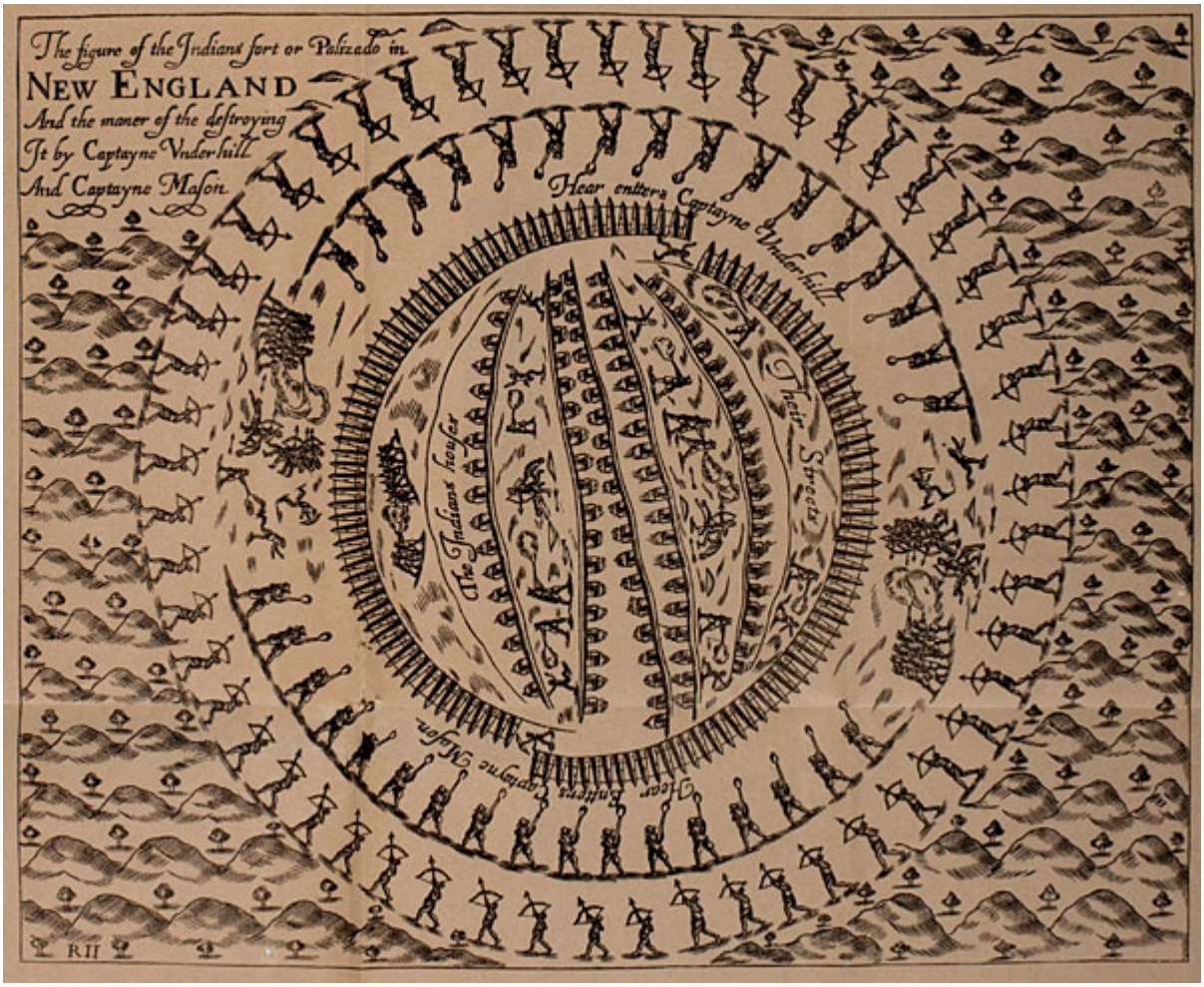
King Philip’s Hand



Prologue

I had begun so many times.
With snow, with leaves, with wind and rain,
with a white initial A of sail,
with a woman’s voice recalled, with syllables
stilled centuries ago, with faces in the trees,
in the windows, in the fog.

I had begun so many times
before the tiny rubric of the crab’s claw appeared
in my palm, curling out from its scavenged shell,
just before the fog.
Before the cold rain began in my shoulders.
Before the fog.

Down where the ocean melts to a sheen,
looking back toward dune grass, the charred log

where my family sat, I watched the infiltration of the pines,
the vanishing of the islet we had planned to explore.
Then it was upon them,
or rather it erased us all—it poured through everything,
until I had just ten yards of water, sand, and white air to see,
the sun a spun nickel at my shoulder.

I was being brought about again.

Mutterings wavered up, strangers trembled past with awful smiles
and disappeared.
So now, say it, they said, say what
you knew of the earth, the where of it, the truth of it,
what soil, sea, what wind prevailed, what voices in your blood,
when it was blood, when it was wind,
when stars sang into your body as you lay there on the stones,
breathing there, remember, so long
it came to seem looking out as from the whole
planet's vast, sloping side.
What was given you to know?

Ogwhan
Ogwhan
Let the boat drift
Nickquenum nittauke: mishquawtuck
home to cedar trees.
Wunnagehan sowanniu.
before a southwest wind.

Belong there, settle, claim
at last the scents and leaves, the moody tidal song
of channel bells.
You will lose them just this way,
lose life after life.

I have begun so many times.
Begin again.

King Philip's Hand

In Memoriam E. M. F. 1900-1978

It is characteristic then, of what I have called 'angelic' consciousness that it does not develop a separate, hidden, inner world of private thoughts and feelings. These Beings reflect, or pass on, the light they receive from above; and that <u>is</u> their inner life. Or we can put it that they do indeed have an inner life, but do not feel it as being exclusively their own…not in the sense

of [it] being at their disposal. …On the occasion of the Fall, all this was changed by the intervention of Lucifer. Lucifer induced man to begin hiding and hoarding his inner life, and to take pride in it—as a 'room of one's own'—making it into something separate and detached alike from its outward manifestation (nature) and from the inner world of spirit beings… Man is now started on the long road which ends in his present normal relation to Nature, wherein nature is not merely his own outward manifestation, nor that of the higher Spiritual Beings who shine through him; whereinnature is not a manifestation at all, but an object—a finished work.

Owen Barfield

There they were, dignified, invisible, Moving without pressure, over the dead leaves, In the autumn heat, through the vibrant air, And the bird called….

T.S.Eliot

Everything only connected by "and" and "and."

Elizabeth Bishop

When the old Plymouth lost its brakes
on the bridge's far slope she didn't say
a word, just shifted down to an empty lot,
stopped them short with the parking brake,
raised a hand to her lips, and smiled at him.

   Ten years later, when he'd drive her to market
or the clinic, and she'd say "Home, James"
in her amused, quavering voice, he'd recall
the flicker of triumph on her face that day,
as though she'd been modestly enjoying
what she'd have called pluck, what now
was letting her live out winters alone
beside the bay. She had a cheerful dignity,
humorous self-possession, and a streak
of unpredictable severity, but he could bear
her gentle admonitions, about speeding,
sex, seamanship—even her once saying
she hoped he wouldn't always be an angry
young man. So he keeps yearning her back
across the lost waves, the old moraines,
longing, and fearing her arrival.

            She was interested
in history, (they were on the way
to Gilbert Stuart's house the morning
the brakes failed), and so one summer

suggested he accompany his cousin
to the museum, near Philip’s last
stronghold on Monthaup, his people’s
summer home—a spring, the granite throne.
There they sorted moccasins, and built
a wigwam with a student of anthropology
from Brooklyn, a young bearded man
whose anger took an ironic, Marxist form.

The museum was near the bridge, minutes
from an estate where they learned tennis.
No wonder he had them pegged: no hope,
or worse, the first who would perish
in the revolution’s maw. In their whites
and sneakers they were helping make a story
out of items—that gentle catalogue of what’s
presumed an extinct way of life, recalled
as a romance by those who murdered it.
Arrowheads and spearpoints, wampum
and beads—that frail dome of saplings
and bark they struggled to lash up said more
about their habits than lost cultures, but their
lives depended on finishing that hut, upon
reading labeled items under glass, selected
and arranged like stones for a path the mind
might follow down to the waters…

*

   Mud became the shale the glacier
crushed to stones we heaved as
children by the hour into whitecaps,
to become the gravel becoming
the sand piling at the tidemark. Legend
says that with the Devil’s help, Philip
could throw a stone from Mount Hope
a mile across the harbor to Poppasquash…

   I would call her back, who passed
such history on to me. But I never
learned the faith she used to compose
past and future, that let old portrait
figures, villains, heroes, plain,
goodhearted sorts from several
centuries go about their lives
and works all at once in her mind,
as in some busy village Brueghel
painted. Now as the land she knew

is vanishing, her shadow comes
in me to belong somehow with Philip's,
like contraries the mind feels
obliged to hold together—the strange
comfort of distinction made and
overcome at once…

That is not your piping voice, not
your deliberate passage from the porch
to the kitchen, not your sigh heaved through me,
but it is, it isn't merely a gust of southwest wind.
The cardinal in the big oak isn't answering,
he is keening twice, then eight bunched,
rising whistles back to me, three times,
and then he adds cadenzas, until I cannot
say it back.

Cuppyaumen.

Pashpishea.

Mequaunamiinnea

Now you are there.

Moonrise.

Remember me.

Memory, no wish to be a hero
made Philip say*I am determined not
to live until I have no country.*Even if
his scattered bones calcified beneath
this earth, no prayer, no spell, no
moonrise will bring the lost to voice.
Salt wind on our skin is not their touch.
Aloof and disappointed, they only seem
to wake in episodes of our making, beneath
the wind-ridden trees, the driven clouds.

Cowwewonck.

Soul.

Wunnicheke.

Hand.

Keesauname.

Save me.

In her last years she wondered aloud
only whether she would recognize
her husband. I pretended to remember him
more clearly than the sharpest recollection
I have—clinging to his shoulders as
he swims toward a float. Could I reach
him, or even Philip in their afterworld,
I'd ask if they could locate her. And look
what I have done now, stranding her under
Matteson, in my life's encyclopedia,
across from Metacomet, far from her William.
Surely someone who knew them both to love
will put this right. And I think she would
forgive me, having called me more than
once by her lost son's name, dead suddenly
at about the age I was when she died.

Yes, I seek him rowing there among
a moonlit fleet of boats at anchor. *There are so many
places to look.*

Halyards gently slapping, an unlashed
tiller
waving slowly. With each
stroke he takes a pair of whirlpools
gleam.
Where is *Trilobite*, his tiny moth-winged
catboat, where? I cannot tell him, he
cannot hear me say the hurricane destroyed
her.
Spirits show across the scrim of present
spirits; uncannily kindred, he and I,
in letters we had written her, apologizing
for tickets we had gotten driving her car,
some twenty years apart…
just the continental wind…

*The wind is long and shadow-flagged
and moonstruck. The whole song,
beginning everywhere and nowhere,
flute-stopped upon the northwest
corner of the house. We are all
within it, all of us, all one. Stand
beside the winter window, there
beneath the bookshelf. Closer, in
the corner with the pestle and
binoculars. Feel your nape crawl.
The breath upon your knuckles*

Mere associations
that's all, dissolving from reverence to humor,
disappointing hope with common sense.
My ancestors read and read their holy
dictionary for signs of their god's will;
the random verses they lit upon made
metaphors with practical results—
destinies, space for English names to creep
west across the blank, benighted maps.

The winters here are hard, the bright spaces of the snow as
smooth as vellum. Deerprints and sticks look like words I
cannot read, just at the dark edge of the forest.

Listen, poor shadow, whirled among
the cedars. The bell, whose bird-limed
clapper we held silent for five minutes
one moonlit wild night years ago,
the bell goes on, telling the channel passage
to the ships, searing the darkness white
an instant, clanging, clanging.

