

Reviews

The Lived Nile: Environment, Disease, and Material Colonial Economy in Egypt, by Jennifer L. Derr. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2019. 244 pages. \$85.00, cloth. \$26.00, paper. \$26.00, electronic.

As I sat down to write this review, I had been “sheltering-in-place” in my San Francisco apartment for 119 days. COVID-19 continues to spread globally, killing nearly two and a half million people to date. And we are not nearly out of the woods yet. The present pandemic is a stark reminder of some of the unintended consequences of human-induced environmental change and the increasingly globalized world we live in. What happens in a distant land can affect life everywhere.

In *The Lived Nile: Environment, Disease, and Material Colonial Economy in Egypt*, historian Jennifer L. Derr provides an example of the unforeseen impacts that development efforts can have on environments and human bodies. She examines how the construction of dams, canals, and barrages along the Nile River shaped Egypt’s colonial economy and the bodies of Egyptians who lived and worked alongside the river. After a discussion of nineteenth-century centralization under Mehmed Ali, she turns to the efforts of the British, who during their occupation (1883-1923) transformed the Nile for cash crops such as cotton and sugar. The construction of Aswan Dam (Khazan Aswan) in 1902 led to the spread of perennial irrigation that increased agricultural yields; it also altered Nile ecologies, resulting in the rise of hookworm and schistosomiasis that drew the attention of health experts. “At the root of this investigation,” Derr contends, “lies the notion that the Nile is not an always, already constituted singular entity but a realm of practice and a set of temporally, spatially, and materially specific relations that helped to structure experiences of colonial economy” (p. 3). Changes along the Nile had far-reaching economic, social, environmental, and health implications.

After a brief introduction, Chapter 1, “Nile Articulations: Decolonizing the History of Irrigation Engineering,” lays out how during the nineteenth century, Egyptians understood and used the Nile to grow staple crops like wheat. Mehmed

Ali introduced conscripted labor to build canals, barrages, and establish irrigation works that allowed for the production of summer crops (e.g., rice, indigo, linseed, and sesame). He also set up training institutions for engineers and published a formal agricultural code. British engineers built upon these efforts in the late nineteenth century to make even more efficient use of Nile waters. Chapter 2, “The Dammed Nile: The Thirty Year-Project to Build Khazan Aswan,” examines the construction of the Aswan Dam as the primary means of expanding perennial irrigation. The project brought together the interests of colonial officials, engineers, and foreign capitalists and resulted in the transformation of Nile ecologies and communities.

The following three chapters explore the implications of perennial irrigation on Egypt’s colonial economy and the bodies of Egyptians. Chapter 3, “Beyond the Frontier: Negotiating the Geography of Authority in Egypt’s South,” focuses on the expansion of sugar farming into central and southern Egypt. Derr adeptly connects foreign capital to both the Egyptian state and the lived experiences of Egyptian agricultural workers. Chapter 4, “Cruel Summer: Environmental Labors and the Scales of Subject Making,” shows how the altered environmental conditions along the Nile increased the prevalence of hookworm and schistosomiasis, thus worsening the material conditions of rural communities. Such health concerns drew the attention of both Egyptian and foreign experts alike. Chapter 5, “Treated Subjects: Irrigating the Veins of the Nation,” outlines the public health efforts of the state and institutions like the Rockefeller Foundation to understand, treat, and eradicate these parasitic diseases. The overworked and diseased bodies of rural Egyptians were transformed into subjects of study, as well as objects of the colonial economy.

Derr shows how colonial experts negated and often ignored local knowledge and expertise for their own purposes. In the process, Nile communities lost—economically, culturally, and physically—as their disease environments degraded. This is an important story and one that needs a wider audience. Specialists have explored this arena, such as environmental historians working on issues of colonial economy, irrigation, environmental change, and disease. More incorporation of this scholarship would have strengthened the study and allowed the Nile to be situated within a broader global framework of river development. As is often the case, the available source material privileges the experience of foreign engineers and medical experts to the detriment of both Egyptian experts and rural communities, and the reader is left wanting more discussion of local experiences on the ground.

