

Book Reviews

Michael Klarman. *The Framers' Coup: The Making of the United States Constitution*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016. 880 pp. \$39.95 (cloth), ISBN 9780199942039.

The Framers' Coup can best be described as encyclopedic. It provides a detailed overview of the constitution making process from the economic doldrums of the 1780s through the efforts to revise the Articles of Confederation, the Philadelphia Convention, the ratification process, and, finally, the establishment of the Bill of Rights. Michael Klarman, a Harvard law professor and Bancroft Prize winner, claims that it is the “first comprehensive account of the Founding” (X). He is correct if one modifies the claim of comprehensiveness with the phrase “from the perspective of the framers.”

The book is based almost entirely on very close and detailed readings of published documentary sources relating to the founders, primarily Federalists but also Anti-Federalists. In addition to remarkably close readings of the 27-volume *Documentary History of the Ratification of the Constitution* and the 26-volume *Letters of Delegates to Congress*, Klarman also appears to have read pretty much all relevant portions of such massive published collections as the Papers of George Washington and the James Madison Papers.

Although it has an argument and a good deal of analysis, *The Framers' Coup* works best as a reference work. If you need to know how the founders discussed the issue of federal supremacy at the Philadelphia Convention, it is discussed in great detail (154–169), likewise the failed efforts to amend the Articles of Confederation (24–41); the ratifying contest in Maryland and South Carolina (447–453); and Anti-Federalists' thoughts on military powers (330–335) to take just a few examples. The discussion is extremely detailed and clearly written with little repetition, difficult results to achieve when dealing with such an enormous mass of information.

While readers can easily ignore it while sifting through the encyclopedic details, Klarman presents a clear two-part thesis. First, he argues that the Constitution was a “conservative counterrevolution” (x). He views the founders, and particularly

Madison, as anti-populists seeking to remove the federal government from the sort of popular control that appeared to be the fate of many of the state governments. Klarman sees anti-democratic tendencies from start to finish, from the early objections to the Articles of Confederation to the process of ratification and even the addition of the Bill of Rights to mollify the Anti-Federalists. He concludes that, “Only a ratifying process that was less participatory than the governance norms employed in many states could have secured endorsement of a constitution that was less democratic in its substance than were all state constitutions of the era” (618). While it may surprise some nonacademic readers, this approach should not be controversial to historians who have been making similar observations for decades or, indeed, to those who have read Madison’s *Federalist 10*.

Secondly, and more controversially, Klarman takes a neo-Beardian position arguing that the founders were influenced primarily by interests rather than lofty ideas, and that those interests were at bottom financial. “Although positions that were driven by interest were often dressed up as if they were about political principle, this did not make them any less interest-driven,” he observes (603). Two issues in the mid-1780s (the proposed Jay-Gardoqui Treaty of 1786 and the passage of state debtor relief laws) were of particular concern to the founders, according to Klarman.

First, and less importantly, he argues the Jay-Gardoqui Treaty would have traded away Mississippi River navigation rights that were beneficial to the South for trade with Spain, which would have benefited the North. He sees it as a warning bell to southerners about the danger they faced in a northern dominated Confederation Congress. While Klarman writes that the treaty proposal “profoundly influenced southerners’ thinking on issues as diverse as the value of the union, how to apportion representation in Congress and the limits that should be placed on the national government’s powers over commerce and treaty making,” he admits that “the issue itself was largely a moot point by the time the ratification process had concluded” (604).

More importantly and directly, Klarman argues, the founders were reacting against the debtor relief laws passed by the various states during the mid-1780s. These laws, particularly the legalization of paper money for paying taxes, were populist measures that eased the financial burden on debtors and poorer people generally but were understood to be very detrimental to their creditors and to wealthier people. Klarman argues that the framers saw such legislation as “craven

capitulations by overly responsive state legislatures to the illegitimate demands of lazy and dissolute farmers” and notes that, “It is hard to overstate the extent to which the state crises over tax and debt relief in the 1780s influenced the agenda of the Philadelphia convention” (606). Klarman’s position here and, more generally, his take on the so-called critical period of the 1780s is not far from that of Woody Holton in his recent *Unruly Americans and the Origins of the Constitution*, although Holton is more explicitly sympathetic toward both the debtors and the debtor relief laws.

Because of his intense focus on the founders and their writings, Klarman is not in a position to say much about the general citizenry, to provide any sort of objective view of the efficacy or inefficacy of the state governments, or to comment on the strength or weakness of the economy generally. As a result, we are forced to settle for the founders’ views of dysfunctional state governments and a critically poor economy. In this sense, Klarman’s avowed critical stance toward the framers seems to have been blunted by his immersion into their world view.