This is the passage through, the right of way,
all else is damnation, a wilderness of death.

Now that you wander, I know why
you told us more than once of that
Longley cousin. Taken, after
witnessing the slaughter of his parents,
he begged his captors to let him
return, just to set his father's cows to forage.
When he kept his promise and returned
to the tribe, they adopted him, and when years
later relatives redeemed him, the story goes
they had to bring him back by force. Claimed
by twenty stark Quebec seasons, he had
wandered, couldn't return to ownership,
the stonewalled plots of Groton. He grew
old, of course, and well-to-do (why
his story survived), but I have always
wondered what became of his two
sisters, and if you trembled to think
of them, or envied how they really
must have come to know the countryside?

As we know it now. Disaforested, routed, claimed,
a prospect of some acquiring mind. The dead have always known
what they, what you have done.

Fear their smiling. I was a teller of
stories. I am a story now.
The living suppose the stories belong to them.

But you seemed to bless my reverence
for waves and stars and trees. Because
it was your nature to love kinships,
affinities, or just the apt and lovely names
of things, I thought you left mere causes

and effects to the sententious…

It is not as you suppose. I pass freely in the light between the worlds.
No one needs to hold the quahog shut, answer the bird, fasten the blossom underneath the apple.
We can hear the sad improvisations inside the silent one, the snarl within that one's smile, all the threnodies of resignation, shame, desire,
but we cannot connect them, only listen.

When you spoke your hand would
undertake a gentle dance, fingers
tamp your thumb, drumming
syllables out upon a chair's arm,
a table, your lap. When you lay
down beneath a shawl on the daybed
under the window, your eyes
would strangely drift and close
while you spoke, but your hand
would flutter up with remembrance,
as if in the chambers of the years
to choose, cherish, caress what those
chambers would contain.
Items.
Exhibits. Evidence. That way of taking
the world was old and well in New England,
brought here like the germs thrashing
inside the Pilgrims, before they were the land's…
Exempla, symbols, wonders, the argot of god.
Divers Indian baskets filled with corn…

Today, on the way to cross
the Mount Hope Bridge we paused
beside the old stone walls near the north end
of the road. Hooves that forever changed this
soil (trampling the maize of Satan's children)
stamped in the clover, while my sons counted
the black, fly-tormented backs.
And I saw that all I can give to them
are curiosities, assembled under glass
or foggy legend: the sachem's jawbone
Cotton Mather kept, the black stone Philip
hurled across the harbor, the brass button
he tore from the emissary's coat, saying
this, *this*, is what your English religion
means to me, the Tyrian whorls inside
the quahog shell, the vile self-regard
of believers in the mirror of their faith,
the scalp's hot, moist peeling from

forehead to nape, the word of twenty
natives valued as that of one who prayed,
the mourning dove's doxology, the sachem's
son, nine years old, spared, to be sold
in the Indies. Items. Dis-rememberment.

Poor shade, walker, old woman I loved,
gone now with all the lost, lost one, you
didn't say this land you gave us once
belonged to Church, deeded him in
gratitude by the magistrates he saved
from *the great, doleful, dirty, naked beast.*

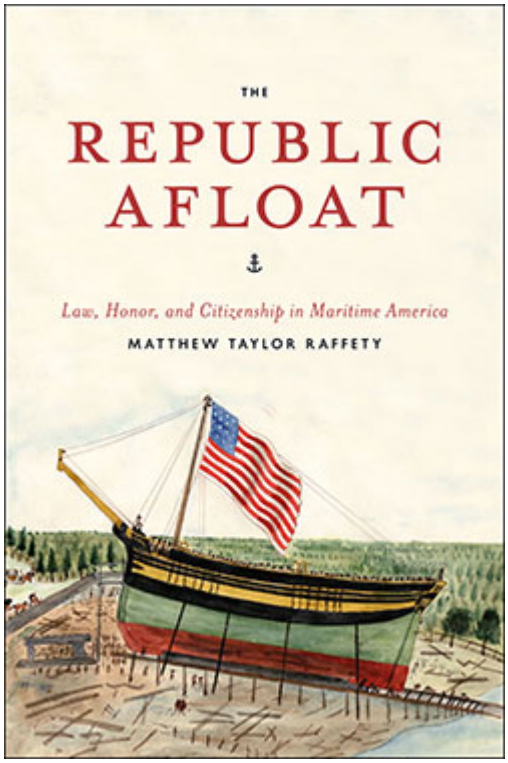
Their holy war came down to musket balls
and butchery, but the tale's essence isn't
cruelty, gross injustice, nor ferocious
piety. It's how fitting was the payment
made to the one who betrayed the sachem's
whereabouts to Church, and how he displayed
the wonder of it all around New England,
surviving on the coins he charged to view it.
And they didn't fear it, all those avid
readers of signs and wonders…

   Now in my imagination a kindred
habit lives—gorging on remorseful
supposition, sometimes with the terror
of one holding closed a grievous wound,
it works at telling the world back whole
as it knew, beginning with the accidental
talismans, details that almost cohere,
but will not comfort. How naturally
it seemed to come to you, a dominion
I would covet if it still seemed possible—
whatever flower, bird, fish, or person
found dead or living, named, gathered in…

   whose bodiless curse would be a thousand
times more terrible than any word to me…
I cannot revive the song that water and wind
and your old house sang in me, nor
the sons you lost, the son I was when we
played evening checkers, your ancient,
waist length, wild hair, drying in firelight,
nor that terror when I found you waiting
up past midnight on the stairs, to warn me,
frighten me, look right through my after-
glowing rapture with some girl…

All I picture now
is your hand upon the tablecloth—
liver-spotted, translucent skin, the palm
pale, vulnerable, the fingers beating
gently beneath your words. Your hand.
And Philip's hand, Metacomet's stiff,
burled hand, cured in a pail of rum.

Between the Forecastle & the Federal Government, or "Jack Tar, American"



For liability purposes, it is the sea that will kill you.
—Pirate Captain, *The Simpsons*

"In the beginning was the land." So states Charles Sellers's classic look at antebellum American economic expansion, *The Market Revolution* (4). But to a swelling field of historians, the landlubber tradition in American history has led us to skip something quite fundamental: the sea. Maritime history has expanded rapidly over the past two decades, kindled in part by enthusiasm for global fields of study that examine the Atlantic, Pacific, and Indian Oceanic worlds. But we have been slower to appreciate that waterways have not simply served as conduits between distant lands, but were themselves sites of

conflicts over labor, identity, and state formation.

In *The Republic Afloat*, Matthew Raffety uses violent encounters on merchant vessels in the years between the American Revolution and the Civil War to suggest that it was on the water, not on land, that Americans settled key dimensions of federal governance and citizenship. Raffety contrasts his findings with Peter Linebaugh and Marcus Rediker's hydrarchy of revolutionary mariners in *The Many-Headed Hydra: Sailors, Slaves, Commoners, and the Hidden History of the Revolutionary Atlantic*. "Rather than the radical internationalists that some historians describe Atlantic seafarers as being in the eighteenth century," he writes, "the crews of American antebellum vessels used the apparatuses of the legal system to press their case, to demand redress, and to assert their understandings of the privileges of manhood and citizenship" (212). Through their democratic appeals, sailors of early America built the state.

The book contains three sections: law, honor, and citizenship. The first is the meatiest of the three. Raffety contends that "maritime issues made up the bulk of the work of federal courts before the Civil War" (27), and that federal judges were at the forefront of this national reach. While the Constitution explicitly gave the federal judiciary oversight of "admiralty and maritime" issues, the Judiciary Act of 1789 suggested that this did not include common law cases (35). Here, in the regulation of shipboard crime, Congress and federal judges made what may have been their strongest stand in favor of a robust national government over a loose federation.

Thus Raffety points to an overarching trend of growing "federal paternalism toward seafarers" before the Civil War (44). Two acts of 1790 formed the early basis of federal authority over mariners, requiring ship registration, establishing parameters for shipboard governance, and defining the terms of sea-based crime. Yet these acts proved vague and insufficient. While the 1790 Crimes Act provided the legal basis for punishing offenses committed at sea, the legislation gave courts little flexibility in differentiating between work stoppages and mutiny, grumbling and violence, harsh masters and the criminally abusive. Over the years, Congress increasingly limited officers' authority. In 1835, a new Crimes Act refined and strengthened the 1790 law and its 1825 revisions. The 1835 law curtailed officers' prerogatives in using corporal punishment to discipline their crew—or at least acts deemed in "haste" or in "excess." Finally, in 1850, even as the use of the lash waned, Congress banned flogging.

In The Republic Afloat, Matthew Raffety uses violent encounters on merchant vessels in the years between the American Revolution and the Civil War to suggest that it was on the water, not on land, that Americans settled key dimensions of federal governance and citizenship.

Of course, law differed from practice. Courts only limited punishments deemed cruel *and* unusual—not only those that were brutal, but also outside of the

ordinary parameters of shipboard life. By using the weather or extreme chores, officers skirted liability. In the 1854 case of sixteen-year-old cabin boy Stephen Whatley, the captain of the*Harvard* kept the lad at the wheel for long hours until his hands and feet froze, inducing permanent disability. “Cruel and unusual punishment” often translated into overwork and deprivation of food, rest, or clothing rather than outright assault. Regular tars became increasingly conversant in legal rights even as they persisted in resorting to “forecastle law” and convention. Officers and sailors alike used travel to renegotiate their contracts: “Just as captains ‘encouraged’ men to jump ship (and by doing so, forfeit wages) in ports where seamen were cheap and plentiful, seamen exploited their advantage, either at sea or in ports where a shortage of qualified tars meant a more lucrative berth could be found with ease” (108). The book is at its best when delving into delicious troves of newspaper accounts and case law to consider how mariners and officers wrangled over acceptable working conditions at sea.

Section two pushes into the murkier realms of custom, masculinity, and honor. Chapters five and six take us from the forecastle to the quarterdeck, from mariners’ demands that “conventions of the sea mandated food and conditions above and beyond the legal minimums” to officers’ tenuous claims to “mastery” (109). As older status-based models of authority came under attack, the question was, which model of authority would prevail? While in the 1843 *Somers* case, Justice Peleg Sprague upheld a naval officer’s authority to serve as both judge and jury over his men, courts compared officers on merchant ships to parents, schoolmasters, and master craftsmen. For captains in particular, authority rested upon a precarious balance of navigational expertise and claims to elite status by virtue of their position. Raffety uses court and consular records, newspaper accounts, treatises, and literature to show officers and tars alike wielding shared discourses of honor and reputation as weapons that could be put to use abroad and at home.

The final section examines citizenship in the legal and cultural senses. Here we have the building not only of the state, but also the nation. What is an American? Who could lay claim to national protections? What defined the national character? Raffety offers the familiar argument that distance from home forced individuals to clarify definitions of nation and citizenship. While this is most in evidence in chapter eight’s history of how the impressment crisis in the years leading up to the War of 1812 provided a template for the passport system through Seamen’s Protection Certificates, Raffety also recounts the development of consuls as arbiters of American identity in chapter seven and discusses sailors as a staple of American literature and iconography in chapter nine.

