakluyt Society Extra Series 47. Farnham, England: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2012. Pp. xxiv+369, maps, images, index. \$120 hardback. ISBN 978-1-4094-0017-2.

Richard Hakluyt should hold a special place in the imaginations of North American historical geographers as the original visionary of everything we have come to study. Hakluyt (1552-1616) was the essential Elizabethan collector and publisher of travel narratives promoting English settlement in the New World and English imperialist ambitions worldwide. His major publications, including *Divers Voyages Touching the Discovery of America, and the Ilands Adjacent unto the Same* (1582) and *The Principal Navigations, Voyages, Traffiques and Discoveries of the English Nation . . .* (1589 and 1598-1600) stand as testaments to a life devoted to a single monumental theme, the aggrandizement of the English nation through discovery, expansion, and trade. An inveterate and careful researcher who believed that knowledge would be the key to the geopolitical rivalries to come, Hakluyt learned languages, pursued manuscripts, and presented to his readership several thousand first-hand accounts of travel and adventure chosen to provide clues to the challenges of expansion.

It is one of his smaller, unpublished narratives, however, that might qualify as the founding document of our discipline. Hakluyt's *Discourse on Western Planting* (1584), written for a readership of one (his queen), provided a complete rationale for the English settlement of North America and described a future that seems eerily prescient when matched with the historical geographies that soon began to unfold. The *Discourse* might be seen as resting against the far left bookend of an endless shelf of scholarship that holds in chronological order the rich literature interpreting the historical geographies that indeed unfolded.

The role of Richard Hakluyt in the shaping of English territorial and commercial expansions has long engaged a tradition of scholarship from a wide range of disciplines. Current trends in this scholarship are amply covered in *Richard Hakluyt and Travel Writing in Early Modern Europe*, a collection of 24 essays chosen by the editors "to place Hakluyt's work in context, to trace the humanist culture out of which his project emerged, to advance the study of his literary and historical resources, and to assess his wide and lasting impact" (p. 2). The essays are organized into five sections: Hakluyt in Context; Early Modern Travel Collections; Editorial Practices; Allegiances and Ideologies: Politics, Religion, Nation; and Hakluyt: Rhetoric and Writing. The volume also includes a Coda essay on the history of the Hakluyt Society, founded in 1846.

Fourteen of the essays were written by English or literature scholars, five by historians, and none by geographers, so it is doubtful that the volume will interest geographers beyond those with a special interest in Hakluyt scholarship. Nevertheless, the essays taken together provide deep insight into the political, economic, and intellectual contexts in which Hakluyt worked. As the European engagement with the larger world grew more global and more intense, Hakluyt was one of many individuals engaged in illuminating and manipulating that engagement. The essays

place him firmly in an early modern humanist tradition of writers and publishers who presented travelers' narratives (supported by maps and illustrations) as essential sources of geographical information and made travel writing an integral part of the late Renaissance. In particular, this tradition included Venetian Giovanni Ramusio, Frenchman Pierre Bergeron, the de Bry family of Frankfurt, and Hakluyt's literary heir, Samuel Purchas.

The essays also link Hakluyt with the political and economic interests in England during his lifetime. He was closely associated with powerful political patrons like Philip Sidney, Admiral Charles Howard, and secretaries of state Francis Walsingham and Robert Cecil. He wrote the *Discourse on Western Planting* at Walters Raleigh's request to support his ambitions in Virginia. Hakluyt was a stockholder in the Virginia Company. His publications were often politically sensitive, and he made a number of editorial choices to support the London mercantile community, especially those concerns interested long-distance trade to new markets.

Geographers might find several of the essays to be of particular interest, including Anthony Payne's insight into the geographical milieu in which Hakluyt worked in "Hakluyt's London: Discovery and Overseas Trade"; Joan-Pau Rubies' discussion of the growing importance of travel writing in early modern Europe in "From the 'History of Travayle' to the History of Travel Collections: The Rise of an Early Modern Genre"; Peter C. Mancall's commentary on the use of geographical imagery to support travel narratives and to inform in "Richard Hakluyt and the Visual World of Early Modern Travel Narratives"; and Diego Pirillo's discussion of the early modern debate over geopolitically contested rights to ocean territories in "Balance of Power and Freedom of the Seas: Richard Hakluyt and Alberico Gentili."

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The Ottoman Age of Exploration. GIANCARLO CASALE. New York: Oxford University Press, 2010. Pp. xix+203, maps, illustrations, notes, index. \$74.00 hardcover. ISBN 978-0-19-537782-8.

Giancarlo Casale's *The Ottoman Age of Exploration* is an attempt to rewrite the history of the classical age of the Ottoman Empire beyond its borders. The main argument of the book is that the Ottoman Empire was directly involved in the struggle of the European Age of Exploration in the sixteenth century. Throughout the seven chapters, Casale emphasizes the agency of the Ottoman Empire in the early modern world in the context of "global politics" by illustrating the economic, religious, and diplomatic activities of the Ottomans in the Indian Ocean. Casale argues that in the classical age of the Empire, the Ottomans were not only in a struggle to conquer new lands but also were attempting to control the spice trade between the East and the West. Casale sees the trading world of the Indian Ocean as a battleground for the clash between Ottoman and Portuguese imperial ideologies claiming universal sovereignty.

Casale states that "the Ottoman Age of Exploration" started with the conquest of the territories of the Mamluk Empire in 1516. The conquest of Egypt provided a strategic advantage to the Ottomans against the Portuguese, and also gave Ottoman merchants the opportunity to establish their commercial ties with the region. Casale emphasizes how Ottoman geographical works such as Piri Reis's world map of 1513 and naval commanders' reports such as Selman Reis's report (which claimed "whoever controlled Yemen would be master of the lands of India") helped Selim I, or "Selim the Navigator" as Casale calls him, his successors, grand viziers such as Ibrahim Pasha, and governors such as Hadim Suleiman Pasha to expand their horizons (p. 45).

During Ibrahim Pasha's vizierate, the Ottomans succeeded in establishing diplomatic

ties with Muslim powers across the Indian Ocean. Hadim Suleiman Pasha, successor of Ibrahim Pasha, continued to gather intelligence about the political, economic, and military atmosphere of the Indian Ocean. Moreover, Casale draws attention to Hadim Suleiman Pasha's expedition to India in 1538 that "allowed the Ottomans to build naval bases and custom houses in Aden and Mocha, giving them a permanent foothold in the Arabian Sea" (p. 64). Casale points out that the expedition of 1538 marked the beginning of open warfare between the Ottomans and Portuguese, and fostered diplomacy between the two empires. Hadim Suleiman Pasha strengthened the Ottoman gains with his appointees from Egypt to Hijaz. Moreover, Casale focuses on the activities of the Ottoman frontiersmen such as Sefer Reis and Ozdemir Pasha, which shaped the Ottoman naval strategy and deepened the political and economic ties between the Ottoman Empire and the Indian Ocean.

Casale notes that Sokullu Mehmed Pasha, the mastermind of the Ottoman Empire's push into the Indian Ocean, took Seydi Ali Reis's *Mir'at'ül-Memalik* (Mirror of Countries) as a reference to build his grand strategy linked to "the concept of a universal Ottoman sultanate as a collective pan-Islamic ideology" (p. 129). According to Casale, as a result of these activities in the region, Ottoman political ideology shifted from a land-based empire to a "sovereign of the seas," and also that Ottoman statesmen began to formulate policies to protect not only their political and economic interests but also Muslims throughout the Indian Ocean. For instance, besides being a partner in the spice trade with the empire, Aceh had Muslim clerics trained in Ottoman religious institutions. These clerics played a significant role not only in the expansion of *ummah*, the imagined community of Muslims, but also Ebu's Suud's caliphal doctrine in the Ottoman classical age. Casale calls the Ottoman imperial dominion in the Indian Ocean a "soft empire" since the main Ottoman interest in the region was not related to territorial expansion but instead to trade, communication, and religious ideology (p. 150).

Casale's book is an important contribution to early modern Ottoman history in answering the question, "Did the Ottomans participate in the Age of Exploration?" Casale makes extensive use of Ottoman primary sources, mostly *Mühimme Defterleri* (Registers of Important Affairs), and also sixteenth-century Ottoman cosmographies, maps, and travel narratives. Casale notes that until the sixteenth century, the Ottomans' knowledge of the world was based mostly on European sources that included portolan charts, world maps, and Ptolemaic geographies. As Casale states, Piri Reis's famous world map of 1513, which was presented to Sultan Selim in Cairo in 1517, was a great contribution to the Ottoman intellectual world and had a significant impact on Ottoman naval strategies. The selection of portolan charts, maps, engravings, and miniatures from various archives makes this book valuable and illustrates the dissemination of ideas and intellectual works in the sixteenth century. Furthermore, Casale uses printed Portuguese sources including travel accounts and chronicles to break the silence of contemporary Ottoman chronicles about the Indian Ocean.

Casale's book sheds light on the history of the Ottoman Empire from an international perspective and illustrates that the Ottomans were one of the major actors of European overseas expansion in the sixteenth century. From Ibrahim Pasha's ambitious goal of establishing Ottoman presence in the Indian Ocean to Hadim Suleiman Pasha's efforts to gather intelligence about the region and Sokullu Mehmed Pasha's project to join the Mediterranean and Red seas, in each chapter Casale focuses on the key figures of the sixteenth-century "Ottoman Age of Exploration" through comparative perspective.

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Urban Rivers: Remaking Rivers, Cities, and Space in Europe and North America. STEPHÁNE CASTONGUAY and MATTHEW EVENDEN, editors. Pittsburgh: Pittsburgh University Press, 2012. Pp. xi+302, illustrations, maps, index. \$25.95 cloth. ISBN 978-0-8229-6185-7.

Urban Rivers is one of the latest additions to the History of Urban Environment series, which examines the historical impact of urbanization. The work is composed of a collection of selected essays from a 2009 conference in (appropriately enough) Trois-Rivières, Quebec by environmental historians and historical geographers. The scope is rather broad, examining “both the role of rivers in the process of urbanization and the impact of urbanization on rivers” in Europe and North America from the eighteenth century to the present (p. 3). This expansive focus is both a strength and weakness of the work, allowing for a broad discussion of theory and historiography while simultaneously making it difficult for the reader to grasp the intricacies associated with individual locations. Nonetheless, this approach also means that the work offers something to specialists and general audiences alike.

Twelve chapters comprise the work, which is divided unevenly into three topical sections. The first topic, entitled “Industrialization and Riverine Transformation,” analyzes how city population growth created conflicts over urban river usage. This is followed by the largest section, “Urbanization and the Function of Rivers,” where five chapters are directed toward analyzing how urbanization affected the reordering of the role and place of rivers within cities. “Territorialities of Water Management,” the final topic, broadens the focus and “illustrates political problems resulting from the imposition of a social order on the nature of rivers” (p. 11). The essential unifying theme is that “the industrial and urban revolutions of the Western world changed how urban societies used rivers,” with the contributors addressing this idea with various approaches (p. 237). Related to this argument is the idea that these changes engendered social conflict, which often spread beyond urban centers into their hinterlands.

Like most compilations, however, this work suffers from a lack of focus at times. While the broad attention of rivers in an urban setting in North America and Europe provides a general theme, the contributions in the book vary considerably. This difficulty is often exacerbated by the fact that the scholars often need to offer minute geographic details in order to make their arguments. The end result is that as soon as the reader becomes familiar with the geography of a specific locale, they have to reacclimatize to a new location with the next chapter. This feature is most apparent in the two chapters which focus on Montreal by Michèle Dagenais and Jean-Claude Robert. Dagenais examines the city’s relationship with the Rivière des Prairies while Robert looks at the St. Lawrence River. At times, however, it appears as though the two scholars are discussing two entirely different cities, yet they both reach similar conclusions. Dagenais remarks, “In this way, even harnessed and imprisoned by infrastructure, the river [Rivière des Prairies] helped reconfigure Montreal’s territory” while Robert argues that “For Montreal, the St. Lawrence very quickly determined the city’s functions and oriented its layout” (pp. 92, 158). To be fair, their analysis is not strictly coterminous, as Dagenais concentrates primarily on the early twentieth century while Robert’s analysis stretches back considerably farther.

The intricacies surrounding these scholars’ arguments will undoubtedly make the work more beneficial to specialists treating a specific river or city. Nevertheless, *Urban Rivers* has a lot to offer a broad academic audience as well. The theoretical and historiographic topics are unquestionably the highlight of the book. The opening chapter by Chloé Deligne sets the trend, demonstrating how “water defined a sort of *silent territory* with no administrative status” (p. 25). Uwe Lübken advances another interesting argument when he contends that in terms of concept and practice, modern societies have separated rivers from their floodplains, resulting in disastrous floods. Another work which stands out is Craig E. Colten’s contribution on urban

river basins in the United States. In his introduction, he touches on several important works and approaches such as Richard White's "organic machine," Joel Tarr's notion of the "ultimate sink," and engineer Abel Wolman's idea of "urban metabolism" (p. 202). The final chapter by Shannon Stunden Bower further emphasizes the theoretical strength of the work, demonstrating how in Manitoba "human activity and the laws of nature remain in discord" as different governmental and administrative levels have failed to harmonize social and environmental situations (p. 236). The strong theoretical underpinning of these chapters should make it easy for other scholars to apply these ideas to their research.

In short, *Urban Rivers* is an important contribution to the History of the Urban Environment series, demonstrating the multiple ways in which rivers, river basins, and flood plains have affected, and been affected by, urbanization and urban sprawl.

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Troubled Commemoration: The American Civil War Centennial, 1961-1965. ROBERT J. COOK. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2007. Pp. xi+300, index. \$22.50 paperback. ISBN 978-0-8071-4365-0.

As its title promises, *Troubled Commemoration* examines the problems faced by the Civil War Centennial Commission (CWCC) to promote a better understanding of this nation's bloodiest war. In his well-researched, written, and argued book, Cook shows how the CWCC was overshadowed—and in many cases upstaged—by the civil rights movement of the 1960s. Most important of all, the Commission never successfully addressed the centrality of slavery to the Civil War or the contributions of African Americans to the Union cause. The CWCC's problems with the race issue were glaring amid the tumultuous events of what C. Vann Woodward has called the country's "Second Reconstruction."