The Lived Nile provides secondary and university students of environmental, colonial, and medical history a succinct, narrowly focused, and accessible story of the development of the Nile River. Instructors of global history will find it a useful case study of the unintended consequences of irrigation development. The current COVID-19 pandemic reminds us that historians can and should contribute to the debate about the changing relationship of humans and nature.

Crack: Rock Cocaine, Street Capitalism, and the Decade of Greed, by David Farber. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2019. 214 pages. \$24.95, cloth. \$20.00, electronic.

The United States has finally begun to reckon with its status as the world's preeminent jailer. Scholars have noted how the war on drugs of the 1980s and 1990s had deeply injurious effects on black Americans, and many allege that the campaign was less about handling narcotics addiction and more of an effort to maintain white privilege.

David Farber's *Crack: Rock Cocaine, Street Capitalism, and the Decade of Greed* acknowledges that the drug war included plenty of hype, hysteria, and racial disparities. The momentum of the criminal justice onslaught, however, emerged from a real inner-city crisis aggravated by crack cocaine that had catastrophic consequences in poor black neighborhoods. Farber does not downplay the biases of the drug war, but sets out to provide a more complete picture of why politicians at every level of government enacted punitive laws. Homicide rates shot up, weapons arrests skyrocketed, and the number of black children in foster care doubled (p. 5). Compared to heroin, the scourge of the 1970s, cocaine seemed to be a recreational high, a softer drug with feminine monikers like "girl" or "Missy" (p. 78). Women headed to the corner to buy in unprecedented numbers, intensifying the social costs of abuse.

By the late 1980s, the cheap, smokable version of powder cocaine had appeared in nearly every city in the nation. As Farber notes, "violence was a common denominator in almost all major crack scenes" (p. 60). In impoverished areas lacking mainstream employment, prohibition incentivized aggression to maintain precious profits and discipline an informal workforce. In the "greed is good" Reagan Era, Farber argues, killing gave dealers "the aura of total commitment and authenticity" as the guardrails of capitalism fell away (p. 121). Men like Rayful Edmond III, a drug trafficker par excellence in Washington, D.C., were symbols of success when wealth accumulation was all that mattered.

Under prohibition, the accomplishments of kingpins such as Edmond were earned through the gun. Farber's book is at its best when he details how the public support for the war on drugs sprang not just from concern over substance abuse, but because residents linked crack to violence. Politicians, facing intense pressures from their constituents to "do something," argued that they were attacking both drug use and crime through stiffer laws and police crackdowns. These responses only exacerbated the mayhem, impelling the gun culture that plagued impacted neighborhoods even after the crack epidemic had run its course. "Crack-linked violence and threat of violence," Farber points out, "had helped create a broader culture of gun display and gun murder on some of the hardest streets in the United States" (p. 128).

Many historians suggest that seductive elites foisted punitive policies on an unsuspecting populace. Farber pushes back against this narrative, showing that by the late 1980s, a near-consensus existed across partisan and ideological lines that crack needed to be stopped. Jesse Jackson, a credible leader among black

Americans and white progressives, took a backseat to no one when it came to fervent denunciations of drug dealers. Black communities, beset by the hazards of addiction, trigger-happy dealers, and police on the warpath, navigated the few options available to respond. Governmental institutions had the luxury of foresight, but exercised little of it. Instead, they relied on counterproductive measures that worsened conditions: arrests, imprisonment, and moralizing.

As with many historical works, Farber seeks bright spots amongst the gloom. The entrepreneurial gunslingers who took advantage of crack's cachet make difficult heroes. Despite many fawning media portrayals, narcotics agents engaged in an unwinnable mission do not inspire admiration. Farber finds his voice of reason in Detroit Representative John Conyers, a founding member of the Congressional Black Caucus who broke with the George H. W. Bush Administration's enforcement strategy in 1992 (p. 173). Yet Conyers was a mild reformer, believing that the police should keep the heat on dealers while compelling users into treatment. These revised goals breathed new life into the drug war under Bill Clinton as incarceration rates continued to tick upward and rehabilitation became an arm of the punishment apparatus (p. 175). The nation's drug problem, then as now, required a substantial reframing, but Americans dismissed those offering harm reduction alternatives as kooks.