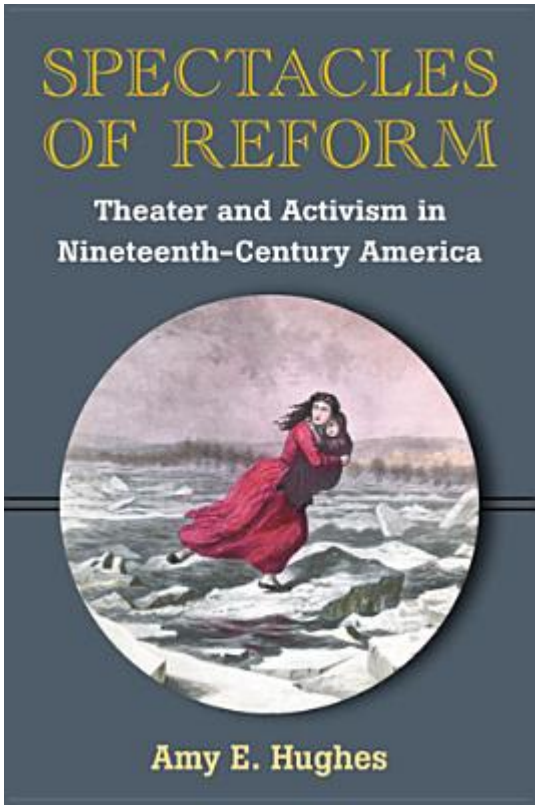
The Republic Afloat is especially valuable as a contribution to the literature on American state formation. Raffety highlights three ways in which the maritime story diverges from narratives of American statelessness, like the invisible state depicted in Brian Balogh’s *A Government Out of Sight*, or even William Novak’s local and state-based “well-regulated society” in *A People’s*

Welfare. First, Raffety argues that articulations of nationhood and federal power flourished *through*American maritime expansion. The 1835 law sparked a surge of criminal cases from sailors and officers, ultimately shifting the center of adjudication of sea-based crime "from the quarterdeck to the courtroom" (47). Second, federal judges handled offenses that on land would be reserved for state and local authorities. While states reformed penal codes in the 1820s and 1830s, representatives of the federal government outlined criminal offenses and regulated labor relations, within the marine context. And federal judges seemed more willing to intervene than their state-based counterparts. Finally, the 1790 legislation required ships to have articles—a contract establishing the terms of a voyage—and federal courts proved surprisingly willing to meddle in the enforcement of these contracts. Intentionally or no, sailors strengthened the federal government: "[S]eafarers' rights became one of the first important tests of federal law, the federal courts, and a national identity. Because they pressed Congress to regulate their work environment, and the courts to delineate how those rulings would be applied, seamen prompted the machinery of the new nation for definitions and structure" (196).

Readers of *Common-Place* may well recall Gautham Rao's 2008 article on early American marine hospitals as an initial example of public health care. Like *Republic Afloat*, Rao's article points to a broader national willingness to support federal intervention by the early American public than is commonly acknowledged, albeit for specific populations. But why was judicial intervention acceptable for mariners, but not land-bound laborers? Raffety suggests that the international context of shipping and, above all, mariners' status as wards of the state marked them as exceptional—more akin to children or slaves than other men (10). Thus, seamen helped to establish the federal apparatus, but within the distinctive context of admiralty law. Still, if this judicial activism was *about* a desired expansion of federal power, as suggested in chapter three, why was it so circumscribed? And was judicial paternalism on the rise? Raffety himself seems conflicted. In surveying New York federal court verdicts between 1835 and 1861, Raffety found that rulings tended to uphold officers' prerogatives: sailors were more likely to be convicted for acting against officers than vice versa. Likewise, given that support for consular service vacillated depending on the presidential administration, how does the national political context influence the book's broader narrative, especially given its focus on Massachusetts and New York?

Yet in shifting our attention from the land to the water, Raffety persuasively establishes the importance of America's maritime tradition to the nation's development. Raffety's work reveals that "Jack Tar, American" did not disappear with the Congress of Vienna, but continued to be central to the nation and state well after 1815.

I See, Therefore I Act?



More than two thousand years ago, Aristotle placed "spectacle" (*opsis*, that which is seen) dead last in importance among the six elements he listed as essential to drama when writing his *Poetics*, his notes on dramatic structure. Ever since, scholars and critics of the theater have maintained an uncomfortable relationship with stage spectacle, fearing that its very adoption arrives at the expense of thoughtful, verbal, literary content and, therefore, impedes theatrical performance from reaching some higher cultural purpose. Indeed, "most assume that spectacle's main function is to decorate and amuse, or believe that it is a voracious vacuum," Amy E. Hughes writes in *Spectacles of Reform*, "robbing us of our ability to think, feel, or act." "But spectacle is rarely empty," she argues, and throughout the mid-nineteenth century, the spectacles realized on the American melodramatic stage were overflowing with socially relevant, audience-activating messaging (166). Identifying and unpacking this previously unacknowledged freight is the mission of Hughes's carefully researched, methodically wrought monograph.

As an interdisciplinary cultural history operating at the intersection of performance and print, *Spectacles of Reform* comprises at its core three chapter-long case studies that explore how visual images contributed to three nineteenth-century American reform movements: temperance, abolition, and women's suffrage. Although the point of departure for each case study is a

close reading of the so-called sensation scene—a scene of pumped-up emotional affect usually coupled with stagecraft designed to amaze—from a popular mid-century stage melodrama, the discussion is by no means limited to things theatrical. Print images in books and periodicals, on sheet music covers, stationery, and even decorative kitchenware, rise alongside their theatrical counterparts as Hughes examines their roles in both reflecting and shaping American public opinion on some of the country's most pressing issues of the 1840s through the 1860s. Despite the author's position as a scholar of theater history, her book is as much (if not more) about the conversations these plays' spectacles provoked outside theater walls than it is about the responses and reactions elicited inside them, as the subtitle *Theater and Activism in Nineteenth-Century America* suggests.

It is the spectator's bodily response to bodies in perceived danger—danger effected through spectacle's affective jolt—that compelled melodrama's original audiences to consider, or else to reconsider, the sociopolitical conditions of real-world bodies located outside the orbit of theatrical representation.

Hughes offers a preliminary chapter to orient the reader's gaze upon the human body, which, she posits, can manifest itself *as* spectacle (in the case of societal and biological "freaks"), *in* spectacle (as performers within sensation scenes), and *at* spectacle (the audiences who behold the first two bodily varieties). Somewhat surprisingly, then, spectacular scenography—what is usually thought of as the primary vessel for melodrama's spectacular excesses—arrives secondary in interest to what Hughes calls "exceptional bodies," those that defy or exceed recognized social norms, in this study the drunkard, the fugitive slave, and the woman suffragist. Furthermore, Hughes argues that it is not melodrama's manufactured distresses themselves (such as the archetypal oncoming locomotive) that make a scene "sensational," but rather the presence of a "body in extremity" (the figure tied to the tracks in the path of the oncoming train) that creates a "rigorous stimulation of the senses" in the spectator (41). Therefore, it is the spectator's bodily response to bodies in perceived danger—danger effected through spectacle's *affective* jolt—that compelled melodrama's original audiences to consider, or else to reconsider, the sociopolitical conditions of real-world bodies located outside the orbit of theatrical representation, and to alter their own personal behaviors in light of what they have seen.

The first case study centers on the "spectacular insanity" of the *delirium tremens*, a violent, hallucinatory fit, invoked frequently throughout the nineteenth century as a cautionary result of excessive alcohol consumption. Along the proverbial road to ruin, mapped out visually by socially conscious lithographers, the "DTs" (in the common shorthand) marked a mere step away from destitution, and a mere two steps from death. Though the condition was typically experienced as a private episode, plays like W.H. Smith's pioneering temperance melodrama *The Drunkard* (1844) seized on the affliction's inherent theatricality and provided audiences with dynamic public exhibitions of its

alcohol-induced hysteria. Hughes underscores that such displays were often made all the more effective as tools for reform by dint of their performers' own personal histories of alcoholic indulgence, which seemed to enhance their credibility. This was the case for Smith, who himself portrayed the drunkard he authored, as well as for John B. Gough, who famously slipped back into drink while touting abstinence in autobiographical "lectures" featuring dramatic recreations of his own DTs. Whereas most scholarship on temperance drama has tended to privilege the image of the reformed drunkard's ultimate return to a "normal" state of bourgeois domesticity, Hughes intentionally focuses on the threat of the unreformed drunkard's withering-away in the country's newly formed insane asylums—of which she provides a brief social history.

Next Hughes considers the case of the fugitive slave, typified by the image of Eliza crossing the ice in several theatrical adaptations of Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852), including the best-known stage version, by George L. Aiken, which premiered only months after the novel's publication. These plays' varying melodramatic depictions of Eliza are made spectacular via the character's "excess of potential," explained as the surpassing of "racist, culturally constructed expectations of [her] innate abilities and proclivities" (23). And it is not the stage machinist's realization of the Ohio River ice floes that makes the scene sensational, but rather the Eliza character's precarious journey across them which does so. Assessing Stowe's original construction of this episode as an artistic response to the Compromise of 1850 (legislation that toughened the Fugitive Slave Act, demanding the return of escaped slaves to the South even after they'd reached free Northern territories), Hughes reads in sensational renderings of it—both on stage and in print—the character's fundamental transformation from being another person's property to being an autonomous human being. The famous scene, therefore, offered a corrective to the period's rampant dehumanization of fugitive slaves, frequently represented as chattel and reduced to stock typographical ornaments in print advertisements seeking their return.

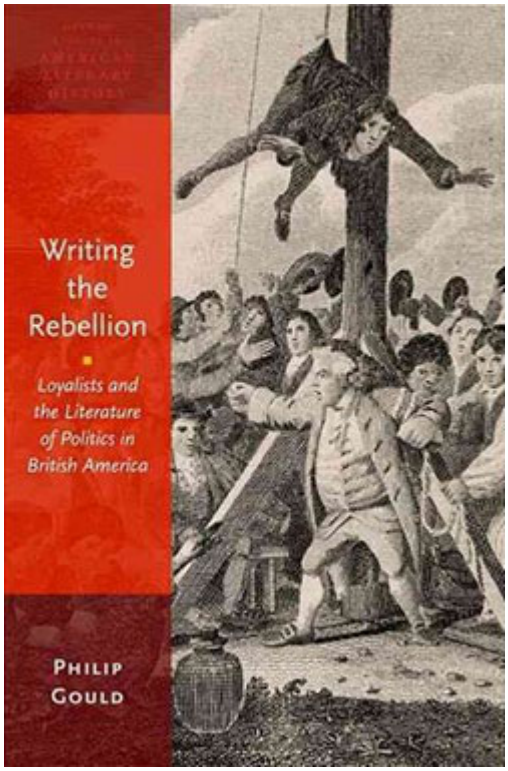
The final chapter, at once the most ambitious and satisfying, finds its theatrical root in the sensation scene of playwright-impresario Augustin Daly's *Under the Gaslight* (1867), the melodrama that inaugurated the trope of the railroad track rescue. Despite the seeming disconnect between railway accidents and gender politics, and her own caveat that the politics of the play "have been lost to us over time," making them "harder to detect than those of the temperance play or abolitionist drama," Hughes reads in this scene a timely exhibition of female potency (119). In Daly's play, the gender roles now typically assigned to victim and savior are swapped: it is the strong-willed Laura Courtland who rescues a male Civil War veteran from the path of the speeding train, a daring subversion of expectations one year after Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony founded the American Equal Rights Association and one year before the implicit denial of women's suffrage in the ratification of the Fourteenth Amendment. In the context of this historical moment, Hughes argues a dissenting critical perspective, that the liberal politics of the victim's reaction to his deliverance ("And these are the women who ain't to

have the vote!") and Laura's excessive display of progressive traits (not the least of which being her ability to wield the masculine "American axe" during the sensational rescue) could not have gone unnoticed by the play's original audiences. Women had proved to be an indispensable force in aiding the earlier temperance and abolition movements, but resistance to their right to vote held fast. And whereas most voting-rights plays of the era sought to cement the status quo, Hughes claims that the audacious visual spectacle of Daly's pasteboard train provided a shock to the senses that allowed for the delivery of an alternative political message.