The Commission began as an effort by conservative members—some of them avowed segregationists—to promote the centennial as a celebratory, patriotic, and commercial venture. Cook's book adds an important dimension to the work of David Blight and others who have argued that sectional conciliation between North and South was made possible by erasing slavery from the larger Civil War narrative. Among CWCC members, even the northerner Ulysses S. Grant, III, whose grandfather helped defeat the South and free the slaves, was uninterested in highlighting the legacy of emancipation. The CWCC also faced challenges overcoming its decentralized administrative structure. Although the Commission was sanctioned by Dwight D. Eisenhower and given federal money, most of its funding came from the states, which set up their own commissions. And though the centennial was a national event, the focus of the CWCC's efforts would fall on the troubled South, where most of the battles of the Civil War—not to mention the civil rights movement—were fought.

The turning point for the CWCC came in April 1961 when a hotel in Charleston, South Carolina refused to accommodate a black female commissioner from New Jersey, who was planning to attend the centennial of the firing on Ft. Sumter. An uneasy compromise was reached when the CWCC decided to meet at a nearby military base, which was not subject to South Carolina's Jim Crow laws. The compromise, brokered by historian, CWCC member, and southern liberal Bell Wiley and the Kennedy administration, made clear the need for more progressive leaders within the Commission.

The new leadership of the CWCC included academics such as James I. “Bud” Robertson and Allan Nevins. With Robertson and Nevins at the helm, the CWCC took on a more serious and scholarly albeit subdued tone. Robertson shunned such things as battle reenactments. And Nevins would assume an important role in commissioning the superior scholarship that came out of the centennial, such as the Jefferson Davis and Ulysses S. Grant papers projects. Nevins also oversaw a series of scholarly monographs on the war.

The new CWCC leadership, however, was only moderately successful in maintaining the public’s interest in the centennial. As the civil rights issue heated up, Americans’ concern with the centennial cooled. For example, few people remember George Wallace’s visit to the commemoration at Gettysburg in July 1963, but far more Americans recall Martin Luther King’s “I Have a Dream” speech, which he gave later in August.

Cook does an excellent job of placing the activities of the CWCC in the larger context of the civil rights movement. The author rarely steps wrong until the last chapter, which examines historical literature and film from the commemoration period. This chapter on pop culture is insightful but feels like it belongs in a different book. Rather than have read about Civil War pop culture, I would have preferred to have learned more about how the various states involved in the centennial, especially Virginia, benefited, or did not benefit, from state tourism and other Civil War-based commercialization. Indeed, historians could do more work on examining the centennial at the state level. On the whole, however, as an overview of the history of the Civil War centennial, Cook’s book will be difficult to surpass.

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The Explorer’s Roadmap to National-Socialism: Sven Hedin, Geography and the Path to Genocide. SARAH K. DANIELSSON. Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2012. Pp. 304, index. \$119.95 hardcover. ISBN 978-1-4094-3212-8.

The historical relationship between European geographers and the politics of the Third Reich is a messy business. Sarah K. Danielsson’s study of the Swedish geographer Sven Hedin recognizes this, and the sometimes confrontational tone of her book reflects (accurately, in my view) a brand of historiography plagued by academic whitewashing, claims of professional self-preservation, and (too often) willful ignorance. While long-dead ethnocentric proponents of geopolitical determinism and *Lebensraum* (think: Friedrich Ratzel, Rudolf Kjellén, and Karl Haushofer) took the initial brunt of history’s judgment regarding the aggressive territorial expansion of Nazi foreign policy, only in the past thirty years or so has a small group of geographers and historians (led, in Germany, by Mechtild Rössler and Ute Wardenga, among others) begun to critically engage with the legacy of geographers who outlived the Second World War and whose professional careers survived Allied denazification efforts. Danielsson attempts to include Sven Hedin in this discussion, not simply as one more racist geographer but as an ideologue so radically avant-garde in his obsession with preserving the space of the Nordic “race” that he played a prominent role in helping establish the geographical imagination of the Nazis.

Danielsson splits the bulk of her text into two parts, with each part evenly divided into four chapters. The first four chapters outline Hedin’s rise to prominence and international recognition, his transformation from Swedish nationalist to pan-Germanist, his support of Germany in the First World War, and his support for genocidal solutions to perceived spatial problems—all of which, argues Danielsson, led him to embrace National-Socialism. It is within this section that

the reader learns of Hedin's incredible efforts to mythologize his expeditions throughout the "Far East." According to Danielsson, "Hedin's popularity came through his ability to portray himself as the hero of the tale, placing his own work in the central role as purveyor of uncivilized knowledge made civilized . . ." (p. 36). After establishing himself as one of the world's greatest explorers, the reader learns how Hedin used his reputation to begin intervening in foreign affairs and gain political influence. Danielsson lays out this shift well, showing her reader the ideological continuity between the self-centered geographer who robbed graves on his expeditions throughout Asia in the name of science and progress (pp. 16-17), the self-proclaimed "independent observer" who published letters he had stolen from the bodies of dead Russian soldiers in an effort to show their cultural and racial inferiority (pp. 94-95), and the witness of genocide against the Armenians—a project Hedin justified as well within the interests of the Ottoman state (pp. 99-100). Danielsson ends her first section by making clear Hedin's early sympathy for Nordic racism, his friendship with members of the Nazi party leadership (particularly Hermann Göring), and his final expeditions to Asia.

The second part of Danielsson's book begins with Hedin's visit to what he called the "miracle" of Germany in 1935 (p. 130) and ends with his death in 1952. She clearly demonstrates the support Hedin received from the National-Socialist government, his criticism of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact on racial/cultural grounds, his tacit acceptance of German expansion into Denmark and Norway in the spring of 1940, his knowledge of the Holocaust, and his unwavering allegiance to Hitler and National-Socialism even at the end of World War II. Danielsson's final chapter grapples with Hedin's insistence on remaining unapologetic for his support of Nazi Germany while simultaneously working to "tone down, and mask, his view on the Jews" (p. 247). She concludes this section of her book with a discussion of the flawed methods, lack of evidence, and political biases of Hedin's earlier (much too sympathetic) biographers.

Perhaps the most famous example of Hedin's postwar whitewashing was his involvement in the survival of Alfred Philippson, a German-Jewish geographer who had been banned from teaching in 1933 and eventually, in 1942, was imprisoned at the Theresienstadt concentration camp. The case of Philippson is often used to portray Hedin's sympathy for the Jewish people and his refusal to simply lock-step with the atrocities of the Holocaust. Philippson himself claimed that he had been saved by Hedin's intervention. But Danielsson points out that this was not at all the case, and that Hedin's involvement in Philippson's internment was limited and only a brief distraction from his otherwise complete compliance to Nazi policies toward the Jews (pp. 223-225).

Despite being a useful and persuasive new look at Hedin's role in the spatial ideas of the Third Reich, Danielsson's critique of the man does, in some cases, run into problems. The links between Hedin's early expeditions and later enthusiasm for National-Socialism is often overemphasized. While Danielsson admits, for example, that his early trips exploring Asia "did not point toward his Nazism" (p. 20), everything else in her book certainly does. The research done, the evidence compiled, and the story presented to the reader all reflect what Danielsson makes explicitly clear: her story is interested in moving "relentlessly toward Hedin's embrace of National-Socialism." While her story is an important (and welcome) addition to the study of historical geography, one worries that she may be overcorrecting the Hedin narrative a bit. The author sometimes also fails to include specific information in her citations, offering at times only the unhelpful label "correspondence" after a cited archive (see p. 100, for example). German historians will take issue with some of Danielsson's contextual oversights, most glaringly her assertion that "The Nuremberg Laws . . . restricted Jews from renting apartments, buying groceries, owning cats, and so on" (p. 142). While local and regional restrictions did often ban Jews from owning pets and houses by 1935, the Nuremberg Laws did no such thing. Moreover, Jews were

certainly allowed to buy groceries (although only during certain hours) and were forced to move into and pay rent for *Judenhaus* apartments. Finally, although it is most likely not the author's fault, it would have been nice for the publisher to have included maps in the text, especially when discussing Hedin's early expeditions in Asia. One cannot adequately characterize the developing spatial ideas of a geographer without presenting his or her cartographic work.

The breadth and importance of Danielsson's project, however, should not be overlooked or quickly dismissed. She presents a forceful case against Hedin's apologists and his portrayal as "a national hero in Sweden" (p. 259). Any scholar interested in the intersections of history, geography, Nazi Germany, and the Holocaust should read this book, engage with its material, and (as Danielsson begs in her conclusion) investigate the seemingly untarnished pasts of academics and intellectuals potentially connected to violent regimes and the inexcusable ideologies of racism and ultranationalism they are so often built upon.

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Public Spaces, Private Gardens: A History of Designed Landscapes in New Orleans. LAKE DOUGLAS. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2011. Pp. xi+282, maps, figures, appendix, notes, index. \$55.00 hardcover. ISBN 978-0-8071-3837-3.

With a focus on the late eighteenth to early twentieth century, Lake Douglas examines the origins, people involved, and uses of the historical designed landscapes of New Orleans. Using a variety of archival sources such as lithographs, photographs, almanacs, advertisements, secondary observational writings as well as synthesizing existing scholarship, he attempts to explicate *new* understandings with major sections on public open spaces, commercial open spaces (pleasure gardens), domestic garden design, horticultural content, horticultural commerce, workforce characteristics (of those involved in horticulture), horticulture literature, and plant lists in and pertaining to New Orleans. Douglas includes black and white photographs, lithographs, advertisements as well as twenty color images of garden designs. His careful choice of visuals enriches his section discussions.

In the preface, Douglas states that he will, drawing from cultural geographers, show "landscape as process," providing an analysis that moves beyond customary means of investigation and understandings of the city. He asserts that he places "New Orleans's landscape history within a broader urban narrative and thereby provides a new perspective on the evolution of open spaces in America" as well as "a more complex, nuanced picture of people and developments involved in the evolution of American landscape design, a history defined less by singular 'heroes' or iconic examples and characterized more by contributions from anonymous actors and heretofore unnoticed cultural, economic, and social forces" (p. 2). Douglas also states that "...until now, an investigation of its landscape history has not appeared" (p. 2). Whereas an investigation concerning these topics in one work has not emerged, his assertion is an overstatement in that a variety of social scientists have provided in-depth critical examinations that involve "its geographic location, environmental characteristics, and cultural diversity" (p. 3) concerning a variety of designed landscapes in New Orleans. Surprisingly, many of these critical works are not cited. Nevertheless, based on these promises, the reader expects an analysis in which these topical areas are woven together in a cogent discussion that in fact reveals an innovative critical contribution to understanding the history of New Orleans's designed landscapes.

Douglas's greatest contribution is how he illuminates access, activities, and goods offered, and the spatial organization common to the until-now-unexamined pleasure gardens in New Orleans. In addition, he shows how domestic gardens evolved from encompassing more utilitarian to ornamental purposes as well as they varied in scale and spatial organization. The color plans and elevations from the *New Orleans Notarial Archives* complement Douglas's analysis so that these gardens come alive for the reader. To be sure, these plans usually represent specific populations and locations—those more affluent, European and Anglo. Douglas also excavates information concerning the “who, how, when, and where” of horticulture resources to (some of) the city and through meticulous analysis provides comparative fruits, vegetable, and herbs plant lists (Table 1) and a compiled ornamental plant inventory (Table 2-B). Together, these sections, largely drawing from primary data, will prove an excellent point in which to begin researching additional facets of pleasure gardens as well as reconstructing or recreating domestic gardens in New Orleans.

However, though the author succeeds in these ways, the work fails to provide the necessary depth, analysis, and connections from one topic to another to have met the aims he set forth. Instead, he offers general impressions of each topic, more in isolation than integration. More importantly, Douglas does not provide equal attention between these topics. For example, though he argues early on that he will provide a nuanced picture of the people in these landscapes of process, most of his primary data comes from or is based upon literate, middle-class, or elite whites. The discussion he provides regarding Native American and enslaved populations' agriculture and horticulture is in the service of the colonial city, and non-European or non-American open spaces and gardens are given little attention and detail. Furthermore, the section, “Workforce Characteristics of Gardeners, Seedsmen, and ‘Flourist’ Planters” is only thirteen pages. Though he includes more detail on the practices of European diversity, Douglas makes little mention of people of color beyond providing census of enslaved people arriving and mentioning, for instance, that “the agricultural economy of the rural antebellum South was built on the back of... enslaved people” (p. 173). Even as he provides some discussion of complex intersections among the vagaries of color, social standing, and freedom of people, he relies too heavily on synthesizing existing scholarship with popular accounts, often relying on those popular accounts, whether in pictorial or written form, as innocent and straightforward.

The book will be of interest to those who want a brief overview of specific, usually European and Anglo dominated *public* open spaces and the general state of horticulture. Those individuals concerned with detailed examination of European and Anglo *commercial* open spaces, domestic garden design, and plant lists will find much useful information. The reader will be left wanting concerning the complexity of “larger” and “smaller” processes that inform these landscapes and their associated practices, importantly including contributions from enslaved or free people of color as well as those Europeans and Anglos of lesser socioeconomic standing. Hence, *new* understandings of actors and the cultural, economic, and social forces that shape the public spaces and private gardens of New Orleans (landscape as process) are far more partial, in both senses of the word, than the author promises.

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The Nation's Nature: How Continental Presumptions Gave Rise to the United States of America. JAMES D. DRAKE. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2011. Pp. xii+402, illustrations, notes, index. \$39.50 hardcover. ISBN 978-0-8139-3122-7.

While most scholars of Revolutionary America are familiar with Tom Paine's proclamation regarding the geographical absurdity of an island governing a continent and Montesquieu's assertions about the spatial limitations of republican governance, the connections between geography and history in this tumultuous era are often overlooked. In *The Nation's Nature*, James Drake illuminates the how geographical ideas contributed to the emergence of a national identity, the success of the War, and the eventual ratification of the Constitution. Through a combination of synthesis and original research Drake constructs an intellectual history that "traces some of the more important ways in which spatial identity changed over time and altered many North Americans' political consciousness" (p. 9). By examining the intellectual currents and political events through a geographical lens, Drake not only demonstrates the centrality of "continental presumptions" to the course of events, he also reveals the importance of places otherwise erased from the master narrative of the American Revolution—Canada, the West Indies, Mexico, and even India. At its heart, however, *The Nation's Nature* is a book about the power of geography and imagination.