History teachers in advanced high school and undergraduate courses will find Farber's concise, accessible, and compelling book essential to understanding the nation's infatuation with punishment and imprisonment in the late twentieth century. The nation's post-industrial economy had left behind large swaths of the urban landscape and, rather than attend to this new inequality, many Americans lashed out at the most vulnerable. Fixing this will require fewer morality plays and more of the candid accounts provided by those like Farber.

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Will Cooley

This Is Our Message: Women's Leadership in the New Christian Right, by Emily Suzanne Johnson. New York: Oxford University Press, 2019. 240 pages. \$31.95 cloth. \$21.99 electronic.

"Vociferous male leaders," Emily Johnson notes in *This Is Our Message*, have monopolized the attention of historians who study the New Christian Right (p. 148). Even when they have acknowledged the movement's vibrant female grassroots network, commentators have too often allowed their subjects' messages about gender to distract from the Christian Right's "reliance on women's national leadership" (p. 2). Few readers could make the same mistake after completing Johnson's illuminating monograph. Through engaging character studies of self-help author Marabel Morgan, anti-gay-rights activist Anita Bryant, lobbyist Beverly LaHaye, televangelist Tammy Faye Bakker, and politicians Sarah Palin and Michele Bachmann, Johnson painstakingly contextualizes forty

years of evangelical women's influence on the national political scene. In the spirit of Ann Braude's dictum that "Women's History *Is* Religious History," Johnson identifies how leading evangelical women formed political identities, articulated political priorities, and disseminated political messages.

Johnson rightly cautions those observers who might "dismiss this movement as simply patriarchal or anti-woman" (p. 153), and her keen attention to theological nuance and cultural context demonstrates the rewards for avoiding that mistake. Evangelical understandings of gender roles helped define both the types of activism that women undertook and the ways they justified that activism. For instance, Johnson notes that "Evangelical theology lauded women's expertise in the domestic sphere" (p. 27), so Anita Bryant framed her own political engagement "as an extension of her familial roles" (p. 56). Theologies of gender also explain the frequency with which Johnson's actors depicted their work as a final recourse. Beverly LaHaye reluctantly founded the Concerned Women for America (CWA), she insisted to audiences, as what Johnson calls a "response to an existing threat" (p. 79). These evangelical women needed always to weigh their decisions against the doctrine of "wifely submission" in order to "maintain their authority...without overstepping their bounds," but Johnson argues that they "subtly redefined that doctrine even as they propagated it" (pp. 8-9). If boundary maintenance sometimes limited them, their very marginality also provided a certain ideological flexibility. In Johnson's reading, Tammy Faye Bakker's television interview with an HIV-positive gay minister thus occurred on *Tammy's House Party* rather than the Bakkers' flagship show—the "persistent assumption...that women's ministries were less serious" afforded Tammy Faye freedom to test "theological and political boundaries" (pp. 95, 114-115).

Discourse and politics never occur in a vacuum, and another of Johnson's major contributions is how she contextualizes evangelical women's activism within other contemporary movements. She notes that Marabel Morgan's publishing career both drew upon and reinforced "a specific women's culture within the conservative evangelical subculture" (p. 36). When LaHaye set out to build CWA, she, too, tapped into "the same evangelical publishers and distribution networks" that had been growing for decades (p. 88). The interest here was mutual: if conservative women recognized that those mechanisms could serve their interests, enterprising publishers also "sought to capitalize... and to stake their own claim in this market" (p. 75). Contemporary religious context, however, was not the only influence on Johnson's subjects. Numerous "secular" trends also informed the story told here, including self-help and "advice" literature (p. 29), narrative techniques from books like Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* (p. 81), and the daytime talk show format (p. 105). This seemingly singular and contained movement bore numerous traces of cross-pollination.

This Is Our Message will be an excellent resource for teachers. I personally utilized it in a course with advanced undergraduates, and the book's themes catalyzed an invigorating class discussion. While students in introductory

undergraduate courses might not tackle the book in its entirety, Johnson's chapters are sufficiently self-contained—without being repetitive—that an instructor could reasonably select a portion of the book that aligns well with a course theme. The chapter on Bryant's moral activism could stimulate discussion about the politics of sexuality, while the final chapter on Palin and Bachmann could pair well with a class session on evangelicalism, women, and electoral politics. At any level, teachers should consult the book in their own preparations. Instructors committed to expanding the narrative of the New Christian Right have found ample aid in recent years, with helpful examinations of grassroots Protestants, Catholic women, and Mormons. Now, instructors can consult Johnson's book for rigorous analysis and rich anecdotes that prove definitively that the New Christian Right's national leadership involved more than fundamentalist men. With other recent titles, including Kate Bowler's *The Preacher's Wife: The Precarious Power of Evangelical Women Celebrities* (2020) and Daniel Vaca's *Evangelicals Incorporated: Books and the Business of Religion in America* (2019), the book highlights the persistent influence of gender and markets in evangelical communities. It makes a timely and important contribution to the field.