The author's close readings, both of the melodramas themselves and of their related extratheatrical images, demonstrate an impressive ability to weave together remarkably heterogeneous archival materials into a fluid scholarly narrative, of interest well beyond theater history. Her explanatory and bibliographic notes alone (which make up a fifth of the book) make *Spectacles of Reform* an invaluable reference, as does its trove of thoughtfully selected images, pulled largely from the periodicals collections of the American Antiquarian Society and New York Historical Society. In the analysis, however, there lurks on occasion a tendency to suppose the political intent of dramatic moments that were influenced, no doubt, by a number of factors, making conclusory leaps that might be taken with more cautious footing. For instance, her reading of *The Drunkard*'s inclusive final tableau—"that every American, despite personal failing and lapses in respectability, could rehabilitate and join the ranks of ordinary citizens once more"—is perhaps not inadmissible, but the the ensemble finale likely has as much, if not more, to do with plain old melodramatic stage conventions than with politics (65). To this point, it is sometimes more implied than explicated just how the social and political content located in these plays translates into direct real-world social or political action, leaving the subtitle's promise of *Theater and Activism* more of a laying-out of the two side by side than an argument for the theater as a driving agent of reform.

Nevertheless, when Hughes lifts her gaze from the past to consider how the nineteenth century's spectacular fascinations remain at work in our own spectacle-obsessed world of today—making, for example, an ingenious connection between the "freakish" bodies of *The Octoroon* (the racially charged Dion Boucicault melodrama from 1859) and the so-called Octomom (Nadya Suleman, who in 2009 gave birth to eight children in one pregnancy)—these reservations dissolve, and the project affords her entire subject refreshed relevance. American melodrama is so frequently relegated to the category of disposable, sub-literary entertainment that any attempt to treat it otherwise can feel like a *de facto* exercise in inconsequence. But by showing in transhistorical flashes how "the spectacular instant [that] offered producers, reformers, audiences, and consumers a unique opportunity to articulate ideas" still does (44), Hughes helps to close the temporal gap between her reader and the works she discusses, making the nineteenth-century popular American theater a little more relatable, a little more worthy of our attention. And that is no little achievement.

Fine Distinctions



There's an old military proverb: *No army ever rode into battle shouting fine distinctions.* In Philip Gould's *Writing the Rebellion*, however, the armies fight with pen and printing press, not sword and cannon. In this book, polemical writers shout, sneer, and hiss fine distinctions at each other on a paper battlefield of pamphlets and newspapers, broadsides and burlesques, satires and political theatre. Shades of rhetorical difference occupy every page: sublimity vs. bombast; true vs. false wit; apprehension vs. expression; genius vs. decorum; irony vs. invective; low vs. high burlesque—plus subtle and not-so-subtle contrasts among most of the classic rhetorical strategies and tactics. The subtitle, *Loyalists and the Literature of Politics in British America,* indicates why disputes about the nuances of literary and stylistic categories predominate in Gould's analysis. This is a war of words, a contest for the minds and feelings of British subjects in a time of rebellion. It is politics understood as literature, aesthetics understood as politics.

The controlling premise of *Writing the Rebellion* is that a writerly class of Patriots and Loyalists—each side claiming the title of "civilized English subject" (25)—used disputes over "literary form and aesthetic taste" in order to "leverage political authority" (32). Rebels and Loyalists alike got their political leverage by mocking their opponents as *bad writers* as well as bad thinkers. As Gould states, "the sometimes tendentious arguments about Parliament's sovereignty, the common law, and actual and virtual representation

segued almost seamlessly into those concerning literary style as a touchstone to political credibility" (32). Furthermore, a "focus on aesthetics assumes that the subject is always already politicized: it functions as the means by which British Americans were reimagining their cultural relations to one another and to Britain itself" (25).

Gould presents case studies in five chapters, each case analyzing in detail a few highly representative Patriot and Loyalist documents, beginning with the Stamp Act crisis of 1765, extending through the meeting of the Continental Congress and the formation of the Continental Association (1774), and concluding with responses to *Common Sense* (1776) and its various reprintings.

In sequence, the cases dramatize how a considerable percentage of British colonists (estimates range from 20 to 33 percent) at first supposed revolution against England too far-fetched to imagine. Suddenly, it was imaginable. Alarmed, the Loyalists then tried to arrest this momentum of nonsensical imagining, using their writing to restore good sense and calm order. But then the unimaginable kept happening. Rapidly. As events swiftly turned worse, and ultimately punitive, Loyalist lives were daily transformed. "The feelings of divided loyalty usually assigned to them" slipped into devastating feelings of loss, dislocation, isolation—a "dread of no longer being British *or* American." Although, Gould observes, we "traditionally have seen the Loyalists as being simply elitist or aloof in their writings, I would argue that such detachment was driven more by the increasing sensations of desperation, outrage, and fear" (168-170).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The first case, on the Stamp Act Crisis, features the Loyalist Martin Howard Jr.'s *Letter from a Gentleman at Halifax* (1765) versus the answers of two Patriots, Stephen Hopkins (*The Rights of Colonies Examined,*1764) and James Otis (*Vindication of the American Colonies from the Aspersions of the Halifax Gentleman* and *Brief Remarks on the Defence of the Halifax Libel*, both 1765). The stylistic/political issue involves the "sublime" style (Samuel Johnson's "grand or lofty style") versus self-indulgent "bombast" and "bathos." Anticipating the debates a decade ahead, each side claims the grand style for itself and relegates the opposition to one or another level of bathos—drawing fine distinctions, and not gently.

The second case pits Anglican minister Samuel Seabury and his 1774-75 series of pamphlets published under the pen-name "West Chester Farmer" against Alexander Hamilton, who attacked the West Chester Farmer with his own pamphlets, including *The Farmer Refuted* (1775). Seabury and Hamilton tussled over the proper forms of ridicule: those conveyed by true wit ("ideally modulated, its humor proportioned to the targeted foibles, its premises rooted in sympathy with human nature") or false wit: self-indulgent, extravagant word-play and

punning. With each adversary mocking the other, the shadows of Pope's *Dunciad*, "Essay on Criticism," and "Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot" seem to fall on their pages, with Seabury and Hamilton wittily assigning the other a seat among the dunces.

The extensive third case, "Satirizing the Congress: Ancient Balladry and Literary Taste," makes the Seabury/Hamilton exchange look positively jolly, for Congress gets satirized in "a literature of outrage: verse parodies, mock epistles and public confessions, satiric sketches, false advertisements, cards, cards-in-reply, squibs, closet-dramas, humorous ballads, and comic political fables" (84). The pertinent texts are the anonymous Loyalist burlesque *The Association, &c. of the Delegates of the Colonies, at the Grand Congress, Held at Philadelphia, Sept. 1, 1774, Versified, and Adapted to Music* (1774) paired with Major John Andre's take-off on the old ballad "Chevy Chase," a snarly satire on the American military that he called "The Cow-Chace" (1780). Each exploits the revival of serious interest in ancient ballads that had occurred in Britain around mid-century—a revival Gould treats in considerable detail.

In the widely popular *Common Sense*, of course, Loyalists encountered their greatest challenge. The fourth case, "Loyalists and the Author of *Common Sense*," uses the figure of Thomas Paine to explore the nature of "authorship," a topic much discussed today in theory circles. Once Paine was revealed as its author (an open secret all along), an increasingly anxious opposition targeted him in person and in *persona*. For Patriots, Paine qualified as a true "author," an honorable writer marvelously bringing eloquence to the cause of common sense; for Loyalists, he was unworthy of the name of author, a "scribbling imp," a "hired Grubb Street hack," out for the money and unscrupulously promoting the evil schemes and crazy policies of his employers. Yet Loyalists also found Paine useful, for he became a metonymy for the entire cast of rebellious leaders and their propagandists; by extension, if they could skewer him and his reputation, they could wound his sponsors.

The anti-Paine Loyalist works are pamphlets by Maryland's James Chalmers, *Plain Truth* and*Additions to Plain Truth* (1776), and a pamphlet by Charles Inglis, *The True Interest of America Impartially Stated in Certain Strictures on a Pamphlet Intitled Common Sense* (1776), plus a series of letters William Smith wrote under the pseudonym "Cato" for Philadelphia newspapers. (Paine answered "Cato" under his own pseudonym, "The Forester.") The Loyalists disdained *Common Sense* because Paine rejected monarchy and promoted American independence, but also because of his dangerous philosophy of natural rights and liberties, a wildly idealistic fantasy floating in an imaginary world of flawless people needing no social and political control. "I find no Common Sense in this pamphlet but much uncommon phrenzy," wrote Inglis (122). In Philadelphia, moreover, the controversy involved rival printers, who, since the conflicts involving Franklin and Zenger, had claimed political neutrality but now faced pressure from both sides to convert their presses into political instruments as opportunities presented themselves to print, reprint, and refute *Common Sense*.

The fifth case develops a revisionary argument explaining how the Loyalists located *Common Sense* "New Englandly." New England, Loyalists insisted, had *never* been truly English and never truly part of the British Empire. *Common Sense* is a *Puritan* text; when New England Puritans trumpet it, they forfeit any claim to "English credentials" (145). In *Plain Truth* and *Additions to Plain Truth*, Chalmers even posits Paine as the new Cromwell, thus connecting Loyalist fears of rebellion in 1776 by analogy to the English civil wars of the 1640s. As the Puritans then had nearly destroyed England through regicide, bloody violence, mendacity, and personal ambition (exemplified by Oliver Cromwell), their New England descendants, likewise infected with Puritanism, were now hell-bent on destroying British America.

Writing the Rebellion concludes with an epilogue urging historians to discard their stereotypes about the Loyalists and instead to "account for the seriousness and depth of their political critiques and positions" (172).

In his effort to persuade readers to rethink the literature of the rebellion, Gould faces some rhetorical challenges of his own. Because the specimens are "occasional," a reader needs information about the particular occasions that sparked the exchange between writers, and it also helps to be familiar with eighteenth-century British literary theories, for they carry over to the colonies. Gould supplies considerable context, but each case necessarily requires an effort to keep in mind the specific historical circumstances serving as the basis for the witticisms, satirical stings, local allusions, etc., of the specimen documents—in short, to get the joke. Although Gould includes sections summarizing the upshot of each case and connecting it with the case to follow, his very close readings do presuppose an attentive reader with some prior knowledge of transatlantic rhetorical practice.

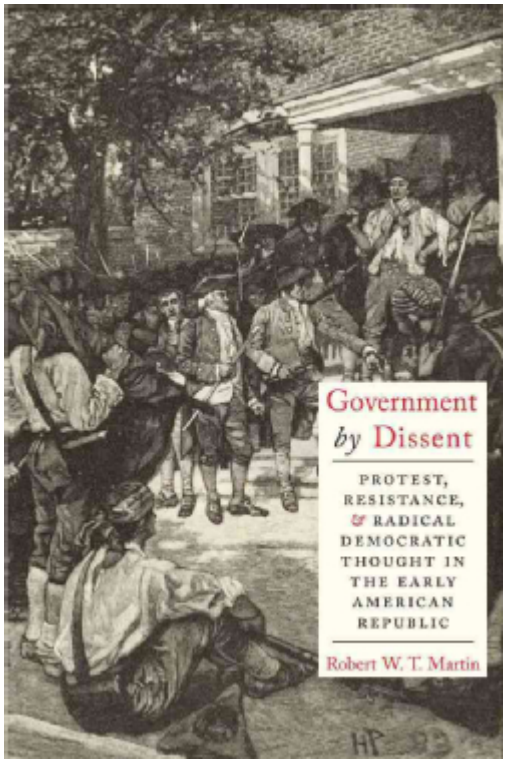
Several projects underlie this brief but dense book. One is surely the recovery of good-but-forgotten Loyalist writers. In this regard, two more maxims come to mind: *History is written by the winners* and *Literature is what gets taught*. Accordingly, the national narrative has for generations adopted the major premise that the system of laws, liberties, and values identified as truly American, accompanied by the culture that the United States developed, flows from 1776 and the principles of Independence established by the patriots in their successful conflict with England. Those beliefs likewise form the *credo* of the United States' civil religion, and Americans tend to call dissent from them "un-American." The Loyalists, having lost, are thereby banished to the insignificant margins of American history as we have constructed it. *Writing the Rebellion* returns them to the discourse.