The book, divided into two parts, begins by erecting the theoretical framework that supports the bulk of Drake's analysis. Drake begins this critical task by connecting his work to Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities*. While Drake pokes holes in Anderson's contention that nationalism in the thirteen colonies depended on print capitalism, he readily subscribes to the integral role imagination plays in the creation of national identity. More importantly, perhaps, Drake builds on the work of Martin Lewis and Karen Wigen and their definition of "metageography." For Drake, the concept of metageography—or a set of culturally constructed spatial structures used to frame how people think about the world—helps to explain how people living in North America began to think of themselves as part of a nation well before declaring independence. More importantly, by unpacking the metageographical understandings of eighteenth century actors, Drake reveals the importance of a "continental consciousness" to the history of Revolutionary America. As Drake demonstrates, the power contained within these metageographical understandings hinged on their ability to connect nature and politics.

In Part One, which is divided into three chapters, Drake examines the political and intellectual trends that shaped North America before colonists declared their independence. Focused on the abstractions of intellectuals, Drake introduces the prevailing notions about the connections between people and their natural environment. More importantly, perhaps, Drake outlines the debates between Europe and British North America that emerged from these geographical imaginings. For example, Drake details the debate between those who championed a "rigid relationship between latitude and climate" and those who connected climate to continent (p. 54). As the first sections progresses, however, Drake begins to delve more deeply into historical specificity.

Drake's analysis of the Seven Years' War and its aftermath, which constitutes the majority of the next two chapters, demonstrates how British North Americans applied their continental imaginings to political situations. According to Drake, anxieties about who would rule North America, which because of its geographical unity could only house one imperial power, helped jumpstart the Seven Years' War. Furthermore, once Britain defeated France, it became easier for colonists to imagine themselves as part of a larger, continental community. Ironically, memory of this victory, according to Drake, "repeatedly raised the questions of whether the war was indeed for the continent and whether mainland colonists constituted a distinct continental society"

(p. 132). Even as colonists' memories of the Seven Years' War helped to solidify an imagined continental community, growing political rifts with the crown regarding taxation, representation, and the Quebec Act built upon Americans' continental consciousness.

The final four chapters that comprise Part Two examine how leading colonists turned previously constructed metageographical conceptions about the continent away from empire and toward independence and expansion. For Drake, this turn appears most clearly in two "continental" labels: the Continental Congress and the Continental Army. According to Drake, the Continental Congress "offered the comfort of a unity rooted in nature that helped allow a legislative body to assume executive powers and replace the discredited king" (p. 175). The "Continental" label helped diffuse some of the anxiety about the centralization of political power, and its later application to the newly formed regular army did much the same for American fears about standing armies.

In addition to wicking anxiety from a newly independent populace, metageographical understandings played a key role in the intellectual underpinnings of independence and expansion. Chiefly through a comparison of Jefferson's *Notes on the State of Virginia* and Mexican Jesuit Francisco Clavigero's *Historia Antigua de Mexico*, Drake demonstrates the peculiarity of the American geographical imagination. The same metageographical understandings that separated America from the West Indies, Canada, Mexico, and India also played an integral role in the eventual ratification of the Constitution. Although Anti-Federalists called on the warnings of Montesquieu, Federalists called on widespread ideas about the America's "continental" destiny to alleviate the fears of their political opponents. Again, chiefly through intellectual history, Drake lays the connection between geography and politics bare.

While Drake uses intellectual history to effectively demonstrate the integral role played by metageographical understandings, his reliance on this methodology renders his central argument less effective. Far too often, Drake neglects to provide broad historical context for his analysis of eighteenth century geographical imaginings. As a result, Drake's presentation of the development of Americans' metageographical understandings seems far too linear. In other words, Drake's study does little to illuminate any resistance to the growing continental consciousness of leading Americans. Perhaps a more thorough examination of non-elites would help unearth that resistance. That said, Drake's contributions to the story of America's independence far outweigh these shortfalls.

In the end, *The Nation's Nature* provides readers interested in Revolutionary America, political history, and the intellectual foundations of nationhood new answers to old questions through an intriguing blend of historical and geographical analysis. Not only does Drake complicate America's master narrative, he demonstrates that much like other cultural constructions, geography gives historians another lens through which to view the power dynamics that shape history. Most significantly, *The Nation's Nature* adds to an important historiographical discussion about the value of interdisciplinary history.

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Islands: From Atlantis to Zanzibar. STEVEN ROGER FISCHER. London: Reaktion Books, 2012. Pp. 336, illustrations, index. \$35.00 hardcover. ISBN 1-78023032-X.

Since the late 1980s, researchers and academics with an interest in history have renewed their interest in analyzing across vast temporalities, such as the beginning of life on Earth.

From physicist Stephen Hawking's seminal *A Brief History of Time* (1988) to historian David Christian's influential article "The Case for 'Big History'" (1991), grand scales of relationality and engagements that venture far beyond specific events, a few centuries, or even across the arc of a particular nation-state's history have appeared with greater frequency. Embracing different urges than the "grand narratives" of civilization that captured the attention of historians in the past, these approaches consider the *longue durée* of human and/or planetary evolution. Although each one goes by different names and focuses on slightly different types of evidence, they share certain characteristics. The one that most applies to the book under review here is the intellectual endeavor that refers to itself as "big history."

From the start, big history has had its advocates and critics. In *Maps of Time: An Introduction to Big History* (2011), David Christian notes that opponents of big history accuse its adherents of flattening important distinctions in the world in order to make exaggerated claims that sound like just another type of grand narrative. Christian does not back away from these challenges. Instead, he believes that critics can deal with these issues by addressing some concerns head-on and being clear about the limitations of the theoretical approach. While a challenging type of analysis, the end results are historical accounts that position human history within a wider, complex story of life that includes other species and even other worlds.

Although a challenge to many branches of history, big history looks quite tame when seen from the perspective of disciplines such as geology, geography, physics, and other fields in which studies of vast time and scale—such as evolution or the "big bang"—demand large data points across epochs (both historical and geographical). This fact may account for why historical geographers, such as Barry Rodrigue, participate at the forefront of big history along with other pioneers such as Christian, geologist Walter Alvarez, historian and educator Cynthia Stokes Brown, cultural and social anthropologist Fred Spier, and newly converted big history student-philanthropist Bill Gates. With an international organization, multiple books in circulation dealing with the topic, a wide range of courses for students of all ages, and an assortment of large-scale projects underway, big history has evolved into something formidable and much more far-reaching than merely a scholarly trend.

Although Steven Roger Fischer does not explicitly tie his book *Islands: From Atlantis to Zanzibar* to the big history community, it nevertheless does share several notable similarities with that field's research agenda. First, although a prolific author more known for linguistics and language study, Fischer has created an interdisciplinary book on islands that seeks to tell a much longer history of the evolution of island systems. What emerges from this orientation is a book that carefully focuses on what Fischer describes as a "recognition that islands take on form through geology, take on life through biology, and take on meaning through culture" (p. 7). Fischer may have come to this conclusion while working on another book on islands of the Pacific. Regardless of where the motivation to write this text first appeared, the resultant book is one that, in keeping with the agenda of big history, focuses on aspects of island history that do not begin with human habitation of island systems.

From the start, Fischer makes this agenda clear, arguing in his preface that "islands are Earth's crucibles and cradles, bridges and bonds" (p. 6). As such, examining islands on our planet is a study of life on Earth. The resulting text provides a diverse assortment of statistics, histories, and narratives that attempts to give islands a big history makeover. What follows, though, is a book that only partially succeeds in its aims. Although Fischer wants to chart the ways that island systems "have co-enabled, geologically and biologically, the very Earth that we know" (p. 6), what emerges is a readable but uneven text. Some chapters benefit from the big history approach while others become bogged down by too much information. Even with these issues, *Islands*, on the whole, proves a welcome contribution to big history and the field of island studies.

As noted above, the book grapples explicitly with the geological formation of islands and the flora and fauna that inhabit their worlds. In fact, the first two chapters deal specifically with these issues. Sweeping and almost overburdened with details, these chapters are, unfortunately, the least effective within the book. It is as if in order to tell a tale of big history, Fischer thinks that he needs to rigidly control the narrative by resorting to lists and definitions. In so doing, he struggles to find a tone within them that is neither overly technical, nor overly didactic (such as what one might expect in an undergraduate text). The end result is a story that contains far more lists intermixed with prose than argument. Although both chapters provide important and fascinating information, they lack the narrative punch of the later chapters. In these later sections, Fischer grabs the reader and sets up a rich conversation about islands, their myths and realities, and their afterlives.

One of the best examples from these chapters is one called "First Footprints." It charts the evolution of humans and their "prints" on island systems over time. At nearly sixty pages, this is a mammoth chapter that swings from the first hominids and their island journeys to twenty-first century islanders exiled from their homelands due to climate change. Even though the information is presently chronologically, the chapter offers a compelling argument that human-island interaction over time contains cycles of connection, discovery, exploitation, and destruction. It is heady and engaging material.

The chapters that follow walk through a range of topics from trade through and among islands, nation-building on islands and archipelagoes, the island in the imagination of humans, and the future of island systems on our planet. It is this last point that draws the book to a close. And Fischer uses it to great effect by arguing that even with humanity's current level of ecological destruction on the planet, islands have a future. It's ours that is in doubt. "We shall all go," he warns, "but islands will endure" (p. 306). A compelling read suitable for general audiences, students, and specialists.

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Napa Valley Historical Ecology Atlas: Exploring a Hidden Landscape of Transformation and Resilience. ROBIN GROSSINGER. Berkeley: The University of California Press, 2012. Pp. xi+223, maps, diagrams, color plates, bibliographic references, index. \$39.95 hardcover. ISBN 978-0-520-26910-1.

The grandeur of the great Napa Valley oaks captured the imagination of many nineteenth-century travelers to the Napa Valley. Eloquently described in literature by Robert Louis Stevenson, and sensitively photographed by Carleton Watkins and Eadweard Muybridge, the Napa oaks were mainstays in a complex savanna landscape likened to an English park, valued for not only its aesthetics, but also for the practical benefits of providing shade during the hot valley summers. Over the course of a few decades, early farmers did away with most of the oak savannas, transforming the Napa Valley floor to favor the higher-value and sun-seeking vineyard and fruit orchard agricultural landscapes, dissipating an early geography no one has seen for over one hundred years (pp. 26-27). The *Napa Valley Historical Ecology Atlas* by Robin Grossinger examines the oak savanna landscapes and other historic ecosystems of the Napa Valley, documenting their rapid transformations and rediscovering forgotten habitats and functions that are vital for understanding present-day environmental challenges and practical land management options for the future. The San Francisco Estuary Institute, Friends of the Napa River, and other local partners collaborated with Grossinger's investigation.

The *Napa Valley Atlas* presents a fresh perspective on an iconic landscape using methods pioneered by the San Francisco Estuary Institute (SFEI) in historical ecology that synthesize natural science with history to document the physical transformation of the Napa Valley over the past two centuries. *Napa Valley Atlas* cartographer, Ruth Askeveld, has created a series of detailed maps that unite regional historical maps, photographs, paintings, and graphics to provide the reader with an elegant visualization of a forgotten heritage. These images are vital in chronicling each historic layer of landscape, unfolding a picture of the Napa Valley through time and space. Grossinger identifies five major components that compose Napa's biogeography – the grand oak savannas, the downslope creeks, the valley wetlands, the Napa River, and downstream tidal marshes – relating distinct stories to explain the valley's conversion to the present-day agricultural landscape. A selection of these stories is presented in a series of Napa Valley driving field tours designed to revisit the living landscape, identifying natural heritage remnants and patterns that correlate historical geography with present-day population and residential pressures.

The *Napa Valley Atlas* overall emphasizes historical ecology as an important tool for increasing the fundamental understanding of the Napa Valley ecosystem, investigating how people have interacted with and shaped the landscape during the past two-hundred years. Many contemporary researchers are recognizing that some conservation strategies are misguided and many ecological restorations fail due to a lack of knowledge about the local historical conditions. Understanding historical perspectives can expose the dynamic nature of a specific landscape, piecing together a picture of the long-term influence of humans as components in functioning ecosystems and providing a basis for conservation and restoration decisions. "There is a lot of mythology out there how things used to be," writes Grossinger, but he contends that dispelling preconceived notions of the past can improve the conservationist's goal to restore native habitat. The author recognizes that revisiting local geography with a new level of scientific thought and historical reconstruction will allow land managers to apply more integrated and functional landscape management practices. Historical ecology helps define and connect choices – those from the past with ones that will remain in the future. Landscape-level perspectives likewise can aid in an accurate identification of missing elements in present-day landscapes, marking hidden landscape elements that might be recovered within the context of current and projected future environmental conditions. The Napa Valley is a stunningly beautiful landscape, yet its characteristics are in constant flux. Local Napa Valley residents still desire roads and electricity, safety from floods, and a thriving agriculture and economy, but residents also want a resilient and healthy local river with fish and wildlife, a reliable water resource, and a landscape that is resistant to climate change for future generations (pp. 144-151).

"Part of the Napa mystique is in fact the rawness and vibrancy of the land, wildness mixed with refinement – rugged hills and remnant valley oaks framing vineyards in wine labels" (p. 145). Grossinger introduces the idea of *terroir* – the unique influences of the local land and climate on the nature of wine – to celebrate the Napa Valley for its unique present-day sense of place, yet interestingly, he scarcely mentions viticulture in the atlas. Within the local agrarian community, there is a remarkable knowledge of regional topography, soils, and microclimates of the valley (p. 144). The author attributes Napa's agricultural success to a present-day culture that appreciates and preserves the countryside, thus suggesting that future environmental strategies may subdue urban and suburban development and create a resilient valley agricultural landscape that will guide the expansion of ecological functions and processes (pp. 144-151). *Terroir* is a promising theme Grossinger needs to expound. Napa's natural bounty of salmon, oaks, songbirds, and other elements play unique roles and contribute to the valley's aura, building a depth into the layers of the living Napa landscape.