University of Notre Dame

Philip D. Byers

Erased: The Untold Story of the Panama Canal, by Marixa Lasso. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2019. 344 pages. \$35.00, cloth. \$35.00, electronic.

Marixa Lasso's powerful book, *Erased*, provocatively challenges visions of world history that still privilege a notion of Western Civilization, where modernity supposedly emerged, over tropical lands awaiting civilization brought from afar. In this older vision, the United States, by building the Panama Canal, bought technological modernity, democracy, and capitalism to the jungle wilderness of Panama. In contrast, Lasso convincingly argues that "Panamanian muleteers, boatmen, lawyers, engineers, and peasants" had managed the interoceanic route for centuries before the canal; they had long been at the center of global capitalism, technological innovation, and practices of republicanism and democracy (p. 17). However, after the canal was built, this long history of modernity was erased, forgotten by historians and even many Panamanians. Lasso resurrects this history, exploring how and why "a country at the center of technological and political changes was transformed into a backward tropical space" (p. 19).

After tracing the long history of Panamanians' agency in managing the interoceanic route, Lasso's focus turns to how, beginning in 1912, the United States ordered the depopulation of the Canal Zone, where over 61,000 people lived. The thriving towns that had lined the zone would eventually be

covered by jungle, hiding the evidence that belied U.S. claims to have brought civilization to the wilderness. The towns had been republican municipalities, often led by black mayors (Panama, as a part of Colombia, had abolished slavery and granted people of color citizenship long before the United States). However, this reality did not fit U.S. racial or civilizing visions, so travelers mocked Panama's republicanism through portrayals of poor courthouses and pretensions of the black mayors. "Through ridicule, travelers managed to transform innovators into imitators. This was the first step toward the nativization of Panama's black citizens" (p. 68). To justify the depopulation plan and U.S. rule, Panamanians had to be rhetorically transformed from long-time farmers and republican citizens to semi-nomadic jungle natives. Local governance would now not be influenced by citizens, but made by technical, especially sanitation, experts.

In addition to being a history of global identity and organization, the book works on the local level as well. Lasso captures the intimate local histories of the Panamanians and West Indian workers who lived in and along the Canal Zone. Many had welcomed the U.S. canal, assuming (as did many U.S. administrators before the depopulation order) that they would live and work alongside it. The towns thrived in the early years of the canal's construction, with Panamanians also assuming they would maintain their local centrality to global commerce. Yet for the United States, the Zone became a "symbolic space where the US government aspired to show the world its mastery over the tropics" (p. 125). The lively zone towns, with a majority of black citizens who had their own ideas and histories of civic life, did not fit the U.S. vision; it became easier, and cheaper, to expel them beyond the Zone than to force them to fit into the symbolic space. By kicking people out of the Canal Zone, many of whom moved into slums right outside its borders, the Zone's new landscape after depopulation "created a contrast between Western Civilization and tropical backwardness by erasing the elements of their shared nineteenth- and twentieth-century history" (p. 245). Lasso captures the pain, surprise, and resistance of those evicted from their homes and towns, arguing that depopulation was not necessary for canal construction or security, but was a result of the failure of U.S. civilizing and racial visions. Lasso constantly and concretely connects the local and the global: "By depopulating the Zone and allowing the jungle to grow over old town and farm fields, the ICC [Isthmian Canal Commission] made visible and concrete the idea that Panama was only a jungle waiting for US progress and civilization" (p. 225).