That developmental narrative has also guided the teaching of American literature—itself a relatively new subject of study that American colleges, until the mid-twentieth-century, taught as a curious but minor departure from The Great Tradition of British Literature from Chaucer to Yesterday. Search the standard classroom anthologies of American literature for any selections from the writers Gould discusses and you will find a great deal of Franklin and

Paine but precious little of the Loyalist intellectuals who doubted the wisdom of rebellion from the Mother Country. Gould tries hard, though, especially when it comes to *Common Sense*. He writes that by "accounting for Loyalist responses to this magnum opus," he "has aimed to dislodge its traditional place in national history and emphasize instead the literary and political dissent it precipitated" (142).

That's one heavy rock to move. But maybe he got it to tilt a little. It's a start.

In Search of America's Radically Democratic Founders



Government by Dissent is an engaging meditation on one of America's founding fantasies—the fantasy of democratic self-government. In 1776 Thomas Paine's *Common Sense* articulated what we might call the "primal scene" of American democracy. According to Paine, emigrants to any new land (such as the American colonies, he implied) could initially live free from the external constraints of government because the community would be "bound … together in a common cause" by "the first difficulties of emigration." Over time, however, common

kindness and *esprit de corps* would be insufficient to preserve peace and justice, and thus the need to establish "some form of government" would arise. Paine wrote that "some convenient tree will afford them a State House, under the branches of which the whole Colony may assemble to deliberate on public matters. … In this first parliament every man by natural right will have a seat." Reduced to its common denominator, this is American democracy—every single inhabitant gathered together to create the rules that will bind them all. Paine readily admitted that population growth and increased social complexity would render this original political system obsolete, but the metaphor of the tree and its radically inclusive vision of literal self-governance remained an ideal to which he and other eighteenth-century democrats aspired.

As anyone with even a cursory knowledge of the history of American politics can attest, the reality of how Americans have governed themselves has rarely resembled Paine's depiction of an inclusive and productively deliberative picnic under a tree. Paine's eighteenth-century critics (almost all of whom were conservatives) argued that most citizens knew nothing about politics or law, and thus were entirely unfit to craft legislation. Political decision making, they claimed, should be the province of a small number of qualified (by which they meant wealthy and well-educated) experts, because truly democratic governance would result in short-sighted public policies that sacrificed the common good at the expense of the majority's short-term self-interest. Politics under that tree, they claimed, would always be the politics of provinciality and stupidity, and American politics since the founding has certainly seen its share of both.

The dissentient democrats we meet in this book envisioned a system in which political decisions percolated up from the general populace, rather than being imposed from above by political elites.

Paine's twentieth- and twenty-first-century critics (most of whom are progressives) emphasize the implicit exclusions that marked Paine's imaginary, tree-shaded Congress. Merely declaring that an ideal legislative body should include everyone did not change the fact that 50 percent of people at Paine's time were excluded from politics because of their gender, or that 20 percent of the colonies' population in 1776 consisted of enslaved people who obviously would not be invited to that picnic under the tree, or that the tree itself had been forcibly taken from Native Americans whose land use practices had shaped the verdant landscape that sustained both those settlers and the luxurious old tree they claimed as their own. If Paine's tree metaphor provided any sort of precedent for American politics, it was the precedent of white, male, propertied rule duplicitously carried out under the sign of an abstract, but perpetually deferred, commitment to universal equality and inclusivity. In sum, from the founding era up through today, there have been good reasons to dismiss Paine's democratic tree metaphor as a rhetorically powerful but intellectually and politically flimsy fantasy.

Martin, a professor of government at Hamilton College, acknowledges the perennial gap between democratic theory and American political reality, but rejects the idea that the gap represents a fatal flaw in the American political tradition. Martin's goal in this book is to restore the democratic credentials of the founding generation by bringing to light a cohort of late eighteenth-century writers (including, surprisingly, James Madison) who advocated strategies for making the nation more radically democratic. These "dissentient democrats," Martin argues, articulated a vision of democratic self-government far more robust than Paine's metaphor of the tree, and capable of withstanding the criticisms levied by American democracy's many skeptics, both past and present, progressive and conservative.

At the heart of Martin's "dissentient" democratic tradition rests a Habermasian conception of public opinion. The dissentient democrats we meet in this book envisioned a system in which political decisions percolated up from the general populace, rather than being imposed from above by political elites. They were not anarchists seeking to rip down Paine's governing tree, however. Like Paine, they recognized the need for a representative political system that set up a few hundred empowered seats under that governing tree and a spectator's gallery for everyone else. This tactical exclusion was a forgivable concession, however, as long as the governing few under that tree did the bidding of "the people," and not an unrepresentative portion of them. But how were legislators to know and enact what "the people" really wanted? To solve this problem, dissentient democrats advocated a diverse, contentious, and inclusive public sphere in which "the people" could work toward a shared, though never static, understanding of what "we" want. The point is not that dissenters have greater access to the truth than advocates of the status quo. Dissentient democracy is all about process, not content. The more voices that are heard, the more open the discussion is, and the more attuned and accountable elected leaders are to the rough consensus that emerges out of that never-ending discussion, the more "democratic" we can consider a polity.

This concept of dissentient democracy is Martin's promising way of dealing with what we might call democracy's representation problem. As literary critic Jay Fliegelman pointed out long ago, the nation's foundational texts all anxiously speak on behalf of a "we" that did not yet exist (and, arguably, never has existed). In 1776, Jefferson knew that many of his fellow colonists did not hold certain truths to be self-evident, let alone support independence. Something similar could be said of the 57 decidedly-not-representative men who, in the summer of 1787, claimed to speak on behalf of "We the People." As the nation has gotten even more populous and diverse, the idea that "the people" could speak with one voice or that there exists some entity that could discern the authentic will of "the people" seems even more outlandish. Virtual representation, in other words, did not end when the colonies separated from Britain, but has rather been standard operating procedure since long before the revolution. Whereas some critics emphasize the partial nature of all claims to representativeness (who really is speaking here and whose interests and aspirations are really being furthered by the authors of these texts and the

propertied men who took over the political reins of the new nation?), Martin focuses on the aspirational side of this political equation, the ultimately unachievable but still laudable goal of creating both a vibrant, participatory political culture and a political system that is responsive to it.

The most obvious form of political responsiveness is the vote, but Martin spends almost no time talking about elections because, he claims, the dissentient democrats of the founding era thought that "elections simply were not enough" (97) to ensure truly popular control over the political process. Eighteenth-century democrats recognized the extent to which the tradition of deference had disempowered ordinary citizens, and they worked to create "counterpublic spaces" where they could "amass their collective wisdom" and "find a shared voice" (105). Whereas contemporary Americans, when they think with any depth at all about what "democracy" means, associate it almost exclusively with the right to vote, Martin's subjects had a far more sophisticated understanding of how social and cultural forces empowered some and silenced others. They were not content to take a few minutes every couple of years to pick a proxy; rather, they wanted to build a political culture in which deliberation and debate were ongoing and dispersed throughout the nation's media and social structure.

This is just one of many ways in which Martin paints a very appealing picture of the founding era's dissenters, whether they be Anti-Federalist opponents of the Constitution, democratic critics of the Washington administration, backcountry regulators, or the cantankerous lawyers and radicals who took on John Adams and the Sedition Acts. Many progressive historians have written about the brave fight that such people waged against the elitists, land speculators, and anti-democrats of their day. The difference here is that Martin is less interested in taking sides with these dissenters, and more interested in demonstrating that such people espoused dissent as a robust political principle, a right that should belong to all and not just themselves. This combats what has long been a conservative, or merely skeptical, critique of eighteenth-century democrats—that they were grumblers, the embittered losers of history who, had they won, would have been just as intolerant as the winners who were the targets of their ire. According to Martin, these late eighteenth-century dissenters did not espouse dissent simply because they were outsiders who wanted to be heard. Rather, they valued dissent irrespective of its content. These impressively humble and tolerant dissenters did not want to rule the world according to their own lights; they wanted the world to be run in such a way that dissent of any sort would always be nurtured, valued, and heeded by the powers that be.

Martin's dissenters were also precociously aware of how a political system keenly attuned to public opinion could fall prey to an intolerant, stifling groupthink. These democrats privileged unending contestation, what Martin calls "dissensus," rather than the achievement of a complacent consensus. They also worried about the tendency of democracies to silence those whose opinions lay outside the boundaries of what the public deemed acceptable at any particular

moment. To combat this tendency, Martin's dissentient democrats offered a radical defense of the right to unmolested free speech, even speech they themselves detested or was demonstrably untrue.

Dissentient democrats also had a progressive solution to the problem of demagoguery. Where the conservative solution to this endemic, democratic problem was to leave governance up to the educated few, Martin's dissentient democrats argued that the best way to prevent demagoguery was to fund public education for everyone. An informed and intelligent citizenry would be inoculated against the danger of demagoguery, and be prepared to participate productively and intelligently in the process of political deliberation.

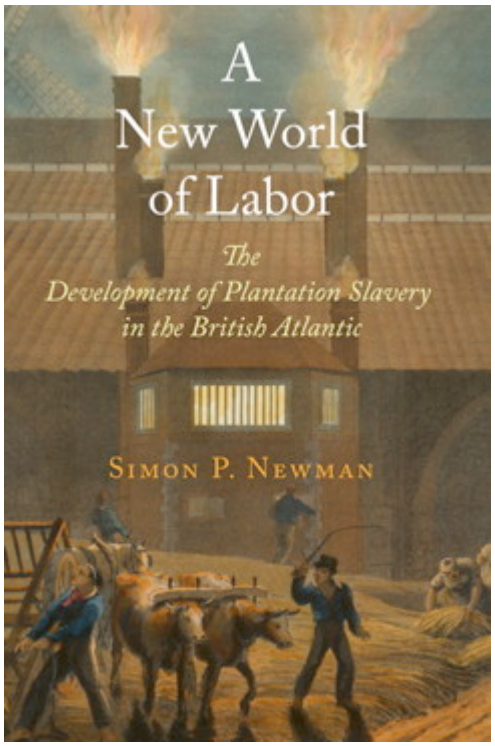
By now it should be clear that Martin greatly admires his subjects. Indeed, at times it almost seems as if his arguments were organized around the desire to rebut virtually every contemporary criticism of the Enlightenment political tradition that his dissentient democrats championed. Where feminist critics of the public sphere have highlighted the eighteenth century's gendered valuation of reason over emotion, Martin argues that his dissentient democrats were attuned to that issue and thought emotion had a legitimate role to play in public political discourse. Where other critics regard the Enlightenment as having an overly static and unchanging conception of truth, Martin stresses the epistemological subtlety of his subjects, making them at times seem more like early twentieth-century Pragmatists than figures from the Age of Reason.

These moments when Martin stretches a bit too far to make his dissentient democrats relevant and appealing to modern readers are understandable given his background as a student of political theory. His goal is to construct a usable genealogy for a bundle of political ideas that have their roots in the late eighteenth century, but which are still relevant for our contemporary political culture. This leads him to sometimes offer quite generous and decontextualized readings of his sources. This problem is most pronounced in the chapter on James Madison, where Martin interprets the "father of the Constitution" as a seminal, creative participant in the tradition of dissentient democracy. As early as 1785, Martin argues, we see Madison "hinting" at the idea that public opinion (rather than elected leaders) should function as "a positive, proposing force that could point toward new, better policies" (123). Given Madison's great disdain for the more populist state legislatures of the day and the elaborate roadblocks the Constitution placed between the "people out of doors" and the formal political system, this vision of Madison the radically populist democrat seems like an interpretive overreach. It is understandable that Martin would want his cohort of dissentient democrats to include at least one figure whom lay readers might recognize, but the Madison we encounter in this book will probably be significantly and provocatively different from the Madison that has emerged in the last few decades of historical scholarship.