Any examination of a historical landscape helps recognize the persistence and resilience of

its living landscape today. Grossinger argues that the historic Napa landscape was well adapted to a variable climate regime, exhibiting diverse ecological functions to buffer environmental extremes, but today's modern landscape transformations have simplified native valley habitats, thus suggesting that many intrinsic features of resilience have been eliminated. Complexity and diversity did allow multiple life history options for Napa Valley native species now vulnerable to change. Overall, the author insists that there is still potential to increase local ecosystem health and resiliency by reestablishing selected characteristics of the valley's historic natural heritage (p. 151). While the future is inherently unpredictable, Grossinger believes the Napa Valley residents still have the ability to choose and reshape the valley's environmental elements to insure a sustainable, economically viable, and pleasant place to live. The *Napa Valley Atlas* is visually pleasing, initiating new thought on a dynamic northern California landscape that will be of general interest to public and scientific communities alike.

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Building a Market: The Rise of the Home Improvement Industry, 1914–1960. RICHARD HARRIS. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012. Pp. xii+431, illustrations, notes, index. \$45.00 cloth. ISBN 978-0-226-31766-3.

Over the last three decades, Richard Harris has, in installments, sought out highly original ways to revise the history of suburbanization in North America. In *Unplanned Suburbs* (1996), *Creeping Conformity* (2004), and a suite of articles, he has joined Robert Lewis and others in rendering developments on the edge of the metropolis more morphologically complex, agentially diverse, and downright disorderly than received wisdom—in which composed residential enclaves of the middle class perforce lead the way—has let on. Here he continues this line of inquiry, but obliquely, refracting it through the specific sets of materials and now-ordinary economic practices that have made mass home improvement possible, popular, and convenient.

To do so, *Building a Market* adheres to a traditional sort of plot: setup, crisis, resolution. In the first part we see certain conditions of possibility settle into place: the middle classes learn in the 1920s to *desire* homeownership—neither a foreordained instinct nor, as Harris has argued for years, an originally middle-class contraption—and the lumber industry learns, fitfully, a bit awkwardly, how to accommodate amateurs. Indeed, the brunt of Harris's empirical labors—and, one suspects, the book's most enduring value—resides with this intricate story of lumber's great domestication. In part it is the chronicle of an oddly chaotic, trust-besotted sector submitting to standardization. In larger measure the shifts we follow are cultural: lumbermen's self-conception, public image, and professional competency all morph as companies diversify, establish showrooms, produce model homes, initiate whole "lines" and "packages" of their goods, and, crucially, retrain employees (or find new ones) to be genteel enough so as not to repulse their new, higher-class, increasingly female clientele. We watch reluctant manufacturers, in short, learning to become *retailers*, and to like it. Harris's thick-descriptive contrast between the old-style "line yard," that "Eveless purgatory" (p. 86) on the wrong side of the tracks, and the retouched, friendlier "home center" closer to downtown is evocative and instructive. And he revisits questions of gender in surprising ways throughout: home improvement, Harris argues, became by the early 1950s a key arena in which new forms of male-female cooperation were forged, men assumed a new interest in things domestic, and women took on new roles in public.

Harris also skillfully expands our understanding of the New Deal's interventions in

housing finance. The emergence of the FHA has been documented and critiqued many times over, but usually with reference to the mortgages it facilitated for *new* housing starts (under the 1934 National Housing Act's Title II). Harris points out that, particularly between 1934 and 1936, the state insured significant sums in order to promote the "modernization" of *existing* homes – an appealing option *precisely because* the climate for new housing was so dire. (Federal programs were, in turn, modeled on the installment plans innovated by the manufacturer Johns-Manville in the 1920s, and on the work of smaller credit agencies.) It was this expansion of financial instruments, for Harris, that "unwittingly, and unwillingly" (p. 224) laid the foundation for the post-World War II consolidation, complete by 1954, of a full-on "Do-It-Yourself" movement and the landscape of one-stop shops recognizably linked to today's Home Depot gargantuan. The book's third part deals with this postwar period in some depth, but Harris's method is so measured and causal that the book's resolution feels like an eventuality, telegraphed from the outset. His cultural-historical explorations of how "DIY" was parsed in the national media are astute, as are his comments on home improvement's period-appropriate gloss as a form of "therapy," but few appreciable surprises can be said to emerge.

Harris's is not primarily a theoretical project. He is conversant with recent work in economic sociology that treats "markets" as learned collective performances, "field[s] of action" guided by state policy and sustained by trust, habit, and a host of forces that exceed naked calculative rationality. This brand of thinking, advanced largely under the sign of Pierre Bourdieu, can lapse into truism – "If markets are political, they are also fundamentally social" (p. 11) – but Harris wisely sequesters these formulations on the edges of his story, letting them adumbrate but not invade the text. He is at root a storyteller, not an interpreter: "We can parse rhetoric. Better, we can observe what people did" (p. 43).

Still, *Building a Market* harbors the residues of too many conceptual roads not taken, exciting leads that the author confines to the epigraph, the aside, the anachronistic cartoon. Harris seems uninterested in theorizing built space – its inhabitation, its modification, its inertial sway over hearts and minds – with the same kind of thoroughness he devotes to "the market." Nor, despite the extended forays into lumber and its substitutes, does he reflect on materiality, on the house (or its components) *as material culture*, in any sustained way. Yet the perpetually "improved" home, all his evidence suggests, is, precisely in its constitutive *incompletion*, a most perplexing artifact, thinkable only in process – and in terms of the ongoing activity to which it compels its stewards. Houses continually form their accompanying subjects: they are objects, but hardly inanimate. But what precise *kind* of animacy should we take this to be? Paul Robbins, in *Lawn People* (2007), has used another totemic unit of suburban space to open this conversation. Houses present a different sort of challenge. That buildings "learn," that they "don't stand still" (*Building a Market*, p. 1), we know colloquially but struggle to elaborate in a philosophical way. It would have been fascinating to see these propositions thought through with some of the speculative license assumed by another Harris, Neil, in *Building Lives* (1999), on the durable relationships of care and obligation – well beyond mere consumption – we enact with respect to the object world. The conspicuous reliance over the years on medical metaphors in making sense of home improvement – "the ailing house" (*Building a Market*, p. 153), "house doctors" (p. 330) – suggests a dense associative web suffusing everyday bromides about enhancing a building's "livability." Perhaps these conceptual flights beckon to a different, less narrative historian than the present author, but their seeds are manifestly there in his storehouse of evidence. Their pursuit might, too, have afforded relief from the mundane internecine blow-by-blow that Harris lets structure too many subheadings on end: "The Manufacturers Finally Pull Together," "Dealers Go Their Own Way," "Opportunity Knocks," and so on.

But these are stylistic points, ultimately issues of emphasis and temperament. Harris's

omnivorous archival work points us in a number of productive directions. The result ought to be read with attention by historians and theorists of the built environment, and by all those concerned with how ordinary Americans and Canadians have experienced, valued, reimagined, and intervened on their most familiar spaces.

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The Lost Art of Finding Our Way. JOHN EDWARD HUTH. Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2013. Pp. 528, appendices, glossary, notes, index. \$35.00 cloth. ISBN 978-0-674-07282-4.

The progress of Western civilization has increasingly valued a removal from the natural world, a move from the material to the abstract. This trend manifests itself in a number of ways, from the fact that prized jobs now consist of sitting in front of a computer screen in air-conditioned buildings rather than laboring in the fields, to the reality that many people these days simply do not know where food comes from. Another manifestation of this trend, one largely unremarked outside of perhaps the survivalist subculture, is the growing loss of those traditional forms of navigation which relied upon reading the signs of the environment. After all, we live in an era in which increasingly affordable GPS devices offer a paint-by-numbers form of finding one's way in the world, so what knowledge need we of how to find the northern star or take note of the direction of the wind?

As someone who enjoys hiking and who lives in a rural state with still many gaps in cellular coverage as well as large swaths of sparsely settled national forest land and several major trail systems, this reviewer appreciates Harvard University physicist John Huth's assertion that "humans *can* absorb exceedingly subtle environmental clues to find their way," and that "[e]ach of us is a navigator" (p. 2). *The Lost Art of Finding Our Way* explores what Huth calls "cultures of navigation," those peoples such as the Vikings or Pacific Islanders who, as a matter of course, traversed great distances without the aid of modern technology, employing primarily their trained observations of the natural world. In surveying the techniques employed by such cultures, Huth produces a book that can be approached as both a study of the challenges faced and skills exercised by voyagers throughout human history and as a practical manual, "an opportunity to test your own observational skills, increase your appreciation of your environment, and perhaps develop a lifetime of practice" (p. 10).

Huth opens with a chapter describing the sorts of mental maps navigators must keep in their heads, pairing the practices of, for example, Inuit nomads with current research conducted by neuroscientists and psychologists into how our senses of motion and direction become integrated to produce an internal blueprint of the environment. Of course, sometimes mental maps and reality do not correspond, producing the experience of being lost, and Huth devotes a chapter to the behavior of lost people, with examples including individual hikers and major historic expeditions into the unknown. After laying this groundwork, the book proceeds to cover practical means of determining one's position and course, beginning with dead reckoning, or the assessment of one's position by reference to one's starting point and travels thus far. Along the way, the practicalities of navigation are enriched with insights into the evolution of human understanding of the world, and how that understanding has been communicated. For example, the chapter on using maps and compasses includes a brief history of both items, from the earliest known maps appearing on cave walls dated to 12,000 BCE through the portolan charts that

appeared in the thirteenth century down to the nineteenth-century Great Trigonometric Survey of India. Far from being mere asides, such sections actually enhance the narrative by revealing the underlying sophistication of maps and tools that might, to modern eyes, appear rather crude. Likewise does his foray into the physics of light polarization help to illuminate the likely use of calcite (a.k.a. Iceland spar) by Viking navigators to determine the position of the sun in a fogbank.

Lest it be thought that *The Lost Art of Finding Our Way* leaves the modern world behind, there is a chapter covering “urban myths of navigation” which tackles whether or not older churches are always aligned on an east-west axis and whether satellite dishes always point toward the southwest. In addition, Huth also draws attention to how even simply sighting a ship at sea or an airplane can aid in determining one’s course and position.

Occasionally, Huth turns MacGyver in order to illustrate the relative ease of employing classical navigation techniques, as when he sets out to determine his latitude and longitude armed only with his wristwatch and a homemade quadrant fashioned from “a wooden board, a metal tube, fishing line, a rock (for the plumb bob), and a graded angle scale I made from scratch,” with the result that he found his position “to a precision of thirty nautical miles along a north-south axis and fifteen nautical miles along an east-west axis” (pp. 247, 249). The whole latter half of the book focuses upon Huth’s clear favorite theme of ocean navigation, with chapters on reading the weather, waves, currents, and the flight of seabirds, differentiating between the use of migratory, shore-sighting, and homing birds. Unfortunately, the author, a kayaking enthusiast, does go off on watercraft-related tangents, covering in depth the stability of hulls as well as techniques for sailing against the wind. That said, though, the author addresses ocean-going travel with enough clarity as to be readily comprehensible by even his landlocked readers, and the closing chapter, which recalls the story of legendary woman navigator Baintabu of the Gilbert Islands, allows Huth to bring together all the lessons of his book in a moving narrative.

One of the challenges of doing historical geography is establishing that subjective experience of relating to the environment as those in the past would have done. One can research, say, older practices of agriculture, but unless endowed with the requisite land and materials, it is hard to establish a real sense of what it was like to engage in cultivation year in and year out. However, many of the navigational techniques detailed in *The Lost Art of Finding Our Way* can be practiced anywhere one can see the sun and stars above. With the practice of observing our surroundings, we not only begin to understand the lives of our ancestors, but we also begin to feel truly at home in this world, which is the true gift of this book.

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Mastering Iron: The Struggle to Modernize an American Industry, 1800-1868. ANNE KELLY KNOWLES. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2013. Pp. 241, maps, photographs, appendix, notes, glossary, bibliography, map sources, index. \$45.00 cloth. ISBN 978-0-226-44859-6.

In *Mastering Iron*, Anne Kelly Knowles has written not a broad-ranging study of the role of iron in the growth and development of America’s economy, but rather a tightly focused exploration of nineteenth-century ironmaking as a process that takes place in, well, places. The result is a masterful exemplar of “doing historical geography” that stands to become an exceptional teaching resource for the way it highlights the fundamental nature of geographic considerations in contrast to the broader brushstrokes of history and economy. Historical GIS peeks through the text from behind the scenes in its role as invaluable research tool without

becoming a major topical focus in itself, making the book also an excellent embodiment of the trend toward historical geography scholarship quietly incorporating GIS technology.

Of the several essential geographic elements that form the foundations of this book, scale weaves itself through the text, here appearing in one guise and there in another. The overarching research question that Knowles seeks to answer concerns why American ironmakers did not fully adopt the British techniques and technologies that made the ironmaking complexes in South Wales and other key locations so efficient. This question appears, at first glance, as one to be worked out at continental scales. Knowles, by contrast, uses data at very different scales – that of individual sites and even buildings, and down to the bodies of workers – to produce much of her answer, even though global-scale factors such as transatlantic migration of artisans and diffusion of technologies are never far from the story and often do play important roles at the microscale. Conditions at regional and subregional scales within the eastern United States complete Knowles' story.

Case studies of both successful and unsuccessful ironworks illuminate the critical role of site and situation in answering Knowles' question. Relevant site conditions include terrain and water but even more critically, the proximity and chemical composition of iron ore, limestone, and carbon energy sources. In particular, some of the British technology designs were dependent on specific chemical compositions found there but not in the eastern US, making a simple transfer of technology insufficient for replicating British efficiencies. Situation conditions involving natural and built accessibility resources were also vital for outcomes at individual works. In this era of widespread internal improvements projects, sometimes an expected canal or railroad line connecting a works to sources and markets failed to materialize, leaving the location too isolated for viability. In other cases, wise initial locational choices were augmented by owners' investment in further accessibility resources, creating a reinforcing feedback loop. Accessibility resources were of particular importance in American ironmaking in part because of the long distances involved. Thus another key geographic element in Knowles' overall argument is that distance between places made conditions for American ironmakers fundamentally different from those in Britain and in continental Europe.