Overall, *The Framers’ Coup* does what it sets out to do quite well. It presents a clearly written, highly detailed account of the framers’ actions and concerns through the entire period of constitution writing and should serve as a valuable resource for scholars and members of the public.

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Cécile Ganteaume. *Officially Indian: Symbols that Define the United States*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2017. 192 pp., 50 color plates. \$28.00 (cloth), ISBN 9781517903305.

Officially Indian: Symbols that Define the United States by Cécile R. Ganteaume, associate curator at the Smithsonian Institution’s National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI), was published in conjunction with the NMAI’s 2017 Washington, DC, exhibition *Americans*. A study in object and meaning over time rather than a traditional chronological narrative, the book reflects its exhibition partnership.

Ganteaume’s aim is to demonstrate that American Indians (the term used by Ganteaume and reused here for consistency) have always been crucial to the United

States' national identity. Instead of focusing on representations of American Indians from popular culture, Ganteaume offers the first study to examine the emblems used by the federal government and, in turn, the federal government's relationship between democracy and American Indians (18). The structure of the work is tied to its multidisciplinary focus. While Ganteaume's essays form the core of *Officially Indian*, the foreword and afterword—by Colin G. Calloway (the John Kimball, Jr. 1943 Professor of History and a professor of Native American Studies at Dartmouth College) and Paul Chaat Smith (Comanche, associate curator at the NMAI), respectively—are equally critical to fulfilling the author's aims. As Calloway explains in his foreword: “the images in this book tell us little about American Indians, but they tell us a great deal about America in search of itself” (15).

Officially Indian presents a collection of concise essays discussing the visual imagery of American Indians used in the United States' official and semiofficial emblems. A wide variety of objects from the United States' Colonial Era are explored including: woodcuts, maps, engravings, medals, coins, sculpture, paintings, events captured in photographs, postage stamps, military insignia and naming conventions, and monuments. Through the examination of these objects, Ganteaume effectively demonstrates the origins of American Indian imagery and how these images persisted and changed over five centuries. Ganteaume explains not only the historical context of each object but also the purpose of the imagery. She explores what the images mean to different people throughout the United States' Colonial and post-Colonial chronology from the 16th century to the present day (13). As Paul Chaat Smith eloquently summarizes in his afterword, America's ultimate intention in using American Indian imagery is “the country saying to Indians, imaginary and real, past and present: without you, there is no us” (165).

Most striking is Ganteaume's demonstration of the origin and perpetuation of American Indian visual conventions over centuries. These European visual conventions, specifically fictional individuals wearing feather headdresses and plumed skirts, are first established with Johann Froschauer's 1505 *Tupinambás of Coastal Brazil* (26–27). Froschauer's template for depiction of American Indians continued to be used and overlaid with new imagery to suit diverse political needs for nearly three centuries. In the 1700s, the British adopted the imagery to signify their wealth (as demonstrated in *Rolls's Best Virginia* tobacco advertisement) (40–41). After the repeal of the Stamp Act of 1765, Paul Revere repurposed the symbol of the American Indian as a distinctly American emblem of liberty in his copperplate

engraving, *A View of the Obelisk Erected under Liberty-Tree in Boston on the Rejoicing for the Repeal of the – Stamp Act, 1766* (46-49). From the eighteenth century to the twentieth century, the images reveal the country's core values and relationships with American Indians (22).

Despite contact and firsthand knowledge of the peoples the imagery is meant to portray, historically established depictions continued to be used into the modern era of American Indian imagery (roughly post-1900). The continuation of historically established depictions reflects a persistent, nationally defined, imagined idea of how this nation's first inhabitants fit into the story of the New World, the history of the United States, and the concept of an American identity. Post-1900, Ganteaume presents a revision of American Indian imagery in public life. As objects, events, and narratives move closer to the present, the use of American Indian imagery becomes more diverse (e.g., the stereograph by Keystone View Company and B. L. Singley entitled *Indian Chiefs headed by Geronimo, passing in review before President Roosevelt, Inauguration Day, 1905, Washington D.C., U.S.A.*, or the 1939 painting *Breaking Camp during Wartime* in the Stewart Lee Udall Department of the Interior Building by the Chiricahua Apache artist Allan Houser) while often suffering from retention of past motifs (99–101). US currency, for example, has often used American Indian imagery as an allegory for the country's value of liberty (e.g., James Earle Fraser's Indian-head or Buffalo nickel, minted from 1913 to 1938 and the book jacket's cover image). While the use of American Indian imagery on U.S. coinage continues to the present, Ganteaume argues that the first attempt at accurate portrayal of an individual American Indian appears with the 2000 release of the Sacagawea dollar coin (151–153).