These criticisms aside, Martin's work makes a strong case for the continuing relevance of the founding era's democrats, most of whom have long passed from the nation's political memory. In an era when many of our most vocal dissenters

are reactionary cynics—Glenn Beck, another contemporary fan of Thomas Paine, comes to mind here—Martin reminds us that democratic dissent is not just an end in itself, but, in its best forms, an aspiration toward a political culture and political system that values a diversity of perspectives, especially those perspectives that have been formed out of a history of exclusion. Dissentient democracy is about listening to those who disagree with you as much as it is about claiming space to be heard. Such a history of democratic listening would make an interesting counterpoint to this excellent history of how the nation's first democrats worked to create a political culture that not just tolerated, but positively valued, dissent.

"Barbadosed": Class and Race in the British Atlantic



In this erudite, thoughtful, and at times sparkling study, Simon Newman—author of noteworthy earlier books on festive culture in the early republic and on the Philadelphia poor—turns to one of the perennial issues in early American history, namely the origins of plantation slavery in the British colonies. Rather than concentrating on the traditional sites of scholarly attention—the Chesapeake colonies of Virginia and Maryland—he turns the spotlight on the pivotal Caribbean island of Barbados which he sees, with considerable justification, as the real "laboratory of labor" in the British Atlantic (251). It was there during the early seventeenth century that a powerful planter elite

first invented a radically new variety of bound labor to service an integrated plantation system that combined workers, land, and machines in an innovative fashion. Once established, he argues that this nexus did not simply remain *in situ*. Instead it was exported elsewhere, with this Barbadian model subsequently shaping the development of racial slavery not just on Jamaica and other Caribbean islands, but in South Carolina and its lower South neighbors as well. As he charts this compelling trajectory, two interrelated facets of Newman's underlying approach become increasingly evident. First, there is his gloss on the classic question of the balance between economics and race in the causation of American slavery, which Alden T. Vaughan several years ago dubbed the "origins debate." Second, in the process of addressing that issue, there is the way he places plantation slavery firmly in the context of other forms of labor—both unfree and free—characteristic of the early modern British world. His pursuit of this dimension propels him beyond the Caribbean and North America to Britain and the West African coast in a work that becomes genuinely circum-Atlantic in scope.

With regard to the first question, Newman supports a socio-economic rather than a racial interpretation of the transition to black slavery. Although he freely acknowledges that a set of ideas and prejudices about race came to constitute the ideological underpinnings of slavery during the course of the eighteenth century, it was, nevertheless, "a class-based system of labor rather than abstract ideas of racial difference that provided the foundation for slavery in Barbados, and for a system that spread to Jamaica, the Carolinas, and beyond" (248). There is, of course, nothing particularly original in this assertion. It merely represents one of the well-established poles in a long-standing controversy. Where Newman breaks new ground is in the crucial role he ascribes to the importance of English precedents with regard to attitudes toward labor, the work imperative, and the treatment of the poor and vulnerable. In particular, the Vagrancy Act of 1547 occupies a central place in his narrative. Despite the fact that there is little evidence that the measure was actually enforced, Newman plausibly suggests that its precedents, its language, and the very fact of its passage are all of compelling significance. They indicate that English rulers and landowners, faced with the challenge of controlling a growing mass of under- or unemployed people, believed that in the right circumstances one individual could seize the body and labor of another, taking away liberty and independence and extracting work through violence.


English rulers and landowners, faced with the challenge of controlling a growing mass of under- or unemployed people, believed that in the right circumstances one individual could seize the body and labor of another, taking away liberty and independence and extracting work through violence.

The commodification of labor that this step represented only gained pace in the early seventeenth century as the settlement of Barbados got underway. On the island itself, the planter elite—unchecked by any lingering legal and social constraints—created the exploitative plantation system characteristic of sugar

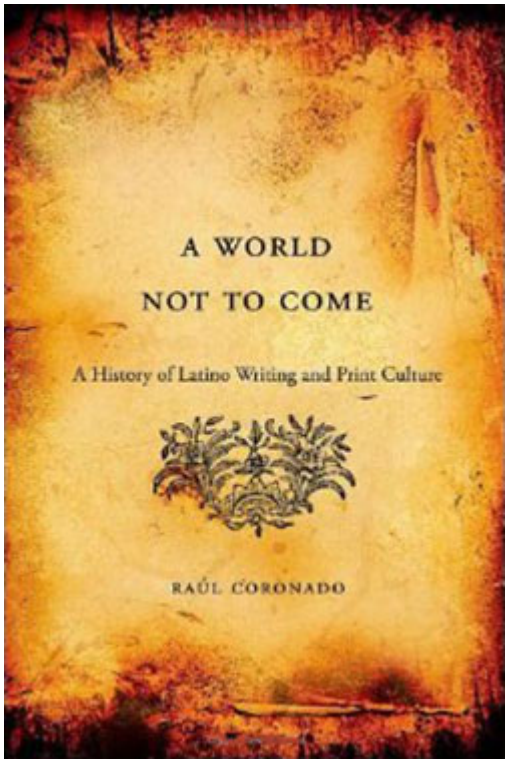
cultivation and brutally utilized first English indentured servants and then black slaves. The former served for far longer periods than English laborers and they were bought, sold, and traded in a manner unknown in Britain itself. What encouraged this tendency was an infelicitous combination of factors. First, indentured servants were in plentiful supply owing to the volatile economic, social, and political conditions in the metropolis and, second, an increasing proportion of those sent across the Atlantic were already unfree and enjoyed scant legal rights and protections. They were, in effect, "white slaves"—vagrants, criminals, and prisoners—whom planters viewed more as inferior and contemptible commodities to be exploited than as free-born individuals (71). According to Newman, their treatment laid the foundations for the late seventeenth-century development of black slavery, whose operation he then analyzes in some depth using an array of contemporary sources familiar to Caribbean historians, including Richard Ligon's *True and Exact History* (1657), Henry Drax's instructions, and the records of the Codrington and Newton estates. Although this is, perhaps surprisingly, the most conventional section of the book, Newman, to his credit, is at pains to stress how dynamic the institution was in Barbados. It was not static, but changed over time as planters adopted rather double-edged "amelioration" policies during the eighteenth century, promoted natural increase and family life, and encouraged the development of a more diverse, highly skilled and trained black workforce. He is also acutely aware of the gender dimension to life and labor on a West Indian sugar plantation and of the role that female slaves played in the fields. Finally, Newman rightly emphasizes the extent to which, with the rise of slavery, white servants and their descendants—the so-called "redlegs"—were marginalized in Barbados to a degree that was unusual even in other regions of the Caribbean.

For Newman this slave system was genuinely distinctive. It stood out from working practices in other parts of the British Atlantic world. Plantation slavery really did constitute "a new world of labor," to repeat the evocative phrase in the book's title. In order to underline this point, Newman focuses not just on earlier English precedents, but also on conditions in British-occupied West Africa and especially the Gold Coast, a region that had close connections with Barbados through the Atlantic slave trade. There, because of the primacy of the trading relationship and the demographic imbalance between Europeans and Africans, Britons were compelled to respect the local residents and their working practices. As a result, they had to engage with, understand, and utilize free and bound labor in ways that differed quite dramatically both from the early modern British Isles and the developing plantation society of Barbados. The Gold Coast was not a slave society akin to those that would evolve in the Americas, and until the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries slavery in coastal communities remained relatively small-scale, without any large and distinct slave class or caste. In addition, the existence of pawns, or voluntary and (at least in theory) temporary slaves, further blurred the lines between free and enslaved. Viewed in this wider context, then, the Barbadian experience was truly exceptional. While categories and forms of labor were extremely complicated elsewhere, on this particular Caribbean island more

rigid definitions of labor and subsequently of race usurped the more fluid ideas and practices characteristic of the larger British Atlantic. What accounts for this outcome? Embedded in Newman's text are several possible explanations: the strength of English precedents and attitudes towards labor; the fact that the initial settlement of Barbados coincided with a period of economic, social, and political turmoil in England; the resulting influx into the colony of British (principally Irish and Scottish) unfree convicts, vagrants, and prisoners of war; the unchecked power and freedom of the Barbadian planter class; and the evaporation with the Atlantic crossing of more fluid, flexible African definitions of slavery. For this array of reasons, according to Newman, the ideas and practices of plantation slavery actually owed more to England than to Africa, and more to class than to race.

This is, therefore, an interesting, suggestive book that merits a wide readership, particularly from those with an interest in Atlantic slavery and labor history broadly defined. Although there is a slightly repetitive quality to the discussion, with many of the same themes resurfacing at different points, the study's clear linear structure anchored around discrete sections on the various Atlantic contexts, British bound labor, African bound labor, and finally plantation slavery, succeeds in driving the argument forward in a compelling fashion. Also, while the study covers some familiar ground in its discussion of Caribbean, British, and African labor practices—and owes a distinct debt to earlier scholars such as Richard Dunn, Hilary Beckles, and Russell Menard—the triangular, comparative nature of his analysis enables Newman to develop his own rather novel argument concerning the distinctive nature of plantation slavery in British America. Here the one element that is perhaps missing is a clearer awareness of the significance of the inevitable entanglements with the Iberian and Dutch Atlantics. That important caveat aside, Newman nevertheless succeeds in highlighting the centrality of labor to our understanding of the early modern world and, as the best Atlantic historians do, raises important questions about the complex, fluid relationship between developments in the Americas, Africa, and Europe.

The Lost Histories of Past Futures: Revolution, Belonging, and the Times of Transnational Print Cultures



When I was a teenager in Catholic school developing a sense of political consciousness, I fixated on the Apostle Jude, patron saint of the hopeless and despairing, because his patronage seemed to extend broadly to what the Psalms call “the wretched of the earth,” the down-and-out and overlooked in modern societies and their written histories. I was also inclined toward Jude because I was forgetful, and so I was told I could pray to him when I lost something valuable, like a new jacket—a rather odd conflation of the transcendent and the banal. St. Jude is also sometimes described (along with St. Rita) as the patron saint of “the Impossible,” making his saintly office even more metaphysically puzzling, since he oversees a conditional, temporal category, impossibility, rather than a geographically bounded place (the Philippines, São Paolo), a profession (confectioners, bankers), or an ailment (bubonic plague, cattle diseases), like most saints in the pantheon. Jude belongs to the counterfactual conditional, that which would or could have happened, had not something else out of your control interceded—an illness, an act of violence, or one of the many other natural and structural injustices that shape the present and limit the futures of the despairing souls that petition Jude for hope and relief.

Jude’s realms, which combine the most quotidian and magnificent aspects of human frailty and aspiration and transcend the bounded present and the conditional future, are in some sense the domain as well of Raúl Coronado’s brilliant, provocative, and often moving book, *A World Not to Come: A History of Latino Writing and Print Culture.* Coronado’s book is ambitious, both theoretically and historiographically, rigorously researched, and eloquently written. His objective is twofold: first, to document the emergence of a Catholic Hispanic modernity in the Latin American age of revolution, one whose models of knowledge and systems of understanding did not match up with the

liberal individualism of the Anglo-American world, which has been generally taken to be*the* standard of political modernity that others in the hemisphere aspired to emulate. Secondly, he explores the emergence, and failures, of revolutionary, anti-imperialist republican thought in early to mid-19th century Texas, using this specific, largely peripheral geography to argue for the centrality of such short-circuits—"worlds not to come," lost futures birthed by revolutions yet to be completed—that nevertheless shape the national cultures that emerge out of the crucibles of empire, slavery, war, and revolution. In so doing, Coronado offers a compellingly rigorous corrective to the often presentist orientation of "transnational" cultural studies by excavating the contingent, unstable forms of social belonging and political meaning in Spanish America that helped create, but also elude, the national categories we have inherited from the revolutionary 19th century.