Feedback loops involving the making and use of iron were, as beautifully illustrated in Knowles' chapter on the Civil War, instrumental in deepening the divide between North and South in terms of economic resilience and infrastructure as well as in the ability to fight the war itself. Although Knowles does not frame the unfolding changes in terms of systems thinking, it is clear that nearly every change in the North contributed to its growing strength in a series of reinforcing or amplifying feedbacks, while nearly every change in the South contributed to that region's further diminishment in a series of balancing or negative feedback loops. In this chapter, more than in any others, Knowles' examination of ironmaking contributes to a broader understanding of the structure and functioning of the United States and two of its major regions.

The longest chapter in the book is the one in which Knowles introduces the reader to her main data sources, discusses their origins and weaknesses in depth, and maps out the broad patterns they reveal. While this chapter might bog down some readers, notably undergraduates, it constitutes an outstanding example of the data assessment necessary for both researcher and readers to evaluate the validity of statements made based on these data. Without resorting to a dry framing of these considerations as such, Knowles presents a narrative about her data that shows us where we need to think about incompleteness, unevenness, uncertainty, and bias. For example, the people whose fieldwork built the guidebook on which Knowles relies were prone to make different assumptions about Southern ironworks than about Northern ones, and to give up more easily on acquiring information in Southern locations. Knowles also argues for the use of visual materials, not as mere illustration but as sources of information (a point I am also

frequently making to my students), and the book is richly “illustrated” with many of these visual data sources, adding both to its visual appeal and its information content.

As part of the chapter on data, Knowles presents maps derived from a GIS database based on the ironworks guide mentioned above. These maps are important because they demonstrate that while there were clear spatial patterns in some aspects of the whole, patterns one might expect to see in relation to the technologies adopted were not evident. That is, there was no clear pattern of diffusion in which backwoods ironworks were primitive (though some were) while their eastern counterparts were more advanced (though, again, some were). One interesting data visualization technique used with some of these maps involves combining a map with a graph constructed around lines extended vertically from major cities as the x value, and year of construction as the y value. The outcome is quite interesting in terms of east-to-west patterns—yet the graph would reflect different patterns if the map were put in a different projection. I also wondered about what a north-south graph would show—or some other axis such as one representing the mid-Atlantic coast.

I stated above that *Mastering Iron* will be an exceptional teaching resource. I base this on my experiences teaching historical geography to undergraduates who are not geography majors. All of them grasp the study of the past, but virtually none grasps how to do that from a geographical perspective until, if I am lucky, the end of the semester. Knowles’ book, even more than what it contributes to our understanding of iron in the antebellum United States or its role in the Civil War, will give students a concrete and eloquent example through which to trace the thoughts and concepts, the differences in focus, and the processes of investigation that make historical geography different from history.

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History and GIS: Epistemologies, Considerations and Reflections. ALEXANDER VON LÜNEN and CHARLES TRAVIS, editors. Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Springer Science+Business Media, 2013. Pp. xiv+239, index. \$116.00 hardcover. ISBN 978-94-007-5008-1.

Advances in geographic information systems (GIS) have had beneficial effects for scholars across a variety of disciplines. The ability to digitally store, manipulate, and analyze geographic data has forever transformed research of spatial problems. Modern GIS applications operate with remarkable speed and efficiency, and these applications increasingly serve as valuable tools for investigators across academia. However, even with the publicity of the recent “spatial turn” in history, few academic historians actively use GIS. Given the large datasets and geographic-based information that often enhance historic research, any union of historians and GIS that has seemed likely for the past few decades has not yet occurred. GIS offers a near-limitless potential of uses and applications for research, so why is GIS not more prevalent in academic history?

Alexander von Lünen and Charles Travis present a response to the problem of distance between academic history and GIS. Their edited volume, *History and GIS: Epistemologies, Considerations and Reflections*, gathers a variety of discussions on the importance of GIS in academic history. The editors argue that yes, GIS requires some technical training, but the real problem of GIS and history’s continued separation is the lack of recognized methodological worth of GIS by historians. Given this divide, the editors note that mainstream historians would be somewhat justified in thinking that “GIS and its proponents have so little to offer in terms of intellectual merit, but are asking for so much in terms of learning curve” (p. vi). This book is not a technical volume

of computational terms, nor is it a tome that merely recounts dozens of interesting historical GIS projects. Rather, it is a collection of multi-disciplinary voices about GIS and GIS methods tailored to address the reservations of any skeptical historian. As the editors noted, the volume's purpose is that each author will emphasize "why historians should use GIS and not how" (p. vii).

History and GIS is an edited volume, arranged into 14 short chapters. The text is quite accessible and the editors and authors are to be commended for this stylistically engaging book. The chapters include interviews, articles with a thematic focus, theoretical discussions, and writings about GIS method. Some chapters include a focus on a particular historical era (early medieval hagiography) while others expand upon a particular geographic topic (historical atlases). This diversity is not a weakness: each of the chapters presents a compelling case for increased usage of geospatial technologies in academic history.

David Bodenhamer begins with an outline of the basics of GIS in history while looking to a future "beyond GIS." Alexander von Lünen follows with an interview of the French historian Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie about computational geography and academic history. Onno Boonstra's appealing chapter covers the rise of thematic cartography of The Netherlands in the nineteenth century and identifies lessons for a possible golden age of historical GIS. Mark Palmer explains the utility of employing postcolonial discourses in historical GIS with a focus on the geospatial histories of North American Indians. Von Lünen interviews Gunnar Olsson on the geographical inference problem: What evidence or information may be gleaned from maps? Historian Alexi Baker provides an examination of the benefits of vernacular GIS in histories of the early modern period, where local concepts of space can suffice for historical data that lack "a modern degree of geographical precision" (p. 89). Faye Taylor discusses the potential benefits of GIS in medieval religious studies, including spatial approaches extant in recent medieval histories. Monica Wachowicz and J.B. Owens address potential revisions to historical GIS approaches using new kinds of knowledge spaces as a framework. Charles Travis interviews the historian David J. Staley about GIS, technology, and visualization. Sam Griffiths addresses the "epistemological barriers" between mainstream historians and GIS. Travis places GIS in a longer academic tradition of geographic practices, and suggests a more accessible use of GIS by historians, including a "rebooting" of GIS, and further argues that "GIS scholarship will proliferate only by developing its own unique language" (p. 191). Edward Ayers, Robert Nelson, and C. Scott Nesbit trace the American Historical Atlas from 1932, and relate the Atlas's pre-GIS spatial history to current GIS debates. Von Lünen concludes by tackling methodological issues relating to historians and GIS.

Von Lünen and Travis's edited volume is part of a wider set of scholars that argue for increased use of GIS in history. Anne Kelly Knowles' *Past Time, Past Place: GIS for History* (2002), Ian Gregory and Paul Ell's *Historical GIS* (2008), and the edited volume by Amy Hillier and Anne Kelly Knowles, *Placing History: How Maps, Spatial Data, and GIS Are Changing Historical Scholarship* (2008), have showcased the rise in book-length scholarship focused on GIS and history. A recent surge in titles includes *The Spatial Humanities: GIS and the Future of Humanities Scholarship* (2010) edited by David Bodenhamer, John Corrigan, and Trevor Harris; Michael Dear's edited volume *GeoHumanities: Art, History, Text at the Edge of Place* (2011); and Toni Weller's *History in the Digital Age* (2012). However, many of these works have focused far greater detail on the technical possibilities of GIS for history, in contrast to *History and GIS*.

The multi-disciplinary approach is valuable, and historians from many fields were represented, including a fair number of academic geographers. While the inclusion of more geographers might strengthen some chapters, the overall representation of the cross-disciplinary nature of historical GIS is effective throughout this work. In addition, while the volume is admittedly not a map gallery of research projects, a few more examples of the end products of various historical GIS approaches could have been included to give even greater support to the

unconvinced historian. Any critiques with this volume, however, are minor – the underuse of GIS in academic history is a broad problem, so there are no easy solutions in convincing a discipline to change methodological direction.

Alexander Von Lünen and Charles Travis have gathered a strong set of arguments, and this book adds important perspectives to scholarship of the geospatial humanities. Understanding and expanding on GIS in history is no simple task, yet the combined authors of this work present compelling geospatial invitations to academic historians. The overall approach and content of this work makes a successful argument for the active utilization of GIS in history. The editors noted that “GIS should be the killer app for digital history” (p. vi). Given the chapters that follow, historians who approach this work will surely agree.

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Sight Unseen: How Frémont's First Expedition Changed the American Landscape. ANDREW MENARD. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2012. Pp. xxix+249, illustrations, maps, index. \$29.95 hardcover. ISBN 978-0-8032-3807-7.

Andrew Menard's *Sight Unseen: How Frémont's First Expedition Changed the American Landscape* offers a new approach to understanding critical environmental perceptions of the west in nineteenth century America. By placing John C. Frémont at the center of text, Menard claims it was Frémont's 1842 expedition of the west that changed perceptions Americans held towards a broader western landscape. Menard argues that Frémont read manifest destiny into Great Plains and Rocky Mountain landscapes. As a result, the West evolved from a feared landscape to an environment filled with the potential of American expansion.

The text is divided into two sections. The first section places the West, more specifically the Great Plains and Oregon, within a larger American conversation of western spaces. Menard argues that politicians constantly debated the value of an American settlement too far removed from the political and economic centers of the east. For example, in the early nineteenth century it was often debated whether Oregon was an entity of the United States or its own autonomous political body. There was a concern among American politicians that its distance would promote lawlessness and hinder proper practice of patriotic democracy. Menard argues that naturalists and their reports reiterated the political arguments of the day. The American prairie was seen as the American Desert, a salty flatland that would never accommodate the agricultural demands dreamed of in Jeffersonian America. However, as Menard points out, this mentality would soon shift with the assistance of Frémont's *Report*. The *Report* broke the standard western script for early nineteenth century naturalists. Frémont certainly saw the west as a violent wilderness; it was not, however, an environment to be feared.

The second portion of the text focuses on Frémont's role in changing the definition of western space. As Menard points out, for Frémont western space was not defined by eastern standards, but rather appreciated for its own natural qualities. In this thinking, Frémont's observation of Courthouse Rock embodies a piece of America rather than a distant and foreign landscape. Courthouse Rock came to represent a piece of American geography, as indicated by its name. Through name association, Menard links Frémont's observations of the western landscape to the early beginnings of manifest destiny. The author places Frémont's *Report* at the birth of manifest destiny and the text that helped change the discourse of the western United States from barren wilderness to celebrated extension of American landscape.

The author uses Frémont's experience with a bee to create a convincing portrayal of the explorer's view of manifest destiny. While resting during a hike in the Rocky Mountains, Frémont was accompanied by a traveling bee. Presumably tired from the increase in elevation, the insect rested upon his knee. After a few moments of inspection, Frémont crushed the bee with a nearby journal. Menard argues that the choice to include this narrative into the report speaks to Frémont's view of conquering the western landscape. Instead of fearing the bee, Frémont kills it in a symbolic act that represents the American conquest of the western landscape. Menard argues that this event is placed in the *Report* specifically to embody a transition from the old sentiment of a barren West to a new and uniquely American West.

Frémont's *Report* is one among other reports coming from an expanding American West. Menard believes that more than other naturalists, Frémont expressed optimism toward western expansion, which transformed and conquering formerly wild spaces. This argument can be hard to place among nineteenth-century naturalists. Eric Olmanson uses the reports of Henry R. Schoolcraft to shape the history of imaginative landscapes of the northern Great Lakes (*The Future City on the Inland Sea: A History of Imaginative Geographies of Lake Superior*, Ohio University Press, 2007). Both Frémont and Schoolcraft explored distant landscapes once perceived as wild and barren but came back reporting redemptive qualities of wild spaces. Both naturalists were equipped with the same cultural baggage during their expeditions. Schoolcraft and Frémont brought back narratives that embraced wild spaces and embodied a movement to understand foreign places on their own terms rather than as a digression from eastern landscapes. Although similarities may exist between Schoolcraft and Frémont, Menard effectively distinguishes Frémont's role in changing American discourse on the West. Frémont's findings and observations shifted the western landscape from an alien world to American landmark.

Menard's work offers a fresh approach to understanding Frémont within American discourse on the West. The author's references to political publications that appeared during Frémont's expedition not only place the *Report* in a historical timeframe but also emphasize the distinct shift this expedition created in developing the theme of manifest destiny. As politicians debated the management of the West, Frémont saw a cohesive continent driven by one American system. Frémont did not perceive the continental divide as an obstacle to an American progress. Rather, the range acted as a unifying force, the spine of America that held the western and eastern United States together. Through the imaginative eyes of Frémont, Menard makes significant strides in linking the words of the explorer and naturalist to the cultural concept that would shape the future land use and settlement of the American West.

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The Caribbean: A History of the Region and Its People. STEPHANE PALMIÉ and FRANCISCO A. SCARANO, editors. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2011. Pp. v+660, maps, index. \$35.00 paper. ISBN 0-226-64508-8.

As the fields of Atlantic and Transatlantic history have grown over the past two decades, so has the importance of the Caribbean as an area of study. Nowhere is this more clearly reflected than in the proliferation of generalist texts on the region which have emerged to provide a foundation for the more specialized works that typically characterize Caribbean studies. One of the more welcome recent entries into this growing body of work is the collection *The Caribbean: A History of the Region and Its Peoples*. Edited by anthropologist Stephan Palmié, a specialist in Afro-

Cuban culture, and historian Francisco Scarano, a student of the Spanish-speaking Caribbean, the volume features essays from leading scholars of the Caribbean in various disciplines including history, geography, archeology, sociology, and anthropology. Spanning over four centuries from pre-Columbian society through the challenges of the twenty-first century global environment, the collection offers a view of the Caribbean that emphasizes the continuity of the region's history even amidst frequent and often cataclysmic social, political, and economic change.