The greatest strength of Ganteaume's study is the inclusion of a diverse number of objects, both in terms of media and across U.S. Colonial and post-Colonial history. Argument and evidence is presented through succinct, digestible essays that include historical context, discussion of key players (such as the artists, those who commissioned the work, invented/actual historic people portrayed, and the intended audience of the objects/events), and the purpose of the objects/events presented. The arguments made are aided by the inclusion of 50 color plates (often half or full page in size) within the text, an addition that helps the reader understand the transmission of the imagery throughout the past five centuries.

Though a well-grounded and well-supported work, *Officially Indian* would have benefitted from organizing the essays into a thematic structure rather than indi-

vidual, standalone essays. As well, while Paul Chat Smith's afterword physically closes the text, the reader is left adrift without a summary conclusion. The addition of a conclusion to tie back together the themes of the visual imagery presented by the individual essays would help better guide the reader. However, on the whole, the lack of a dedicated conclusion does not detract from Ganteaume's argument or the usefulness of the book.

The identification of repeated official and semiofficial use of American Indian imagery to define America offers stimulating introspection on the use of American Indian imagery in public life. As an in-depth, multidisciplinary study, *Officially Indian* is an excellent resource for academics, students, and professionals working in tribal relations while also appealing to those with an interest in the history of American Indians more generally.

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Mitch Kachun. *First Martyr of Liberty: Crispus Attucks in American Memory*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017. 328 pp. \$ 29.95 (cloth), ISBN 9780199731619.

Crispus Attucks, now commonly placed in the pantheon of floating heads during Black History Month, has not always been a widely accepted American hero. In the book *First Martyr of Liberty: Crispus Attucks in American Memory*, Mitch Kachun sets out to explain "how Crispus Attucks has been remembered and forgotten, lionized and vilified, in the centuries-long debate over African American citizenship, patriotism, and inclusion" (1). Kachun presents his case utilizing educational, cultural, and social resources framed in a linear timeline.

A quick perusal of any library shelf (or Amazon search) will reveal that there is a considerable absence of scholarly works specifically on Crispus Attucks. The author continually repeats throughout the book that many works about Attucks are geared towards children, and may verge on being fictional. The first order, therefore, needed to be a solid and factually accurate biography of Attucks. Kachun does well to use the historical record that is available, including using contemporary newspapers and oral traditions that infer an American Indian and African American heritage and using the trial transcripts written during John Adams's defense of the British soldiers that shot and killed Attucks and three other men on March 5, 1770. Acknowledging that there is

not much beyond the above to provide dependable details of Attucks's life, Kachun backpedals on his caution about source validity and includes information from sources that may be only circumstantially connected to Attucks. He also widens the historical lens to set the stage of the Boston Massacre, and provide a detailed understanding of the day Attucks entered American history. Even though there may not be any groundbreaking new sources discovered in Kachun's research, reading the biographical chapter on Attucks leaves one with a more well-rounded understanding of Attucks and the Boston Massacre than has been presented before.

After establishing an Attucks biography, the book moves chronologically through American eras, starting with the Revolutionary War period that followed his death and ending with modern social justice movements. Kachun takes the reader on an interesting journey using numerous references and resources to map the many transitions Crispus Attucks's legacy has gone through in American history including: relative absence from memory in the period immediately following his death; a shining beacon to hold up as justification for African American citizenship and equal rights; and the martyr that was either courageous for fighting oppression or stupidly dying for freedoms that African Americans would not see for another century or more.

In making the case in the American timeline for the many ways Attucks was celebrated or reviled, Kachun brings together quite an array of evidence. Naming of theaters, schools, citizen groups, military groups, and tracing instances where young African American boys were given the name Crispus and/or Attucks demonstrates that the general (African American) public was becoming more aware and accepting of the Attucks-as-hero legacy. A survey of textbooks—from the first to mention Attucks and the Boston Massacre to widely distributed American history textbooks today—track the dissemination of Attucks's knowledge and legacy. The textbook survey also reveals the nuanced ways his actions and personhood have been represented: the most neutral “black guy from the Revolution” (198), a hero of the Revolution, the leader of the rowdy crowd that was asking for trouble, and also a runaway slave, a sailor, or a dock worker. These diverse datasets, though, are largely utilized in later periods of the American timeline. The Revolutionary War and Civil War eras are filled with exhaustive research that is centered on New England, a geographic focus that makes one wonder if there are other instances from the rest of the United States that could flesh out or, perhaps, provide a counterweight to the statements Kachun is presenting.