Coronado offers a compellingly rigorous corrective to the often presentist orientation of "transnational" cultural studies by excavating the contingent, unstable forms of social belonging and political meaning in Spanish America that helped create, but also elude, the national categories we have inherited from the revolutionary 19th century.

The post-Reformation world of Catholic Scholasticism, in which the Spanish Empire took shape and in which it crumbled, is important to Coronado's history of print culture and national consciousness in Texas because it determined the kinds of social and geographic belonging available to those living on New Spain's periphery at the time. In Coronado's summary, Scholastic philosophy responds to the Protestant heresy of a priesthood of believers with direct, unmediated access to the divine Word by presenting the world as a single text, mandated by God, in which all things are intertwined, in a meaning that could only begin to be deciphered by an ordained clergy. (This entanglement of the visible and spiritual world helps explain St. Jude's alternately banal and profound offices.) As Coronado puts it, Scholasticism is an intellectual and social system that values not "innovation but interpretation," the skill of reading the world and uncovering "God's signature" within it (52). The Catholic world was an "enchanted" one, in which events were shaped not only by individual agency, but also by unseen forces and unknowable spirits. "Proximity to the divine," Coronado writes, "involves having a 'porous' self, where meaning emerges not within autonomous individuals but relationally with the visible and invisible world around us; where spiritual transcendence could at times be experienced by a community coming together during trying times" (51). In this "enchanted world," agency resides not just in individual bodies and intellects but also in impersonal forces that are both beyond these and yet also of them. This position is difficult to articulate in other than teleological terms because, according to Charles Taylor, a critic of Scholasticism that Coronado leans on for his own account, this enchanted world seems so strange, and thus so "traditional," to us.

This seeming anachronism points to the most exciting part of Coronado's

argument, which is his historiographical emphasis on the past futures "not to come" in 19th-century Texas, a historical project that takes seriously radical political desires, and the failure that inevitably accompanies them. The "future-in-past" grammatical formulation of *A World Not to Come* considers the history of Texas in terms of the spaces that radicals, pamphleteers, diarists, and generals imagined that they "would become," rather than the inevitability of the nation-states that they "became." As Coronado suggests, teleological narratives that presume the independence and later U.S. annexation of Texas as an inevitable product of Mexican instability, slave-state expansionism, the heroism of the Alamo, etc., tend to write those who would become "Tejanos," and still later, "Latinos," out of their region's history, reducing them to footnotes or obstacles along some other historical path. More broadly, Coronado's genealogical approach is essential, I think, for any serious approach to empire and anti-imperialist movements in the 19th-century U.S. and Caribbean, where national imaginaries, to say nothing of the territories themselves, were so dynamic that the very meaning of the things later called "Texas," "Cuba," or "Florida" changed profoundly across generations. *A World Not to Come* uncovers traces of national futures that look different from the territories we might recognize as inevitable—the post-1848 U.S.-Mexican border, or the revived Aztlán of Chicano nationalism—as well as a Hispanic Catholic epistemology that determined alternative worlds not to come, but not without leaving traces behind.

Given his emphasis on interpretation as a theological and social value in the time and place under consideration here, Coronado organizes much of his argument around close readings of key terms that ground his argument in his print and manuscript archive, while helping to organize this often sprawling book for readers. Besides "enchantment," he considers "Latino," a word he considers as "less…a subject position than…a literary and intellectual culture that emerges in the interstices between the United States and Latin America" (30). *Publicar*, the Spanish word meaning "publish" as well as "publicize," becomes an important combination in 19th-century Texas, where the rarity of printing presses meant that important documents were disseminated in manuscript and through oral performance. Coronado's use of unpublished manuscripts, listed for readers on a bibliographyposted online, is instructive for this reason. He shows how print was an instrument of religious and political authority in late imperial Spanish Texas, "the embodiment of the voice of sovereignty," as well as a rare technology in the northern periphery of Spain's American empire (271).

Yet challenges to temporal and religious authority often eluded these authoritative and authoritarian print forms; here, Coronado's interest in literary form and archival authority coincide with his project of historical recovery. The intellectual and political history of a short-lived 1813 revolution in Bexar, the New Spain city now known as San Antonio, Texas, is a particularly fascinating example. Coronado describes its preparation, aftermath, and legacy through various manuscript sources. The travel diary of José Bernardo Gutiérrez de Lara, a polemicist and leader of the rebellion,

frames its political and theoretical background in Coronado's reading. The "Memoria de las cosas más notables que acaecieron en Bexar el año de 13 mandando el Tirano Arredondo" (Report of the Most Notable Things That Occurred in Bexar in the Year 13, under the Command of the Tyrant Arredondo), a hand-written eyewitness account of Spanish counter-revolutionary atrocities, offers harrowing testimony of the sudden, violent interruption of that revolutionary moment and the future it anticipated. Coronado concludes with a reading of the diary of Florencia Leal, a young Tejana woman living in San Antonio four decades later, as it comes under Anglo control. Coronado uses these manuscripts as records of historical moments pregnant with possibility and uncertainty—the protracted, bloody end of the Spanish Empire in Texas, in the former cases, and the dawn of an Anglo-American one, in the latter—and as peripheral, informal, or forgotten *forms* of writing that do not fit clearly into the genres that we have come to regard as conventional and modern.

The key terms *patria* and *pueblo* bring out some of the political implications of the Spanish-American Catholic modernity that Coronado argues for here, whose vibrations can be felt today.*Patria,* a word without a suitable English translation, refers to both a national homeland and the broader cultural, linguistic, and religious loyalties that radiate from it. *Pueblo* is similarly specific and expansive; it can be translated as "town" or as "people," giving it a paradoxical combination of bounded and vast meanings. Unlike either of its English equivalents, *pueblo* can also refer to an indivisible group, a collective entity. This is different from the sense of "people" enshrined in the beginning of the United States Declaration of Independence, a collection of discrete, individual subjects residing in a particular territory. The difference is critical and points to competing notions of sovereignty developing in the Americas at the time, which Greg Grandin has summarized in terms of an Anglo-American conception of republicanism predicated on individual rights and state sovereignty, and a Latin American valorization of collective rights and territorial sovereignty. The concept of social rights, Grandin argues in his recent article in the *American Historical Review*, bequeathed a tradition of political militancy that has been framed, in the U.S. context, as "disorder," a symptom of the cultural and racial deficiencies of Latin Americans. In his study of an 1856 print debate in the Spanish-language San Antonio newspaper *Ranchero*, for example, Coronado shows how these catholic (with a small and, he suggests, large "c") senses of national belonging struggled to survive amidst the growing tide of Anglo racism and Know-Nothing nativism. The *Ranchero*, edited by a Cuban émigré, José Quintero, gave voice to a "colonial history of Hispanic belonging based on concentric imagined communities," a capacious sense of belonging that could not restrain the discourse of racial nationalism in Anglo-American Texas (374).

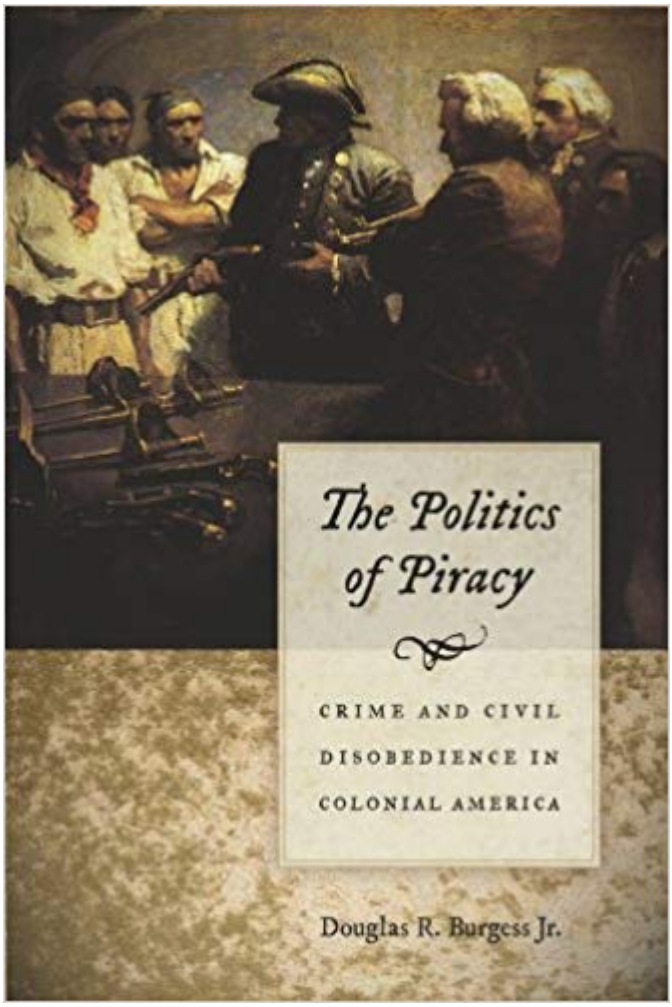
Threaded through several of the chapters is the career of Bernardo, a leader of the short-lived Bexar rebellion. Its defeat, Coronado argues, short-circuited the intellectual legacy of Bernardo's revolutionary movement and doomed its history to oblivion. In his diary of a trip to New Orleans, Philadelphia, and Washington, Bernardo admires the visual world and apparent forms of republican

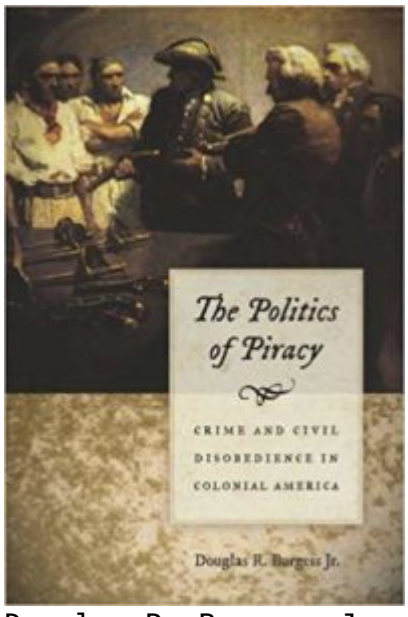
rule (such as new state legislative halls and the layout of the new capital city of Washington) but does so in a vocabulary that betrays his familiarity only with the politics of monarchy—describing Washington's government buildings as the "Corte de este Reyno," (the Court of this Kingdom) for example. Coronado explains how to read this slippage between seemingly republican and feudal modes of political knowledge:

Bernardo's voyage should not be understood as some teleological metaphor for the shift in his political thinking, with his departure from New Spain representing some break with a premodern, semi-feudal way of thinking and his arrival in the United States signifying the development of modern political thought. Such a metaphor would merely replicate our clichéd notion of the United States as the normative agent, positing it as the teleological end of the modern political world; at the other end of the spectrum, of course, would be Spanish America, hurriedly attempting to follow the United States' path to modernity. This is the conundrum of comparative work, the inescapability of positing norms and standards to which some fail to live up. The task requires us to decenter the normative history that has set up the Protestant Atlantic's path to modernity as the ideal (82).