The key to understanding the Caribbean from the points of view of the editors and contributors to the volume is laid out in the first three chapters, comprising Part One of the collection. From its inception as a site of human habitation, the region was marked by both diversity and unity. The diversity of indigenous cultures and societies that occupied the islands in the centuries prior to European arrival is, as L. Antonio Curet argues in chapter two, analogous to the diversity that characterizes the contemporary social landscape of the Caribbean. At the same time that diversity serves as a unifying element: the region was and is diverse in its human geography. This same "diversity as unity" theme is found in a shared physical geography, which, especially in the Greater Antilles, encompasses several local climates and terrain types that are remarkably consistent throughout the region. Hurricanes, oceanographic and weather patterns, and flora and fauna vary according to the several types of local environments, but provide a common geographical experience throughout the islands.

This theme of a unifying diversity forms the core of the remaining sections as the history progresses from the "Columbian moment" in 1492 to the nation-states of the twenty-first century. Part Two, "The Making of the Colonial Sphere," explores the introduction of sugar planting and the attendant emergence of plantation slavery to the Caribbean islands. Essays highlighting the European conquest of the islands and the destruction of native peoples, the cultures of resistance to the creation of plantation complexes whether Taino or African, and the emergence of fringe communities, such as those of maroons and pirates, outside the growing imperial order in the region with sugar as the unifying concept around which these diverse histories are constructed. Parts Three and Four are likewise centered on the theme of plantation agriculture and slavery, with outstanding contributions from Alison Games, Selwyn Carrington and Ronald Noel that locate the region in the larger context of the Atlantic world both demographically and economically. Essays by Laurent Dubois and Phillip Morgan highlight resistance to the sugar plantocracy in the context of creole culture and revolution, while abolition figures prominently as the subject of contributions from Diana Paton and Jean Besson. Other essays explore the course of emancipation and abolition, the decline of the Spanish Caribbean, and imperial warfare.

Parts Five through Seven take the history of the post-emancipation Caribbean forward from the eighteenth century to the present. The diversity as unity trope of the collection is seen here in the variety of post-slavery experiences which differed from island to island depending on which European regime held political sovereignty, from the creation of a veritable peasant class out of former slaves in British and French territories, to the importation of Chinese and Indian laborers, as detailed by Gad Heuman, to Christopher Schmidt-Nowara's explorations of the "second slavery" period in the Spanish islands of Cuba and Puerto Rico. The common factor remains the sugar industry, and even where cash crop diversity became prominent, such as cacao in the Spanish colonies or on British Trinidad, the plantation complex as established in the sixteenth century survived. Whereas the twentieth century witnessed the collapse of the colonial empires in the Caribbean, Part Six takes on the emergence of a new colonialism in the form of US economic hegemony in the Caribbean. Essays on the Cold War in the region, Caribbean nationalism, US business investment, and labor struggles all highlight the divergent experiences of various Caribbean islands within the common framework of establishing independent and viable national and cultural identities. Part Seven, which confronts the modern Caribbean, looks

at ways in which Caribbean peoples continue to grapple with colonial legacies and establish economic self-determination. One of the interesting features of the late twentieth and early twenty-first century experience is the diaspora of mostly Afro-Caribbean people to Europe and North America, who, as Kristine Du Bois notes, make valuable contributions to their host societies while retaining strong links with, and even contributing important cultural identifiers to their home region.

While the range of topics is remarkably broad, and the essays often complex, nothing less would do justice to a region that figures so prominently in the development of the Atlantic world and the cultures and societies of both New World and Old. Because of its survey type of format, *The Caribbean: A History of the Region and Its People* would be appropriate for upper-division history course on the Caribbean or Transatlantic History, while the specialized nature of many of the contributions give the collection value to graduate courses in more narrow fields. Additionally, the diversity of contributions, much like the region itself, makes it both useful and accessible to a variety of disciplines and sub-fields. While the volume lacks the brevity of more general histories of the Caribbean such as Jan Rogonziski's *A Brief History of the Caribbean From the Arawak and Carib to the Present* (2000) or Tony Martin's textbook treatment *Caribbean History From Pre-colonial Origins to the Present* (2012) and does not contain the sharp topical focus of Frank Moya Pons' *History of the Caribbean: Plantations, Trade, and War in the Atlantic World* (2007), which considers the region from an economic perspective, the combination of breadth and scope from a variety of viewpoints make *The Caribbean: A History of the Region and Its People* a valuable and useful addition to the field.

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An Empire of Small Places: Mapping the Southeastern Anglo-Indian Trade, 1732-1795. ROBERT PAULETT. Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 2012. Pp. xiii+259, illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$24.95 paper, \$69.95 cloth. ISBN 978-0-8203-4347-1.

One of the quandaries of entering the field of Native American historical geography is coming to grips with the meanings of historical maps. Take, for instance, C.C. Royce's 1884 "Cherokee Nation of Indians" map, a cartographic record of Cherokee land cessions including roads, rivers, and settlements. These maps prompt us to establish a mental baseline of space in the form of political regions delimited by colorful boundaries, and this can lead us to assume that the actors in the map's events perceived space and region just as we do today.

Rethinking spatial relationships, geographical scale, the meaning of place, and how these affected identities and social relations within the context of the deerskin trade in the upcountry of colonial Georgia, and ultimately the entire South, are some of Robert Paulett's objectives in his geographical history of the southern deerskin trade, *An Empire of Small Places*. Paulett's use of "empire" is a nod to Eric Hinderaker's 1997 book, *Elusive Empires: Constructing Colonialism in the Ohio Valley, 1673-1800* in which an "empire of commerce" proved too slippery for centralized administrative control. Paulett asserts that actors working within local spaces and seeking their own competitive interests created a flexible regional trade system that confounded external imperial control. Although the subtitle reference to "mapping" implies surveying or cartography, it is the first of many of the author's applications of metaphor; here mapping refers both to the historical actors' agency in creating a regional system out of shaping conditions locally, as well as the author's historical interpretations of what it became. Paulett's contributions are methodological

as well as substantive, and this book will be of use to students of colonial southern history, the ethnohistory of the southeastern Indians, and the historical geography of peripheral regions during the rise of the eighteenth-century Atlantic world.

The time period is much of the British long eighteenth century, beginning with the 1715 Yamasee War and lasting to Indian Removal in the early 1930s. The first chapter combines an overview of the deerskin trade with a history of eighteenth-century British mapping of the Southeast. The author demonstrates that deficient geographic information was no obstacle to producing imperial maps, which served to justify commerce with interior Indian nations in order to win them over from the French and Spanish. Paulett lays out his thesis early and, admirably, attempts to substantiate it by surveying the spatial settings of the trade rather than presenting a linear progression of events. The primary spaces of the trade make up four of the six chapters and include the Savannah River basin, the town of Augusta, the interior network of Indian trading paths, and traders' houses. Each of these spaces had their own constituent parts and each embodies varied scales of interaction.

The Savannah River was the arterial up which the trade was initiated from the coast and the primary space in which African-Americans, as boatmen and laborers, played a role in the hide trade. The merchant settlement of Augusta, situated on the Fall Line, served as the entrepôt of the trade. Augusta's reach extended as far west as the lower Mississippi via a vast network of Indian paths over which travel was perilous and demanded cultural negotiation. Beaded along this network of paths were the numerous trading houses or posts in or near Indian settlements, serving as central places within Augusta's hinterland.

The author seeks to present the perspectives of those involved in the hide trade, from colonial administrators seeking territorial expansion and stability, to town merchants competing for network supremacy, to backcountry traders and their families with feet in two cultural worlds, and to African-American slaves. An important theme of the narrative is how these actors had not only different physical and social positions within the system, but also that they had very different parameters of movement and scales of interaction. Administrators competed with merchants, merchants competed with each other, and traders and tribes interacted across a huge region where geographic information was scarce, cross-cultural communication was crucial, and identities flexible. Not surprisingly, those on either end of the trade tended to be least effective. Slaves remained slaves and administrators never controlled the hide trade. Instead, the geography of the trade was orchestrated by the merchants of Augusta and the traders who resided among the tribes across the interior South.

Paulett argues that before the American Revolution, the backcountry Southeast developed as a complex, expansive functional region where commercial interests had worked to stabilize relations among British traders and Native peoples. While it has long been recognized that backcountry Scottish and English traders adapted to Native cultures as they built their own power and influence, Paulett sheds light on the generational cultural changes that produced the mixed-blood elite class that produced tribal factionalism in the 1790s. The system was flexible enough to quickly reorient to British and Spanish outlets on the Gulf Coast following increased white settlement and eventual rebellion in the Atlantic colonies.

Some readers may find Paulett's work occasionally slowed by his tendency to give extensive discussion to seemingly minor details that do not appear to advance his argument and some will become weary of his passion for using direct quotations to construct the narrative; both are marks of an enthusiastic young writer close to the research whose work will appeal more to specialists than general readers. Other readers will enjoy his imaginative interpretations and comparisons. Most readers will wonder why the publisher attempted, unsuccessfully, to reproduce the large historic maps examined in the first chapter. But readers of this journal will

appreciate Paulett's negotiation of the works of historical geographers, his grasp of material culture, and his obvious veneration of the spatial perspective.

Finally, Paulett's story of the British among the Southeastern Indians during the eighteenth century begs for a comparison with the earlier French *coureur des bois* experience in New France, since both fathered generations of influential biracial descendants. Although he does not explore the topic, Paulett's analysis shows that the southern hide trade, like the northern fur trade, is an example of how Europeans and Native Americans cooperated in a mutually-advantageous, *articulated* relationship. If so, then our dichotomous metanarrative of British-Indian and Franco-Indian relations should be revisited.

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Secret Science: Spanish Cosmography and the New World. MARÍA M. PORTUONDO. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009. Pp. xiv+335, illustrations, bibliography, index. \$30.00 paperback. ISBN 978-0-2260-5540-4.

In *Secret Science*, María Portuondo of the History of Science and Technology Department at Johns Hopkins University analyzes the operations, output, and milieu of Spanish cosmographers from the mid-fifteenth century to the early seventeenth century, when the country was exploring and settling the New World. Portuondo has thoroughly mined archival and secondary sources for her work, and provides the most thorough biographies (in English) of the prominent Spanish cosmographers of the day. She throws new light on the reasons for Spanish scientific and cartographic secrecy and how the sheer newness and immensity of the Americas altered cosmographic practices and imperial bureaucracy. Over this period, Portuondo contends, the humanistic discipline of cosmography served more and more as the adjunct to empire building, becoming increasingly specialized, mathematized, and bureaucratized.

In the first chapter Portuondo describes the discipline of Renaissance cosmography, a cartographic and narrative description of the peoples and places of the world. In Spain, as elsewhere in Europe, humanistic, cosmographic texts rested on classical and medieval foundations: Ptolemy, Sacrobosco, and Regiomontanus for geography and cartography, and Pliny the Elder, Strabo, and Pomponius Mela for descriptive natural history. Soon after the discovery of the New World, however, a flood of discoveries led to a dearth of knowledge about the new conquests, settlements, and subjects. The government tasked cosmographers with learning about and explaining the Americas so that king and court could understand the new lands. Cosmographers were also charged with refining navigational methods and training new pilots for the Indies route (*carrera de Indias*). By the accession of Philip II to the throne in 1556, cosmographers had already begun a shift from an emphasis on qualitative description to a more modern quantitative measurement and "scientific" explanation, a shift Portuondo says continued for the rest of the century.

The second chapter discusses the administrative and official uses of cosmography at the *Casa de Contratación* (the "Board of Trade" in Seville), the *Consejo de Indias* (the royal council that administered the Indies), and the *corte* (the royal court, where patronage was dispensed). Portuondo describes how information was collected and collated from the *relaciones* and reports submitted by explorers, conquistadors, and settlers in the New World, and used by the scholarly cosmographers to write books and suggest new regulations. Cosmographers such as Alonso de Santa Cruz, Juan de Herrera, and Rodrigo Zamorano attempted to tackle such problems as

locating the Treaty of Tordesillas line, creating instruments and equations to determine longitude, and assembling information for the use of the king and his ministers. Chapter three examines the increasing control of state bureaucracy on cosmographical practices and output. Official secrecy reduced the public output of Spain's scholarly class while simultaneously regulating and bureaucratizing its methodology. This had the effect of de-emphasizing narrative description and history and accentuating qualitatively precise "science." Cosmographer Alonso de Santa Cruz, with the approval of the information-hungry Philip II and his court, systematized the collection and processing of cosmographical information in the empire with two books, one of ordinances and another of instructions, meant to streamline the process of defining the empire. Portuondo claims that the plethora of information thus gathered was so profuse it prevented the production of any true Renaissance-style cosmography of the Spanish New World.

In chapters four through six, the focus is mostly on the work of Juan López de Velasco as cosmographer-chronicler of the Council of the Indies from 1571 to 1590, who inherited the procedures instituted by Santa Cruz. Velasco sent out the questionnaires that resulted in the oft-studied collection of documents called the *relaciones geográficas de Indias*, though scholars often fault him for not using such a trove to write a comprehensive cosmography of the Indies in the old style. Portuondo posits instead that the bureaucratic machinery in place and the deluge of constantly updated information prevented the writing of any such all-encompassing work. Velasco was content, Portuondo contends, to create a sort of encyclopedic database of information for the use of officialdom. In addition to the increasing scientific nature of the discipline, bureaucracy and secrecy prevented the writing of a narrative and comprehensive cosmography. Velasco rolled with the flow: the government altered cosmographic practices; he altered his cosmographic production. The last chapter discusses the changes wrought by the regulation and scientific specialization of cosmography over the sixteenth century. Portuondo concludes that the narrative-based cosmography of the Renaissance had been replaced by "mathematized cosmography" and the compilation of "atomized facts" because, Portuondo writes, "atomization—then as now—was the most efficient way to process a vast amount of information" (p. 255). The succession of Philip III to the throne in 1598 led to a loosening of some state secrets. Facts and books about the New World were seen less as secrets to be protected and more as a way to prove Spanish knowledge and possession of faraway places.