First Martyr of Liberty does well to include many sources, whether they be factually accurate or not. A clear theme demonstrated throughout the book is that Crispus Attucks's story, and whatever agency he could have to justify his actions, have been lost to history. Kachun's cobbling of good historical sources with (at times) farcical material furthers his examination of how Attucks's identity and placement in the national heroic pantheon has been constructed. Crispus Attucks can certainly claim the title "first martyr of liberty," but this book adeptly shows that a hero's place in American memory can fluctuate. *First Martyr of Liberty* is a great read for a grounded biography of the man (or the best the historical record will allow) and a thorough examination of intention in American history.

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Darren Speece. *Defending Giants: The Redwood Wars and the Transformation of American Environmental Politics*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2016. 384 pp, 16 B&W illustrations, 5 maps. \$29.95 (cloth), ISBN 9780295999517.

The sentiment "The problem is the corporations," emblazoned on an activist's sign during the tumultuous Redwood Summer of 1990, captures the spirit of the late 20th-century Redwood Wars on California's North Coast (109). In *Defending Giants*, Darren Speece skillfully portrays this struggle between environmentalists, workers, and multinational corporations for control over the last ancient redwoods and their communities. The Redwood Wars, as the name suggests, were fought to protect the iconic trees. However, Speece argues the Wars were a catalyst for broader environmental and social activism: resisting globalization, challenging private property rights, reimagining forestry management, and preserving a rural way of life. Activists, Pacific Lumber, and Congress reached a stalemate and, through stalemate, coerced the Clinton administration into negotiating a compromise for the Headwaters Forest near Eureka, California. The Redwood Wars, and their associated methods and results "helped transform national environmental politics, pushing the executive branch to the forefront of environmental policy making" (261).

Speece's greatest strength is his dynamic portrayal of activists, whose characters are enriched by collected oral histories, research in personal archives, and years at Humboldt State University. Together, the activists—the leadership of whom

included many prominent women (e.g., the Sierra Club's Kathy Bailey and Earth First!'s Judi Bari and Alicia Littletree)—reveal the diversity of environmentalism on the North Coast, and offer important historical lessons for the field. *Defending Giants* adds to the environmental literature that blurs the line between Gifford Pinchot's conservation and John Muir's preservation. North Coast activists were avid preservationists who believed in a sustainable, locally owned timber economy. They were ideologically anticorporate, not antiworker. Their rural identities, countercultural values, and often illegal direct actions (including tree sits, barricades, and monkeywrenching) challenge historians' traditional middle-class, consumerist, and metropolitan lens of the environmental movement (18–19).

Not all of the North Coast's activists were radicals. Arguably, the movement's greatest victories were won in the courtroom, though lawsuits often worked in tandem with direct actions in the forest. In July 1985, activists from the Environmental Protection Information Center (EPIC) successfully appealed a ruling in favor of a 1983 Georgia-Pacific Timber Harvest Plan for the Sally Bell Grove by attesting that the plan violated the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The precedent set by *EPIC v. Johnson* repeatedly was used as activists harnessed the power of California's 1970s environmental laws, including the California Endangered Species Act (CESA) and the Forest Practices Act (FPA), to halt industrial logging (96–99). Speece presents a clear case that the legal strategy eroded the state's timber corporatism, a sector enabled through partnership with the California Department of Forestry (CDF).

The role of politics in environmental battles over public lands, including such prominent examples as dam proposals for Yosemite National Park's Hetch Hetchy Valley and Dinosaur National Monument's Echo Park, is well known. That the Redwood Wars were waged almost entirely on private property, brings to light an important and little known facet of environmental activism. In *Marbled Murrelet v. Pacific Lumber*, EPIC proved that the endangered marbled murrelet nested in Pacific Lumber's Owl Creek Grove, and exposed fraudulent reporting practices by the company. As a result, the court placed a permanent injunction on the logging harvest area. According to Speece, "The ruling was devastating for [Pacific Lumber] and de facto corporatism because the permanent injunction was the first time the Endangered Species Act [ESA] had been used to stop logging on private land" (220). Pacific Lumber, which Charles Hurwitz's Maxxam Group acquired in a 1985 hostile takeover, did not relent. In 1996, by

filing a takings suit against the federal government, Hurwitz backed the Clinton administration into a corner. Environmentalists and the public demanded Redwood protection, and with the Newt Gingrich-led Congress calling for reform of the ESA, Clinton sought a quick resolution outside of the courts. What became known as “The Deal” was reached: activists secured 7,470 acres for the Headwaters Forest Reserve, including 3,000 acres of old-growth forest, for which the federal and state governments paid \$380 million. In Grizzly Creek and Owl Creek, California purchased approximately 1,600 additional acres for preservation. In return, Pacific Lumber received cash, 7,755 acres of second-growth forest, and logging rights for residual old-growth trees. However, as part of the nation’s first multispecies Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP), logging was suspended for 50 years in the company’s intact old-growth forests to preserve the ecosystems that shelter endangered species (213, 250). The fight over logging Owl Creek Grove, “The Deal” struck, and the contest over the use of the ESA for larger environmental activism “was a war that neither side won” (25).