The contradiction between Bernardo's fascination with the visual style of republican rule, and his intellectual dependence on feudal and Catholic modes of ordering the world, allows readers to see him wrestling with new forms of loyalty and political agency not yet articulated as a coherent ideological program, the kind of contingency, possibility, and uncertainty that Coronado is after in his readings of "peripheral" genres like this travel diary. Other notions of collective agency and sovereignty, which can be read in the Catholic modernity of the not-yet borderlands, reverberate elsewhere in Latin American political thought, from Simón Bolívar to José Martí, as Coronado suggests. The combination of social rights and collective agency encoded in the meaning of*pueblo*, for example, continues to reverberate in Latin American militant politics today, down to Hugo Chávez and contemporary Latin American social movements, as well as Anglo-American dismissals of these as irrational or "populist" deviations from democratic norms. Coronado's attention to what he calls the "indices of the irrelevant" is an impressive work of comparative scholarship, reflective of a determinedly skeptical approach to what the archive holds and what it hides.

Pirates and Governors





Douglas R. Burgess Jr., *The Politics of Piracy: Crime and Civil Disobedience in Colonial America*. ForEdge Press, 2014. 308 pp., $35.

Swashbucklers, rogues, and scoundrels—the legacy of early modern sea rovers in popular culture has made piracy basically synonymous with villainy. Historian Douglas R. Burgess Jr., however, dusts off pirates' tarnished reputations to

make a much larger point about the nature of colonial legalities and imperial criminality in his new book. Spanning the end of the seventeenth century to the middle of the eighteenth, *The Politics of Piracy* argues that American governors' collusion with pirates represented a rupture in the legal and political relationship between England and its colonies. Pirates actively participated in the negotiation of Crown law and influenced the development of an American legal system distinct from that of England. By examining the reception of anti-piracy legislation in the colonies, Burgess reveals an English state too weak to stamp out piracy and a colonial system profiting heavily from the illicit activities of those same mariners. In fact, in Burgess's telling, it was not until the popular perception of pirates in the colonies changed—due to the closing of the Red Sea as a hunting ground and their depredations occurring much closer to home—that the "war against pirates" experienced any success. This is Atlantic world history at its best and in the end, Burgess assembles an innovative and provocative take on the economic, political, social, and legal formation of England's American colonies.

> If England defined pirates as outside of the law, but colonial administrators refused to see them as such, what did that mean for the creation of an English state that spanned the Atlantic?

First and foremost Burgess's monograph uses piracy as a lens into the ways in which England and the colonies understood and enacted notions of law and authority. Nearly forty years ago, historian Charles Tilly argued that the act of defining criminal behavior served as a cornerstone in the construction of states. Taken further, Michel Foucault presented the destabilizing theory that states functioned more as fluctuating relationships of power than as things in and of themselves. Applying this theoretical framework for understanding the formation of states, Burgess argues that, "in a very real way, the creation of piracy law in the early modern period was an expression of state formation" (4). In a sense pirates—as much as any other type of criminal—served as vectors for the creation of law and therefore for the extension of a state apparatus. This argument is key for Burgess's narrative because England's efforts to root out piracy in the colonies failed so miserably. If England defined pirates as outside of the law, but colonial administrators refused to see them as such, what did that mean for the creation of an English state that spanned the Atlantic? For Burgess, the inability of officials at Whitehall to enforce their will regarding piracy led to colonial subjects themselves creating their own definitions of legality and illegality—definitions often at odds with their metropolitan counterparts.

The center of Burgess's book revolves around the sensationalized act of piracy of Captain Henry Every and his crew. Unlike the trial and execution of William Kidd, Burgess focuses on the Every scandal because it was such a spectacular fiasco for the English state. As Burgess explains, Henry Every and the piratical voyage of the *Fancy* in 1696 precipitated a diplomatic crisis of

unprecedented proportions. Every and his crew sailed into the Red Sea and seized one of Emperor Aurangzeb's ships on its way to Mecca. The seizure and abuse of passengers on the ship led to rioting in port cities of the Mughal Empire and the near-destruction of several trading outpost of the English East India Company. In order to keep their outposts safe and continue trading, East India Company representatives assured the great mughal that Every and his crew would be captured and executed for their crimes. What those representatives could not have realized was how difficult such a proposition would be for a jurisdictionally complex English state with a popular affinity for glamorizing acts of piracy.

Despite the assurances of East India Company officials, the majority of Every's crew found refuge in the colonies from American governors, who looked the other way in return for a share of the mughal's wealth. In the end, the English state apprehended only six of Every's crew, who would serve as proxies in an act of political theater meant to demonstrate to the world that England was not a nation of pirates. However, when put in front of a jury of twelve of their peers at the Old Bailey, all six men were acquitted. Worse, during the course of the pirates' testimonies, it became clear how deeply entrenched colonial officials' complicity with piracy ran—so much so that Captain Every himself was sheltered by a colonial official charged with rooting out piracy, Governor Nicholas Trott of the Bahamas. In a hasty attempt to repair the damage done by the failed trial, the English state tried the six men for the original mutiny on the Red Sea. Although the second trial ended in a conviction, Burgess explains that it "also came up short in providing the proper 'story' of piracy" that English officials wanted (77).

Anglo-America felt the reverberations of the Every scandal almost immediately. The Board of Trade established Vice Admiralty Courts in the colonies, encouraged colonial governors to renounce pirates sheltered in their territories, and considered a Resumption Bill that would have revoked colonial charters and redrawn the administrative maps of the colonies. This narrative of a reinvigorated English state exerting administrative authority over wayward colonies, however, should not come as a surprise to students of early American history. And yet, the Resumption Bill failed to pass, trials of pirates in the Vice Admiralty Courts remained few and far between, and Every's Red Sea exploits sparked a frenzy of American pirates trying to repeat his success—many of them financed by colonial governors. By examining the repercussions of the Every scandal in the colonies, Burgess argues that by the early decades of the eighteenth century, two distinct legal systems had emerged between Crown and colonies, systems that would continually clash over the issue of piracy. In fact, Burgess argues that England's "war on pirates" succeeded only in securing Red Sea ships from attack, leading many Anglo-America sea rovers to seek out colonial shipping in Atlantic waters. It was, for Burgess, the Atlantic depredations of previously protected pirates that moved colonial governors to get on board with England's anti-piracy measures by the 1730s.

What makes *The Politics of Piracy* so interesting is the way in which Burgess

counters older treatments of the "war on pirates," which tended to see the turn of the eighteenth century as a moment of English state power being used to rein in illicit maritime exploits. Unlike previous histories of this moment, Burgess looks not just at imperial policy but also at the reception of those policies across the Atlantic, thereby exposing what he sees as the weakness of the English state. In this way Burgess uses many of the same colonial office and public record papers as the books he argues against in order to tell a dramatically different story. However, while he aptly demonstrates that colonial governors largely ignored the anti-piracy measures of the English state, Burgess's treatment of the Anglo-American colonies could have benefitted from a more hemispheric perspective. By focusing on their responses to the policies of the English state, Burgess produced a static and one-sided account of colonial governors in a period when trade relations throughout the Americas put many of England's colonies on the wrong side of the law. Burgess's narrative covers an era in which many Anglo-American smugglers and pirates developed illicit commercial relationships with Spain's colonial possessions—dealings that irked the newly founded South Sea Company as much as Spanish officials in Madrid. Spanish and English officials alike labeled many of these smugglers pirates despite being respected merchants in their ports of call. In a way, the development of inter-imperial smuggling in this period meshes remarkably well with Burgess's overall argument regarding the development of two distinct legal systems, yet Spanish American trade receives no attention and Burgess conflates acts of inter-imperial smuggling with his loosely defined concept of piracy.

As with many books worth reading, *The Politics of Piracy* raises some fundamental questions that are not all answered within its pages. Perhaps the one worth chewing on is the question of the word "piracy" itself. While Burgess explains the creation of a distinct colonial legal system, his use of "piracy" seems to privilege the metropolitan definition of legality and illegality. If colonial governors understood acts of maritime violence abroad as legally acceptable, does calling them "pirates" contradict the notion of a legitimate and distinct colonial understanding of legality? What else could they be called? It is a tribute to Burgess's provocative work that such questions can be asked and, hopefully, answered in future scholarship.

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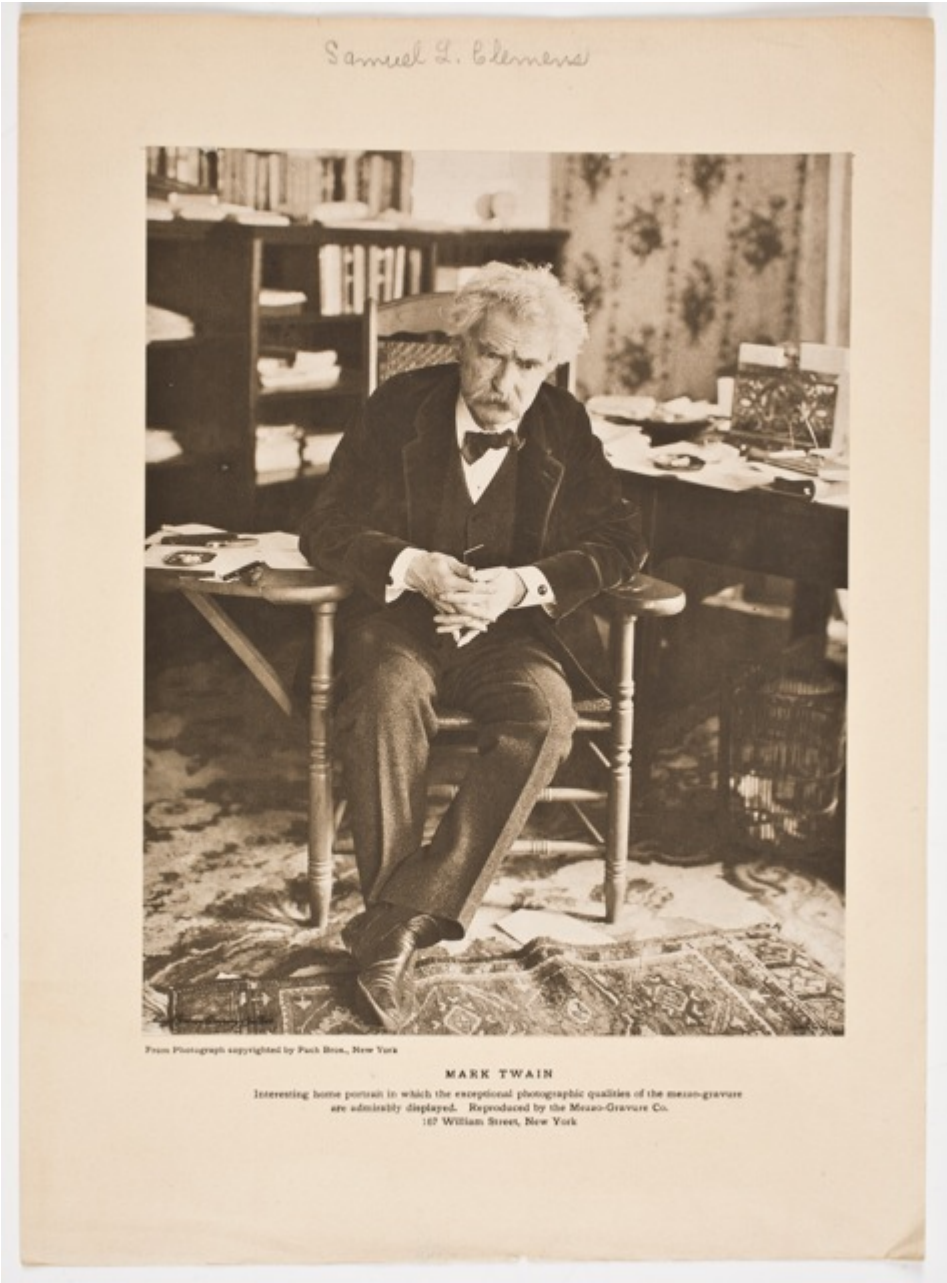
Poems



Mark Twain’s Hank Morgan speaks in Lucy Biederman’s poetry.

On the Inland Seas: Detroit and the Atlantic World

The continental versus Atlantic debate is more about historiography than history.