Erased is an engaging read; while the book is theoretically sophisticated, Lasso writes with a clear style, avoiding jargon, and keeps the narrative as her focus. The book will be easily accessible to upper-division undergraduate students and should become essential reading in world, U.S., and Latin American graduate courses. As important, I hope teachers of world and U.S. surveys take heed of Lasso's arguments, and rewrite the "history in which Europe and the United States were the sole protagonists of historical changes like constitutional republicanism, representative democracy, industrialization, and global capitalism" (p. 262).

Instead, these surveys should begin to capture a new wave of scholarship, of which Lasso is a leader, that makes clear how peoples outside Europe and the United States were not just victims and imitators, but protagonists in creating so many of the practices and institutions of the modern world.

Utah State University

James E. Sanders

Masters of the Middle Waters: Indian Nations and Colonial Ambitions along the Mississippi, by Jacob E. Lee. Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2019. 348 pages. \$41.00, cloth. \$39.95, electronic.

Jacob Lee's *Masters of the Middle Waters: Indian Nations and Colonial Ambitions along the Mississippi* examines the history of Middle America from the fall of Cahokia in the thirteenth century to the emergence of American imperial dominance over the region in the early nineteenth century. One of Lee's most significant contributions to the fields of Native American history, colonial history, and the history of North American borderlands is his imaginative reperiodization of the era in question. Avoiding the missteps of many preceding early American scholars, who have often used pre-European contact indigenous history as a mere prelude to the period of European colonial competition, Lee digs deep into the history of Middle America. In doing so, he finds points of convergence and continuity in the histories of all the various nations, both Native and European, who helped shape this region. Lee cleverly uses the waters of the Mississippi River and its larger tributaries themselves as a metaphor to explain how power in Middle America flowed literally through these bodies of water, but also how power flowed metaphorically through more abstract channels. Rather than focusing on a narrative of conquest and replacement, Lee instead argues that both Native Americans and Europeans used various rituals, like marriage, baptism, and the calumet ceremony, to transform strangers into kin, building critical diplomatic and resource networks in the process.

Masters of the Middle Waters should certainly be added to the resource list of any teacher who aims to present a comprehensive view of early American history or focus on the indigenous history of North America. In addition to its critical emphasis on the importance of kinship and personal relationships, Lee's work also shines an important spotlight on a period of indigenous history that is all too often relegated to the status of "pre-history." While the book in its entirety would only be appropriate for a graduate-level reading seminar in terms of student accessibility, aspects of Lee's compelling narrative ethnohistory should be incorporated into any lecture on the subject. The first chapter of *Masters of the Middle Waters* is a particularly compelling example of narrative ethnohistory in which Lee deftly employs available anthropological archival sources to detail the indigenous history of Middle America in the centuries after the fall of Cahokia.

One of the strongest aspects of Lee's work is his focus on the importance of kinship networks and personal relationships. Lee promises to explore this aspect in his introduction and makes good on that promise throughout his six chapters. One example of Lee's analytical focus on personal relationships and kinship networks is the story of Auguste Chouteau. Chouteau, a French fur magnate active in the late eighteenth through early nineteenth century, was able to build a profitable family business empire during a turbulent time in the American mid-continent by carefully cultivating personal alliances with Spanish, indigenous, and American elites. In a similar vein, Lee's book also gives a new perspective to the life of Pontiac by emphasizing the importance of the renowned Odawa leader's vast kinship network, which he was able to build to the west and south of the Great Lakes region in the middle decades of the eighteenth century. Accordingly, Lee credits Pontiac's success more to his personal diplomatic relationships than to the overall appeal of his nativist religious message.

With *Masters of the Middle Waters*, Lee successfully puts his own research in conversation with many previous influential works in the fields of Native American history and borderlands studies by the likes of Kathleen DuVal, Michael Witgen, Brian DeLay, Pekka Hämäläinen, Brett Rushforth, and others by demonstrating that Native American nations in Middle America held significant advantages over Europeans for far longer than had been previously believed by many scholars. Throughout his text, Lee demonstrates that indigenous nations like the Illinois and Osage were truly the "masters of the middle waters" well into the nineteenth century, when American imperialism began to rapidly unmake a world that had existed for nearly six centuries.