Portuondo's analysis of Spanish cosmography in the century or so after the discovery of the New World succeeds in placing the work of such scholars in their proper governmental and bureaucratic setting. Her contention that the vast immensity of knowledge overwhelmed Renaissance methods of description is interesting and compelling, forcing an emphasis on useful, utilitarian knowledge—facts that would aid in the maintenance of empire. In this scenario, for instance, Velasco's failure to write about the *relaciones geográficas* was not due to his disappointment about their oftentimes Amerindian-style content, but because government strictures and the inadequacy of Renaissance methodologies to process the information precluded any such writings. Velasco was instead compiling a database of useful knowledge for the ruling of the empire. (The tendency of bureaucracy to hamper output with tedious rules and regulations is made apparent but it is never explicitly cited as a cause for the lack of narrative output by Spain's cosmographers.) Portuondo's contention that the information gathered and sifted by Spanish state scholars tended to become more systematized and scientific over time makes sense as well: the history of conquest and the tiresome recounting of native mythologies did not aid lawmakers in Spain, but precise and accurate maps, rutters, and tables did. She concludes that by focusing on utilitarian solutions to the problems of imperial governance "little room was left for scientific speculation" (p. 302). Thus, Portuondo concludes, Spanish cosmographic science has suffered when compared to the work of others in Europe. This last contention would have been

strengthened by comparing the methods and output of Spanish cosmographers to their peers outside the Iberian Peninsula. Despite this minor drawback, *Secret Science* is an excellent addition to the literature for historians of science and the cartography of the age of discovery and conquest, highlighting Spanish cosmography's role in governing an empire.

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On the Rim of the Caribbean: Colonial Georgia and the British Atlantic World. PAUL M. PRESSLY. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2013. Pp. xx+354, preface, maps, illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$24.95 paper. ISBN 0-8203-4503-2.

Historians Jack P. Green, Philip Morgan, and David Armitage have each championed advancements in the study of British American colonies and/or the wider early modern British Atlantic world in the last forty years. With prize-winning titles published singly (and jointly), they have pushed forward a surprising range of approaches that have informed how most scholars study the British Americas. From empire, to Atlantic studies, to transtemporal history, each of these scholars has demanded that critics interested in Britain's imperial territories (and its seas) take seriously the transnational and transmigratory peoples who have moved through these territories – either by choice, coercion, or force.

Critics, especially those interested in British North America's Caribbean connections, have responded to these challenges by producing texts such as literary and postcolonial critic Sean X. Goudie's award-winning *Creole America: The West Indies and the Formation of Literature and Culture in the New Republic* (2006), historian Ashli White's award-winning *Encountering Revolution: Haiti and the Making of the Early Republic* (2010), and what will be reviewed below, historian Paul M. Pressly's *On the Rim of the Caribbean: Colonial Georgia and the British Atlantic World* (2013). Although Pressly's book shares a Caribbean focus with White's and Goudie's monographs, his work does not align with their interests in black Atlantic studies, hemispheric American studies, or the "orature" at the heart of Joseph Roach's *Cities of the Dead: Circum-Atlantic Performance* (1996). Instead of linking *On the Rim of the Caribbean* with issues of race, politics, the entangled history of the new US republic with the Caribbean, or the wider region's cultural syncretism, Pressly is more focused on colonial Georgia as a site of cultural and economic contact and exchange in the British Atlantic world.

From the start, the text focuses on economics and identity-formation, providing significant statistics on consumption patterns, wealth and trade networks, accumulation along the imperial periphery, the exchange of raw goods and products, and the exploitation of laborers (especially enforced slaves) within and beyond colonial Georgia. In working through these issues, Pressly describes how "an economic backwater" such as colonial Georgia would become a part of "Caribbean and Atlantic economies where trade spilled over national boundaries, merchants reacted to rapidly shifting conditions in multiple markets, and the transport of enslaved Africans bound together four continents and three races" (p. 1).

The book begins with an intriguing first chapter that outlines what Pressly calls the three Georgias. In it, he argues that the colony – initially founded as a philanthropic attempt to provide farming and small-scale trade as a form of redemption – struggled to find its position in the Americas and to entice white indentured laborers from Britain. Originally committed to an anti-slavery, pro-white labor ideal, the colony eventually splintered into different cultural zones in which imperial wars and threats from (and to) indigenous groups ebbed and flowed

among multiple colonial communities that included Highlander regiments, lowland Scots, various indigenous peoples, Germans, and a frontier mix of hardened traders, adventurers, and opportunists. With little infrastructure, very low trade levels, and an undeveloped port, colonial Georgia sat for many years in its own inconspicuousness. All of that changed around 1750 when officials allowed slavery to exist within the colony. This decision forever changed the course of the colony's future.

Rather than herald the arrival of a stampede of opportunists, the allowance of slavery saw the beginning of a slow transformation that Pressly suggests brought specific innovators to Georgia's shores, some of whom used their Scottish networks and familial connections to move goods from Georgia to custom houses in the Caribbean or directly to British markets. These traders became the first merchants of the colony and used their links with deer traders, indigenous traders, and others (including merchants from the Caribbean and the Carolinas) to create a rich, varied, and powerful ruling elite. Chapters three, four, and five detail the ways that Georgia, in its emergence as something akin to but apart from the plantation economies of the wider British Atlantic, would engage with these other trade zones. At first, the colony traded its pine. Before long, it began trading in indigo and rice utilizing cultivation practices from a variety of laborers to manage Georgia's coastal floodwaters and inner floodplains, including knowledge from enslaved persons of African descent. This community's contributions to colonial Georgia are the subject of chapter six.

Chapters seven to ten bring the book back to its earlier theme of Georgia's British North American identity crisis. As elite merchants and politicians attempted to maintain the new populations and shifting economics within the colony, they began to strengthen their ties to the homeland and to the Caribbean. Goods moved in both directions and Lowcountry plantations in Georgia were created at a staggering pace in order to feed this demand. Although the colony never out-produced the Carolinas, it sped in that direction during a staggering twenty-five years of growth. Pressly's book displays the successes and the costs of that rise for Georgia as its later political leaders initially refused to participate in the burgeoning resistance to British trade at the beginning of the American Revolutionary era. They did not want to risk alienating their main trade partner. But refusing to align itself with other British North American colonies against the empire proved costly—both internally and externally. Pressly notes how "the colony [...] stamped itself a pariah" (p. 218). The last nine pages of the book briefly describe the tumultuous political changes that saw colonial Georgia's complete reversal from pro-British site to Patriot haven. During that time, Patriots took over the political center and shifted Georgia in support of the American Revolution. The former elites, who had so carefully steered Georgia's growth, fell from power and a new consortium rose up—one that embraced a strong US focus. This is perhaps the most urgent part of the book and the one that is the least detailed. However much I may have wanted more information for this part of Pressly's narrative, it is an appropriate endpoint to his tale of colonial Georgia rather than a beginning.

On the Rim of the Caribbean is an examination into the political and economic beginnings, morphings, and alterations of colonial Georgia, but it is also the story of how a frontier site with grand dreams and schemes would become a US state—even as it balanced on the rim of the Caribbean. General readers and specialists with detailed knowledge about colonial British North America and the Caribbean will find a compelling and welcome addition to the field.

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Kentucky's Frontier Highway Historical Landscapes Along the Maysville Road. KARL RAITZ and NANCY O'MALLEY. Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 2012. Pp. ix+411, black and white illustrations, photographs, diagrams, maps, notes, bibliography, index. \$40.00 hardcover. ISBN 978-0-8131-3664-6.

Kentucky's Frontier Highway is an extensively illustrated and annotated text, part history book, part active project of historical and cultural geography and mapping. It contains no less than twenty-four maps and dozens of images of lost, forgotten or "orphaned" places encountered along the Maysville Road between Lexington and Kentucky. This hybrid text catalogues many aspects of the "development" of the road (both the Maysville Road and the road as a form proliferated across the United States in particular), from the physical changes in road surfaces brought about through the increasing pace of road traffic and technological developments, to the less tangible changes of culture and landscape over more than 200 years and across more than seventy miles.

Authors Karl Raitz and Nancy O'Malley detail a culture of roads and vehicles – not only the Maysville Road and its influence throughout Kentucky, but also the culture of people who have lived and worked along American highways, and the role of the road in relation to broad social changes. *Kentucky's Frontier Highway* combines approaches from physical geography, history, and anthropology, and is situated within a rich field of historical texts about the culture and landscape of Kentucky. It takes its place among other offerings on the region from one of the co-authors, Karl Raitz (for example, *Rock Fences of the Bluegrass*).

In chapters one and two, the book introduces the concept of "reading" the road as a text, as compared to travelling the road. This is followed by a detailed "landscape biography" – an account of field research undertaken block-by-block along the Maysville Road, with each section headed by the distance travelled (mile 0.2, mile 1.3 and so on) and accompanied by pictures (taken by Raitz between 2005 and 2007), maps, plans, and other documents painstakingly accumulated from local archives.

The influence of both Geography and Anthropology brought to bear on this topic results in a staggering quantity of detailed material which is then used to ground the meandering descriptions provided of different localities across a broad time period (for example, the town of Paris from the present to World War II, the nineteenth century, and back to the origins of the town's farms, fence constructions, and tavern). From "Indian Paths and Buffalo Traces" (p. 51) to "1990s gated exurban development of large single-family residences" (p. 136) and beyond, every major point in the history of this strip of road – social, cultural, and architectural – is recorded in a plethora of written and visual material, constantly grounded against the contemporary experience of the site in question.

Raitz and O'Malley put forward the argument that "the road" is a ubiquitous phenomenon and the roadside a "corridor of complexity" (p. 93), simultaneously a national network and a "road landscape" (p. 93). As the title suggests, this road landscape is read as both a contemporary space visited by the traveller and frequented by the local, as well as a historical space that continues to have a relationship to earlier cultural practices and uses. The Maysville Road is studied as a model for an approach that sees a "tableau of historical geographies" (p. 15) – many geographies and histories which are revealed to the "curious traveller" as "layers and bundles of human agency." This literal and metaphorical "reading" of the landscape is then enacted throughout the book, which concludes with a brief discussion on the road and American culture.

This dynamism of structure and intent is simultaneously the book's strength and weakness – it is sometimes unclear whether this is a scholarly or more general publication, and the ideas are therefore at times ungrounded – lofty in its aims but never fully executed. The

reference in the frontispiece to George R. Stewart is perhaps the best indication that this is mostly a historical text. However, by including oral histories and hearsay along with speculation and personal experience, Raitz and O'Malley do not give excessive weight to any one source, and as a result have compiled a text that is just as much folklore as it is a historical account, one that values both the everyday and the official history of the area.

The process of "reading" the road transforms an ordinary or banal experience of travelling into an experience that is beyond the everyday. "Reading" extends to forks in the road and intersections built around things that no longer exist—absences and unseen elements as much as the visible landscape and architecture. This flexible reading of the landscape moves this text away from a strict historical account yet does not sufficiently ground the text in an academic sphere to make it a definitively scholarly undertaking. While it contains a number of key ideas (particularly the useful notion of a landscape biography), it is not a theoretically dense text. There is no mention of Edward Soja, David Harvey (two of the mostly highly-cited contemporary geographers), or any of the successors to Carl Sauer's work on the cultural landscapes of America (Andrew Sluyter, for example). Students of human or cultural geography, anthropology, sociology, or cultural studies would find little here to interest them critically despite the enticing use of mobility, historical landscape, and references to American road culture. However, the unique structure in which the landscape biography presents a historical cross-section of locales, each one prefaced by a description of the landscape and roads in question, presents a useful tool for cataloguing a changing landscape across time and space.

Although the introduction touches on notions of landscape, technological change, mapping, car culture, and other useful modes of "reading" the road, much of the academic literature is eclipsed by the wealth of historical and visual information to the detriment of the conceptual framework that underpins this book.

For those interested specifically in the notion of a landscape biography, this is particularly useful reading. For the theory-oriented academic or researcher, there is less to engage the reader than would be expected of a tome of some 411 pages. The absence of Kathleen Stewart, for example, is telling. (Her 1996 book *Space on the Side of the Road* shares many of the same themes, not least of which is reading the roadside landscapes of America as a historical text.) These absences make this otherwise impressive offering less appropriate for a scholarly audience.

However, the detailed place-by-place account would be invaluable for practical purposes: local geography, historical research, or travel through the (albeit small) region. The value of this text is in the way it captures a particular space during a specific period, and how it renders the landscape, history, and people with an engaging complexity underlined both by an intimate knowledge of Kentucky (and the towns along the Maysville Road) and a clear passion for the subject. This complexity is expanded via the thematic preoccupation with symbolic and literal transformations taking place on roads that have built and linked communities throughout Kentucky and the United States more broadly, particularly in terms of the relationship between American culture and the concept of reading "the road."

Despite the academic background of the authors, this book is intended to accommodate the widest possible audience while still doing justice to its subject—in which case the execution is very successful, as this book would sit just as comfortably in a public library as in a private scholarly collection.

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Sanctified Landscape: Writers, Artists, and the Hudson River Valley, 1820-1909. DAVID SCHUYLER. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2012. Pp. xii+206, maps, illustrations (including color plates), index. \$29.95 hardcover. ISBN 978-0-8014-5080-8.

This book is about the Hudson River valley as a landscape, an observable swath of river and land that has special meaning and associations to beholders. The years 1820-1909 mark the rise and fall of the Hudson River valley as a revered landscape.

In 1820 the United States was overwhelmingly rural and cities like New York, at the Hudson's mouth, were quite small by today's standards. The bucolic nature of the Hudson and its valley, however, was threatened as the Erie Canal construction commenced in 1817. Schuyler focuses on six artists and writers—Thomas Cole, Washington Irving, Nathaniel P. Willis, Andrew J. Downing, Jervis McEntee, and John Burroughs—who shaped their fellow countrymen's encounters, direct or vicarious, with the Hudson. The six men interacted with a large number of other figures, both contemporary and historical, in the course of their artwork or writing, and thus the reader also learns about the indirect roles that individuals such as George Washington and Theodore Roosevelt played in the preservation of the Hudson region.