The Headwaters HCP is crucial to Speece’s concept of “transformation:” when President Clinton overstepped Congress to orchestrate “The Deal,” his administration established a new precedent for executive influence in environmental politics and private property rights. That HCP negotiations increased from 39 between 1982 and 1994 to 230+ between 1994 and 1998 supports Speece’s argument. Additionally, seeking to strike a balance between environmental and business interests, the Clinton administration pursued Safe Harbor Agreements and No Surprises Policies to encourage landowners’ voluntary compliance with the ESA and to protect their economic investments (251). Speece argues that the Clinton administration’s efforts “worked to create collaborative tools . . . to bring industry, workers, and the public together on environmental issues . . . opened up new pathways for activists and timber leaders” (262). In contrast to direct action, the increase in HCPs as a core tool of environmental protection shows a decisive effort for avoiding conflict in favor of compromise.

With its focus centered on activists, little room is left for timber workers. As a result, labor plays only a minor role in *Defending Giants*. This imbalance favors a feeling of single narrative rather than the notion of compromise Speece advances in discussing HCP-based activism. Still, Speece has crafted a well-written and insightful account of the power of grassroots activism on the North Coast, and shows that the Redwood Wars’ influence reached well beyond Headwaters Forest.

Activists, land managers, and environmental historians will enjoy and learn much from Speece's in-depth study.

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Peter Gough. *Sounds of the New Deal: The Federal Music Project in the West*. Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2015. 304 pp., 29 black and white plates, \$50 (cloth); \$27.95 (pb), ISBN 978-0-252-03904-1.

In the deeply researched *Sounds of the New Deal: the Federal Music Project in the West*, Peter Gough accomplishes the herculean task of recounting the intricate connections involving the administration of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt in the Depression-era 1930s; Roosevelt's New Deal policy to return American citizens to work, including musicians through the Federal Music Project; and the funding of regional and local music activities of the FMP in eight US states situated west of the Mississippi River.

Following the introduction of the New Deal, Gough commences with a poignant letter to FDR from a poor, unemployed African American woman in Texas. Lillian McKinney, a singer looking for help in 1937, received a swift, positive response from Ellen Woodward, WPA administrator, one of countless requests fulfilled through employment in FMP projects across the West. Beginning in chapter 2 with the trio of states: Arizona, New Mexico, and Nevada, moving into California in chapter 3, and then grouping in chapter 4 Colorado, Utah, Oregon, and Washington, Gough continually reinforces not only FDR's enthusiasm for FMP-sponsored programs in these states, but also the highly influential support of and interventions by First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt to advance programs and individuals.

In fact, Gough repeatedly spotlights women who successfully directed FMP activities at federal, regional, and state levels, including the only three female state directors in the West: New Mexico's Helen Chandler Ryan, California's Harle Jervis, and, in Texas, Lucile M. Lyons. A vignette about Antonia Brico showcases the first female conductor of a major symphony orchestra. Beginning in 1937, Brico led the FMP-sponsored Bay Region Orchestra at performances in California's San Francisco-Oakland area to the applause of capacity audiences. In the West, she

remained unmatched, a detail not lost on the New York Philharmonic, which invited her to guest conduct one of its performances in 1938, the first woman to do so.

Lens shifting between East and West figures prominently in *Sounds of the New Deal* as the author masterfully distinguishes regional personalities and local entertainment preferences of audiences. Based on the cultural traditions of individuals who had settled these vast geographic areas, Gough reminds readers of the Eurocentric pull toward a symphonic music tradition in the East in comparison with the culturally diverse folk traditions in the West. Of these latter, the Hispanic *orquestas típicas* and African American choral groups remained favorites of multi-racial audiences, although William Grant Still's *Afro-American Symphony* proved equally popular thanks to the score's references to jazz. As for *An Evening with [Paul Laurence] Dunbar*, for which Still set Dunbar's poetry to music, this theatre production "exemplifies both the paradoxes and triumphs of African American involvement in the Music Projects ..." (p. 117).