Fittingly, Lee begins and ends his narrative by challenging the reader to ponder the imposing ancient ruins of the Native American city of Cahokia as they existed alongside the modern American city of St. Louis. This is an important act of juxtaposition, as he is able to accomplish what Americans in the early nineteenth century could not: reconcile the continent's ancient past with its rapidly developing modernity. At many key analytical moments in his book, Lee asks us to look beyond viewing Middle America as a mental landscape comprised of disparate histories strictly defined by either Native or European occupation and influence. It is only then that we can understand the continuities shared by all those who sought to become "masters of the middle waters."

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Brandon Dean

The Gateway to the Pacific: Japanese Americans and the Remaking of San Francisco, by Meredith Oda. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 2019. 304 pages. \$105.00, cloth. \$35.00, paper. \$35.00, electronic.

At first glance, *The Gateway to the Pacific* comprises several interrelated histories—about a new chapter of Japan and its diaspora in California; the Cold

War unfolding in the Pacific; and urban renewal and redevelopment of San Francisco—and how these stories fold into each other to reveal a new portal to America and the transpacific, the main point of the book. This re-orientation positions Japan and Japanese Americans as San Francisco's new post-World War II partners, away from Chinatown, which in the emerging Cold War perspective was now an exotic enclave, musty and suspect of sympathy with motherland Communist China.

This story begins with an ironic reversal in U.S. international relations that spawns another twist. To begin with, almost immediately after the Pacific war concluded with the U.S.-led defeat of wartime enemy Japan and its Pacific empire (and the simultaneous triumph of the Communist Party in China), these divergent transpacific relationships did a total about-turn during the Cold War that immediately ensued. The abrupt realignment positioned Japan as America's capitalist ally to take on Communist China, America's wartime ally (and the Soviet Union, another wartime ally) as ideological nemesis. This development was contingent on the remaking of Japanese Americans after the war, from enemy aliens to a model American minority—the two reversals mutually constitutive.

Japanese Americans were touted for their connection to Japan and insider affinity with Japanese culture to revitalize and re-orient San Francisco urbanism with a specific redevelopment plan to invent a modern Japanesetown in the Western Addition neighborhood. The city fomented growing popular fascination with Japan as a country and Japanese culture and food—but not Japanese Americans, Oda takes care to note.

The redevelopment plan was spearheaded by San Francisco's Redevelopment Agency and the agency it created, the Japanese Cultural and Trade Center. It welcomed active participation by a group of Japanese American community leaders, whom Oda astutely labels "merchant-planners" for their insistence on the right to a prime seat at the urban planning table as "transpacific intermediaries" to Japan. They brought in critical business partners, notably from Hawaii and the mid-Pacific (and, interestingly, one Chinese American), with professional credentials, social resources, financial and political networks, and vast residential and commercial development experience, later forming the Nihonmachi Community Development Corporation. Oda skillfully narrates and meticulously documents a complicated process, navigating carefully among a rich roster of diverse personalities and organizations competing both with ideas and for attention. The reader must pay close attention to details while not losing the forest for the trees.

As with urban development all over the country during this period—New York and Providence, to cite but two examples—infrastructural improvements such as expressways usually resulted in residential patterns that distilled a new racial geography, with blacks and other minorities strictly segregated from whites. Meanwhile, no longer faced with strict residential barriers, Japanese Americans and other Asians moved out of blighted old neighborhoods into more middle-class ones as assuredly as they climbed socially into the middle class and integrated into the urban landscape, further solidifying their "model minority" remake.

Not so fortunate were the African American residents of the Western Addition, for whom residential segregation became even more hardened. Quite the opposite, they became targets of evictions and displacement as part of redevelopment, relegated to “new ghettos,” as the NAACP poignantly noted (p. 183). The disparity in fortune drove a sharp wedge between black and Japanese Americans, exacerbated by public officials such as then Mayor Joseph Alioto, who blamed African Americans for supposedly lacking the drive and hard work of “model minority” Japanese Americans (p. 188). Organized under the banner of the “Freedom Movement,” black activists banded together to fight the deleterious consequences of redevelopment to their lives and community. In turn, black protest inspired the mobilization of young Japanese American and Asian activists against Japanese American-led redevelopment evictions of poor and black residents (p. 193).

So now we can add another story to the list mentioned at the forefront: organized black and Asian protest against the city’s redevelopment project and its Japanese American collaborators. Credit and praise are due to historian Oda for not leaving out this critically important component of the central narrative of how Japanese Americans remade San Francisco. The postwar remaking of San Francisco fomented racial and inter-ethnic confrontations. It is certainly not an unvarnished triumphalist story, as the book’s title might suggest, but its narrative decidedly does not confirm.