The book has several themes. First, Schuyler portrays the six personages as so emotionally attached to the Hudson and its preservation that they devote much of their lives to raising people's awareness and appreciation of the Hudson River valley as the most scenic natural world in the United States. Second, Schuyler, a distinguished historian, wants to record how Americans have fought to preserve local history and historical memory, and he argues that this movement began in the Hudson valley. Third, Schuyler shows the connections that the valley had to distant places such as Europe and not-so-distant New York City, which was critical to selling the art on the Hudson and also to publishing the books and magazines dealing with the river.

Thomas Cole was the first professional painter to put the Hudson River to canvas and is credited with starting the Hudson River School (of art) in 1825. The scenic beauty that attracted tourists up the river from New York City to Albany starting in the early 1820s also enticed Cole to sail north on a sketch trip from the City in 1825. Schuyler critiques not only Cole's paintings, especially his *Course of Empire* allegorical series (reproduced in colored plates), but also his essays and poetry. The reader comes to appreciate Cole as a man who summoned all his creative energy to idealize and sanctify the Hudson valley and highlands.

Washington Irving and Nathaniel P. Willis are the two writers most closely associated with the Hudson River valley. Schuyler holds Irving as a human embodiment of the valley because he invented its folklore, praised its landscape in print, built Sunnyside in Tarrytown, and then fashioned a fanciful history of the estate in *Wolfert's Roost* (1855). The younger Willis knew and admired Irving, who even visited his house in Cornwall, also immortalized in 1855 in Willis' *Out-Doors at Idlewild*. Although wildly popular in his early career, Willis fell out of favor before 1850. Schuyler accepts the critics' judgment of the man as light and breezy, which strikes this reviewer as a little glib itself as Willis worked long hours to perfect phrasing pleasing to readers.

The most unlikely writer discussed is Andrew J. Downing. His primary occupation was running a nursery business in Newburgh. Somehow he found the time and energy to write articles and books on landscape gardening, edit a monthly magazine, *The Horticulturist*, and next to the nursery, build his own house and landscaped grounds. Downing educated many Americans on how to modify and landscape country residences. Accordingly, Schuyler credits Downing with expanding the Hudson River aesthetic to a national scale.

Chapter five is a narrative interlude, a consideration of the industrialization and urbanization of some of the villages along the Hudson by the mid-nineteenth century and the rise of the historic preservation movement. There is an account of the successful efforts to conserve

Washington's Headquarters, a humble building in Newburgh from where the general led the American Revolution during its last year.

The most poignant figure in this volume is Jervis McEntee, who split his time during most of his long career between his native Rondout, a Hudson River port, and a New York City studio. He excelled at painting close-at-hand nature scenes of late fall and winter in the Catskills. His canvases are skillfully wrought in muted tones and bold brush strokes, yet they fell out of favor in the 1870s as Americans became enamored with European Impressionism. Schuyler details McEntee's financial distress toward the end of his career. Many figures for the sales of McEntee's out-of-favor paintings are listed; their 2012-dollar equivalents should have been provided.

Schuyler addresses John Burroughs, a literary naturalist, last. Born in Roxbury in the Catskills, Burroughs, a federal employee, arranged a transfer to the Hudson Valley as a federal bank examiner. He built the house called Riverby in West Park, overlooking the Hudson. But his time at Slabsides, a rustic cottage a mile to the west and out of earshot of his nagging wife, is what enabled Burroughs to blossom as a detailed and accurate observer of nature. Schuyler defends Burroughs as a true environmentalist, despite a lack of public activism, because he was a teacher of the natural world who inspired activists like John Muir and Theodore Roosevelt. The book closes with a discussion of several historic preservation efforts along the Hudson and a summary of the Hudson-Fulton Celebration of 1909, a lavish jubilee that had little lasting impact on the public. Schuyler concludes by acknowledging that the six men featured never painted or wrote about the Hudson and its region holistically, nor did they forestall the fouling of the river that accompanied "progress." He does, however, see them as laying the foundation for the modern environmental ethic.

In the introduction on facing pages there are two maps, one of the entire Hudson region and the other of larger scale on "the geographical center of *Sanctified Landscape*." Neither is sufficiently detailed to show many locales, houses, railways, and canals discussed in the text. This handsome volume is well documented, although some of the footnotes include too many references. It would serve well, nevertheless, as a reference work on the Hudson River valley and as a supplementary reader for a historical geography course on the United States or for a conservation geography course.

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Buildings of Pennsylvania: Philadelphia and Eastern Pennsylvania. GEORGE E. THOMAS. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2010. Pp. xiv+675, sketches, maps, photographs, glossary, index. \$75.00 hardcover. ISBN 978-0-8139-2967-5.

In this edition of *Buildings of Pennsylvania*, which covers the eastern half of the Commonwealth including the city of Philadelphia, author George Thomas along with contributors Patricia Ricci, Richard Webster, Lawrence Newman, Robert Janosov, and Bruce Thomas, takes readers on an architectural journey through one of the most culturally diverse landscapes on the eastern seaboard. As part of the *Buildings of the United States* series, the book travels through varied architecture, starting in Philadelphia and moving systematically toward the New York border. *Buildings of Pennsylvania* is designed to be a field guide for architectural explorers. Entries are organized in a sensible geographic order and safety tips are provided for architectural tourists.

The strengths of the volume are the ambitious goals that the author sets for himself. Within the course of 600 pages, the author and his contributors aim to provide a cursory but

comprehensive picture of eastern Pennsylvania. While by no means complete, the author tries to select a wide variety of structures that accurately portray the variety of architecture present in eastern Pennsylvania. Rather than just focus on plentiful high architecture of the region, the author strives for a mixture of high and vernacular designs. Entries range from iconic structures, like Independence Hall, to the everyday homes of typical Pennsylvanians, sometimes so commonplace that the entries are simply titled "house." The selections include buildings designed by famous architects such as Frank Lloyd Wright and I.M. Pei, but also include structures designed by local carpenters and stone masons whose work has been hidden for so long. The dates of the buildings range from earliest European contact to modern twentieth-century buildings.

The sheer variety of structures that the author chose makes the volume potentially very informative. Rather than just focus on churches, houses, government buildings, and commercial structures, which often are the subject of architectural studies, entries include nuclear power plants, parks and recreational areas, industrial landscapes, stadiums, bridges, and airports in addition to the expected entries on courthouses, mansions, and religious structures. Each entry provides information about the architect/engineer/craftsman who designed and built the structure (and redesigned or added to it, if applicable), a brief history of the structure, a description of important architectural details, and its importance in the context of its local community. The book is divided into sub-regions, which consist of a number of counties. Each county section begins with a brief history of the county to serve as a context for the cultural and architectural landscape that is about to be discussed. Each county is further divided into significant sub-regions with additional history and context provided as necessary.

Perhaps what the author and his contributors do best is to demonstrate the layers of cultural history present in eastern Pennsylvania. The book begins with a lengthy discussion of William Penn and how the policy of religious freedom created a varied landscape where German architectural elements sit shoulder-to-shoulder with those of the Welsh, Scots-Irish, and Ukrainians, among others. The impacts of Native Americans are also highlighted. The theme continues throughout the book, reinforcing the notion that eastern Pennsylvania has some of the most varied architecture in the US.

That cultural variation is part of what causes this volume to fall short of its own goals. It struggles under its own weight, attempting to capture a myriad of cultures' impact on the architectural landscape of the region. Sacrifices had to be made to maintain page restrictions and reduce costs. Photographs are limited and the further one gets from Philadelphia, the less photographic evidence is provided. In some cases, the author describes beautiful colors and designs that would be best served with a few color plates, but the already exorbitant cost of the book prevents this. This is a book that cannot be fully appreciated unless one is in the field, looking at the building while reading the entry.

In addition to the lack of photographs, the selection of buildings leaves the reader wanting more. Again sacrifices had to be made; the author admits this. Only existing structures were included in the volume, which is a sensible choice for a field guide. The author admits, given the limited space, that public and accessible buildings were more likely to be selected than private and inaccessible, again a seemingly sensible choice. County numbers range from a whopping 200-plus entries for Philadelphia County to a paltry four entries for Sullivan County. Perhaps given the diversity and importance of Pennsylvania architecture to other culture regions of the US, the Commonwealth should have been divided into more than two segments in the series to provide adequate coverage.

The author's own biases come out in the choice of entries. In regional and county introductions there are repeated discussions celebrating the rural nature of many of eastern Pennsylvania's counties. But the selections seem to favor urban architecture over many of the

Commonwealth's beautiful rural buildings. Also, Philadelphia and its surrounding counties have much longer and more complete selections, whose entries contain far more detail than the entries for the Northern Tier of Pennsylvania. The further one gets from Philadelphia, the shorter the entries, the fewer the buildings selected for a county, and the more significant the oversights of major buildings. What is a volume of significant architecture, which claims to capture the diversity of the sub-regions, without things entries on the Crayola factory in Easton or the Eagles Mere toboggan slide? Is there something that makes Citizens' Bank Ballpark and Lincoln Financial Field more significant than the home of the Little League World Series in Williamsport, other than the former two are in Philadelphia?

The greatest downfall of this book is the fact that the further one gets from Philadelphia, the vaguer the information becomes. It is almost as if the entries for northeastern Pennsylvania were completed without any ground truthing, like they were simply taken from other written records. While useful for those on an architectural excursion, to say this volume should be taken with a grain of salt is an understatement. What is meant to be a field guide of eastern Pennsylvania's unique architecture must be taken with multiple grains of salt the further one gets from Philadelphia. What starts out as a very thorough examination of the architecture of Philadelphia steadily declines in significance to the point that there are outright falsehoods in entries by the time the reader arrives in the counties along the New York border. While the book has its uses, if you are seeking to understand the history and architecture of counties north of the Lehigh Valley, look elsewhere.

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Common Land in English Painting 1700-1850. IAN WAITES. Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2012. Pp. x+181, color plates, illustrations, index. \$90.00 hardcover. ISBN 978-1-84383-761-9.

In popular imagination the English landscape is commonly envisioned as a patchwork quilt of small irregularly-sized fields enclosed by verdant hedgerows. As a source of cultural identity, this enclosed landscape is often thought to encapsulate a timeless appeal to conservative rural tradition and Englishness. However, like many other cultural artifacts of modernity, the "tradition" surrounding the enclosing of open fields in England since 1700 is largely invented. As a process of landscape change, enclosure was dramatic, disruptive, and disturbing. While the geometries of enclosure have long been reconstructed by historical geographers and economic historians alike, the artistic responses to this transformation are much less well known. Examining these proves fertile ground for Waites's pioneering study. The book is considerably wider in scope than the title alone implies. While landscape painting provides the core lens through which to conceptualise and critique the erasure of the common field systems of England, the interpretation of this process takes the author full-square into debates over the relationship between land, society, and identity. Concern with the loss of centuries-old tradition of communal solidarity in the countryside is as central to the argument as the detailed discussion of a range of landscape artists and their work. In many ways, the strength of this book lies in reinterpretation. While many of the themes or artists discussed will be familiar to historical geographers of landscape, the insistent focus on common land opens up fresh, insightful, and innovative findings.

The organization of the book is notable. The author successfully eschews a strictly chronological narrative and deftly weaves together changing ideas about landscape and its interpretation in a manner that consistently illuminates his key themes. It begins with a useful,

if brief, outline of the nature of open field systems and their subsequent enclosure. For those not well versed in English agricultural history, this will be very welcome. Coupled with this, the author also sets out a framework for interpreting landscape paintings within the historiography of English landscape art. Here, as elsewhere in the volume, theory is worn lightly. The response to this choice probably will depend largely on the reader's own predilection for engaging in discourses on "ways of seeing." Following this, groups of artists are considered in relation to a series of specific genres of English landscape painting: prospects; the creation of idylls; English naturalism; and nostalgia. The penultimate chapter shifts somewhat from this distinctively thematic approach to consider towns and the growing pressure of urbanism on commons adjacent to, or indeed within, urban boundaries. Interpretively, this thematic approach works very well, while the author manages to keep a sufficiently clear narrative thread to tie the story together over the whole period.

What is so interesting about this book is how familiar artists and their work are seen afresh when the common field is the organizing principle guiding an investigation of their work. The paintings of Turner, Constable, Gainsborough, and a host of lesser-known names are carefully considered to see what light can be shed on the nature, timing, and reaction to the loss of common land. The range of paintings and drawings considered is impressive. Some give quite direct evidence on extant common land or its enclosure, but many are ostensibly about quite distinct themes such as hunting, farming, or prospects for the landowning class. In these instances, the author demonstrates considerable skill reading against the grain to piece together how change in the countryside was represented. Furthermore, despite the title, Waites considers a much wider range of evidence than paintings alone. The poetry of John Clare is perhaps an obvious source, writing about the loss of common fields around his native Helpston, Northamptonshire. Here the author intriguingly triangulates Clare's prose with Peter Tillemans's drawings of the same landscape. In this and other examples, Waites demonstrates the analytical power of focusing a range of sources on particular places to ground broader interpretive themes. In other contexts, the work of writers as diverse as Cobbett, Wordsworth, Blake, and Arthur Young are interpolated with the sketches, drawings, and paintings of George Lambert, George Stubbs, William Turner, and John Sell Cotman.

Inevitably in a work of this scope there are absences, some of which the author is well aware of. Certain counties dominate, particularly those in lowland England such as Norfolk, Northamptonshire, and Oxfordshire. Little sense is gained of the transformation of Cumbria, Yorkshire, or Cornwall in this period. Discussion of towns too appears focused on places where the ground is well prepared, such as London, Norwich, or Leicester. By contrast, little is said on the impact of the explosive growth of the great industrial cities of the north. For urban heaths and commons in particular, the role of such spaces as subversive and a threat to the wider moral order could also have been developed further.

Sadly, in one or two places the attractive format and production of the book are marred by the occasional typographical error. For a book concerned so centrally with visual images, the relatively small size inevitably compresses the reproduction of a number of paintings. For the black and white images in particular, it is occasionally difficult to make out the detail that the author so ably describes. These minor quibbles aside, this is an impressive work that deserves to be read by all those with an interest in the remaking of the English landscape. For historical geographers in particular, it demonstrates, beyond the broad themes discussed above, the great value of getting close to places in the landscape via archives, texts, and images to shed further light on one of the most enduring and fascinating historical records we possess.

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