Yet, perhaps the most engaging example of the East-West connection had its start early in the 1930s. *Run, Little Chillun* opened on Broadway at the Lyric Theatre on March 1, 1933 and logged 126 performances before it closed some three months later June 17th (ibdb.com). A play in four scenes, *Run, Little Chillun* features incidental music composed, arranged, and—at that time--directed by the widely popular (Francis) Hall Johnson, whose choir sang in the performances. Gough acknowledges that from 1935 to 1937, under the co-sponsorship of the Federal Theatre and Music Projects Divisions of the WPA, performances of *Run, Little Chillun* featuring the Carlyle Scott Chorus drew thousands to performances in Los Angeles, and in 1939 to the Golden Gate International Exposition in San Francisco.

In chapter 6, Gough introduces what had been called a "'masterpiece of modern patriotic music' (p. 158)." The cantata "Ballad for Americans" resonated across political, regional, and racial divides, embraced by virtually all Americans including the military in the 1930s. Of the Federal One projects, "Ballad for Americans" exceeded the popularity of all the others. A decade later, as Paul Robeson came under intense scrutiny for his support of the Left and was blacklisted, the cantata no longer represented American culture, even though it had been played at the 1940 Republican convention.

Gough's commitment to excellent reportage should not suffer harsh criticism for some minor editing issues that remain. Ultimately, the errata disappear into the richness of the research. *Sounds of the New Deal* is a must read for anyone interested in "the cultural mosaic illuminated by American folksong" (p. 7).

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Michael Green. *By More Than Providence: Grand Strategy and American Power in the Asia Pacific Since 1783*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2017. 760 pp. \$45.00 (cloth), ISBN 9780231180429.

In an era of increasing economic interest and security concerns in the Asia-Pacific region, Michael Green's magisterial *By More Than Providence* provides desperately needed historical context for American national strategy and policy-making. Covering more than 200 years of American foreign policy, Green argues that the United States has shown a remarkably consistent grand strategy based on enduring values and accurate assessments of national interest. As a Japan specialist, with a Ph.D. from Johns Hopkins, and professional experience as a former member of President George W. Bush's National Security Council (NSC), Green blends history and international relations into a solid chronological framework, with enough analysis and theory to highlight enduring patterns and dilemmas.

In the introduction, Green states that a central theme of American strategic culture has been that it "will not tolerate any other power establishing exclusive hegemonic control over Asia or the Pacific" (5). This impulse arose from fears of British power during the 19th century with the rise of Japan in the early 20th century and the Communist high-tide in the 1950s and 1960s eliciting comparable responses; American leaders were required to seek allies, expand trade, and encourage American ideals in an effort to achieve a balance of power. To complicate his overarching theme and to allow for a more nuanced analysis, Green articulates a series of re-occurring contradictions, which have frustrated American leaders as well as Asian nations attempting to understand U.S. policy. Two of these tensions are well understood: the Europe vs. Asia question in U.S. foreign policy and Free Trade vs. Protectionism. Green also highlights an enduring strategic choice between the western Pacific, with the United States linked to Japan, versus an alignment with

China on the Asian mainland. This issue of strategic geography is perhaps the most complex tension in the book. It divided American intellectuals, members of government, and experts in affairs of state into informal Japan and China camps as early as the mid-19th century and continues to divide today. Green's last two tensions, Self-Determination vs. Universal Values and defining the boundary of the forward defense line, become especially salient after 1945.

As a professionally trained historian, Green separates himself from public intellectuals and Washington, DC, policy wonks through his research techniques and solid scholarship. Over 100 of the book's more than 700 pages are footnotes, with large numbers of primary source documents used in building the historical narrative. Green's experience in government gives him an edge when analyzing government documents, and he dissects many of the formative post-1945 NSC and State department memos and statements with an insider's perspective that few academics can match.

As the Japan Chair at a prominent Washington, DC, think-tank, The Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), Green primarily views American grand strategy as shaped by national political figures and government officials in the State Department or the defense community. Particularly in the second half of the book, Green defines U.S. policy by administrations, which is understandable because it provides the reader with a way to neatly distinguish policy choices. Unfortunately, this cuts against the grain of the first part of the book, which showed abiding interests that continued despite the party in office or the inclinations of specific presidents.

Among U.S. presidents, Green gives high marks to Theodore Roosevelt and Richard Nixon for their interest in Asia and their willingness to spend time and effort to create complex, multifaceted strategies. Roosevelt is lauded for establishing "the core tenets that guide American strategy toward Asia today" (104), tenets characterized by a strong navy, a forward military presence in the Western Pacific, support for regional allies, and a willingness to participate in power politics. Nixon emerges as the architect of a new strategic model after the military and diplomatic debacle of the Vietnam War. Faced with dramatically reduced public support for an interventionist Asia policy, Nixon built a robust and low-risk integrated strategic framework relying on close economic cooperation with Japan, diplomatic engagement with China, and staunch support for allies like South Korea and Taiwan.

Green's analysis of U.S. policy can be harsh, as he illustrates in the post-1945 period; although the United States played a vital role in the rise of East Asia, U.S. foreign policy has often been poorly conceived and terribly executed. He attacks Harry S. Truman's administration for its inexplicable decision not to support Chiang Kai-shek with loans and military advisors in the late 1940s, only to deploy hundreds of thousands of American soldiers and spend vast sums fighting a grinding war of attrition in Korea just a few years later. Green finds that John F. Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson displayed a laudable commitment to American ideals and recognized the importance of Asia, but failed to develop anything resembling an overall strategy for the region. George H. W. Bush, an internationalist with long-standing connections to Asia, inexplicably sought only to maintain existing relationships during a moment of unparalleled U.S. power and prestige. A more subtle suggestion of the book is that de facto Chinese dominance of portions of the Asia-Pacific region in the present would cut against the grain of American ideals and interests, and any attempt to strike a "grand bargain" would be shortsighted and ahistorical.

By More than Providence should find a wide audience, with insights and analysis for Asia scholars, foreign affairs professionals, and the general public. The book is also suitable for academic classes, with utility for undergraduate and even graduate coursework in strategic studies, diplomatic history, and foreign affairs. Perhaps more importantly as the United States faces an increasingly assertive China, Green engages the political debate in Washington, DC, and demonstrates that history shows a wide range of policies and options are available to government.

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Diana L. Linden. *Ben Shahn's New Deal Murals: Jewish Identity in the American Scene*. Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 2015. 184 pp., \$45 (cloth), ISBN: 9780814339831

For the first time in American history, President Roosevelt's New Deal art programs validated artists as essential to a healthy nation. Musicians, sculptors, painters, actors, writers, and performers were hired to create hope, to entertain, and to lift up the American spirit. The primary goal of the Works Progress Administration (WPA), established in 1935 and renamed the Works Project Administration in 1939, was to build infrastructure such as roads, schools, hospitals, bridges,

and parks. The central mission of the WPA—to provide jobs—was comparable to other New Deal Programs. However, a fraction of the agency’s budget was used to fund Federal Project Number One. This program provided relief work to impoverished, unemployed artists, built community art centers, and employed qualified art teachers. New Deal art generally portrayed positive scenes of American landscape, industry, and local history. The U.S. Department of Treasury operated three lesser known, more selective visual art programs: 1) The Public Works of Art Project, 1933–1934; 2) The Section on Painting and Sculpture, 1934–1943, and 3) The Treasury Relief Act, 1935–1939. Although the first program was short-lived, lasting only six months, it set a precedent in the United States for the federal government to invest in high-quality art rather than leaving patronage to the private sector. The U.S. Treasury Section on Painting and Sculpture programs commissioned projects to decorate the interior of public buildings, including the Justice, the Post Office, Interior, and Social Security Buildings in Washington, DC, as well as court houses, schools, and post offices across the nation. Commissions from this department, known commonly as the Section, were competitive and prestigious.

Diana Linden’s project is ambitious. She sets out to examine Shahn’s New Deal murals in the context of American Jewish history, labor history, race, and immigration and to elevate Shahn’s reputation as “one of the premier muralists of the New Deal as well as a central figure in twentieth-century American art” (p. 2). The author grounds her analyses with rich detail in an extensive overview of Jewish life in New York City, home to Ben Shahn. New York, the center of the art world after World War I, had a significant Jewish population, a tradition of activism, and rampant anti-Semitism. Jews were considered a separate race during the wave of immigration from Eastern Europe to the United States from 1880–1920s. Linden expands the period of time to consider Jewish immigration from the 19th-century to the 1930s as well as settlements and conditions for Jews in the Russian Empire. Linden magnifies the complexity of New York and Jewish identity during the 1930s, although oscillating between time periods and countries is, at times, difficult to follow.

Linden accurately views Shahn as a pivotal figure of mural painters in America. The American Renaissance Mural Movement (1876–1917) decorated public buildings, often pushing messages for immigrants to assimilate. Focusing on Edward Blashfield’s mural *The Graduate* at City University, where Shahn was a student, she identifies a dominant public message of WASP superiority in visual

form. Acknowledgement of murals produced during the American Renaissance expands the revitalization of painting political murals in fresco from Mexico to include the United States. Typically, the resurgence of murals in the United States during the Depression is attributed to Mexican muralists, such as Diego Rivera or Jose Clemente Orozco. Rivera, husband of Frida Kahlo, is regarded as one of the three main Mexican artists who promoted political and social reunification of their nation with public murals in the wake of the Mexican Revolution. In fact, George Biddle, a member of Roosevelt's administration, suggested that American art should work in service of the government as it had in Mexico with muralists.¹ Linden's attention to Blashfield's mural at the City University of New York adds a novel connection and a plausible ripple of influence on Shahn as, she argues, he bridged earlier mural traditions in the United States and Mexico to the New Deal era.

Shahn's first major series *The Passion of Sacco and Vanzetti*, 1931–1932, comprised of 23 paintings, was on display in Edith Halpert's downtown gallery. Sacco and Vanzetti were Italian-American anarchists accused of committing murder in Massachusetts during an armed robbery. World-wide protests were held six years after their conviction and a series of denied appeals. The international audience feared that they had been convicted because of their politics and race rather than evidence of guilt. With this series, Shahn, like his contemporaries, expressed his concerns for the vulnerability of immigrants. Remarkably, almost all of the paintings sold in the midst of the Depression. This Sacco and Vanzetti series launched Ben Shahn's career as an artist, leading to exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art and collaborations with Communist artist Diego Rivera. Linden argues that Shahn and Rivera shared artistic and political goals—to make art that would incite the masses to action (p. 31). It is clear that Ben Shahn had leftist views as did many of the New Deal artists. However, Shahn distanced himself from communist organizations, even those for artists, like the John Reed Club, and there is no evidence that Shahn's paintings resulted in mass resistance or reform.

Linden boldly claims that Shahn's political views contrasted sharply to the conservative mission of "The Section." Her analysis of Shahn's famous mural *The Jersey Homesteads*, 1936–1938, painted for the town's community center, makes the case. Grounded in histories of Jewish farming in America and Russia, she meticulously

¹ Barbara Haskell, *The American Century: Art and Culture 1900-1950* (New York: Whitney Museum of American Art and W. W. Norton & Co., 1999), p. 216.

examines Shahn's notes and preliminary paintings to reveal changes in his final mural. She concludes that he removed overt religious references that emphasized Jewish vulnerability to create a story of socialist victory in secular setting. Still, she finds religious overtones in the tripartite structure of mural as an echo of the feast of Passover (slavery, deliverance, and redemption). Linden's original interpretation of the mural in terms of the Jewish Haggadah, the religious text of Passover is compelling. She asks her readers to "consider Shahn's entire mural as a recasting of the biblical story of Exodus as the recent mass immigration of the Jews to America" (p. 61). New Deal programs supported the construction of the Jersey Homesteads and Shahn's mural, but the artist deviates from the tradition of upbeat storytelling to include horrific details such as a Nazi soldier and the corpses of Sacco and Vanzetti. This chapter is riveting and is the highlight of the book.

Shahn submitted a proposal to the Section's national competition to paint a mural for the Bronx Central Post Office. The resulting commission, *Resources of America*, 1938, shifts in subject matter from Jewish history and identity to the celebration of American rural and industrial workers contentedly laboring at their trades despite strikes, poverty, and racism. The author decides to include it, not because it was a coveted, competitive commission from the Section, but because Jewishness impacted the context in which it was painted and received by the public. Father Coughlin used his popular radio show to create nation-wide resistance to Shahn's use of a quote by Walt Whitman, which heightened tension between Irish Catholics and American Jews. She links this response to Shahn's mural to the Nazi party's labeling and censoring degenerate art. Linden's analysis of a female mill worker separates Shahn's vision of female workers from other works of art produced in the New Deal era where women supported their husbands as companions (p. 85). Her brief departure from Jewish identity makes a valuable contribution to gender studies.

Ben Shahn is a celebrated artist in the canon of American art. With her careful attention and analysis, Linden effectively highlights Ben Shahn's New Deal paintings instead of his New Deal photography and illustration, which are more commonly discussed. This book brings overdue attention to his 1930s paintings from a perspective vital to understanding his work— Jewish identity and history. It comes as a disappointment that Linden excludes Shahn's mural for the Social Security Building, his third commission from the The Treasury Section of Paintings and Sculpture. Her chapter that replaces this mural examines a fresco proposal and an

easel painting that is enlightening and cohesive in subject matter. However, with her expertise and insight, what might she have discovered about Shahn's third New Deal mural? Although commissions were awarded through a blind review process, what is the significance of hiring a Jewish artist to paint this mural? How would the Bronx mural have been received by a Jewish audience who were, as she explains, particularly susceptible to financial hardship? She acknowledges her plan to exclude this work in the introduction because it is beyond the scope of the book, meaning that the subject matter does not pertain to the American Jewish experience (p. 16). The title identifies Shahn's New Deal murals as the subject of the book. Although she does not quite meet this expectation, she succeeds in examining American Jewish history, labor history, race, and immigration in several of Ben Shahn's important paintings made during the 1930s.

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