Brown University

Evelyn Hu-DeHart

Atomic Junction: Nuclear Power in Africa after Independence, by Abena Dove Osseo-Asare. Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2019. 298 pages. \$99.99, cloth. \$32.99, paper. \$26.00, electronic.

In 1994, the West African country of Ghana acquired its first nuclear reactor. Chinese-built and mainly used for research purposes and as teaching tool, the Ghana Research Reactor Number One (GHARR-1) is one of the few of its kinds found in Sub-Saharan Africa. The convoluted saga of its acquisition is the subject of Abena Dove Osseo-Asare’s *Atomic Junction*. Divided into six chapters and an epilogue, the book narrates “how Ghanaian researchers took leadership positions in nuclear affairs both at home and abroad” and pushed for “scientific enfranchisement over the course of their careers” (pp. 2-3). A major contribution to the history of science and technology in Africa, this work complicates the conventional narratives of Africa’s role in the global quest for nuclear power. Indeed, going beyond the stories of Africa as simple provider of uranium as raw material for nuclear plants, the book presents postcolonial Africa as a place of vibrant nuclear science and science-making.

Interestingly, the story that Osseo-Asare painstakingly reconstructs begins at Reggane in colonial Algeria, where the French undertook a series of above

ground explosions of nuclear devices in February 1960. Although Ghana does not directly share a border with Algeria, a cross-section of the Ghanaian population, including Kwame Nkrumah—the country’s leader—began to agitate against the French nuclear testing. The Ghanaian president even asked scientists in Ghana to monitor possible radioactive dusts of the French explosions. This reaction did not mean that Nkrumah was against nuclear science per se. To the contrary, while he was decidedly “anti-bomb,” the Ghanaian leader was a “pro-atom” nationalist who envisioned nuclear energy as a key fuel for the industrialization of his country (pp. 49-50, 83). To that effect, he called for equal access to the goods of atomic science and initiated putting together a nuclear program. Not only did Nkrumah send a number of Ghanaians to the Soviet Union to study nuclear physics, but he also began negotiation with Moscow for the installation of a Soviet-style nuclear reactor on the outskirts of Accra—the capital of his country. Unfortunately, Nkrumah was toppled in a coup in 1966, an event that interrupted the plans to import the reactor. This ultimately sent the budding Ghanaian nuclear program into dormancy until the early 1990s, when it received a new lease of life.

Much of the book is about the post-Nkrumah period with a granular analysis of the training, professional activities, and strategies of Ghana’s nuclear physicists to keep the dream of “scientific equity” and “nuclear access” alive. In the unstable political landscape that came in the wake of the removal of Nkrumah from power, Ghanaian nuclear physicists took various paths. While a numbers of them decided to seek further training abroad, some joined the International Atomic Energy Agency and thus expanded their networking capabilities (pp. 99-100). Those who remained in Ghana prioritized the teaching of nuclear physics to younger generations. And in an effort to show to the international community that Ghana could be trusted with managing nuclear devices, they also used their knowledge to assist Ghanaian radiologists in their daily work and helped monitor risks of ionizing radiations in the country (p. 108). Since scientists never operate in a social vacuum, Osseo-Asare devotes an illuminating chapter to the interaction between the Ghanaian nuclear physicists and the larger population that lived near the land where the reactor was planned to be sited. Much in the tradition of good social histories of science, she insightfully portrays the scientists as actors involved in the politics of everyday life in and around what became known as “Atomic Lands.” For instance, the historian shows how the physicists cultivated secrecy and used a phantom reactor to sustain control over the land that had initially been expropriated from local communities to make room for nuclear facilities (p. 153). Even more, the atomic scientists exaggerated radiation risks in an effort to have larger exclusion zone around their research campus (p. 169). In the end, then, while the Ghanaian scientists had mobilized the notion of “scientific equity” with the Global North in their quest for nuclear access, their everyday actions locally sanctioned uneven access to resources and power inequities.

Overall, *Atomic Junction* is an excellent contribution to the history of science in postcolonial Africa. One may have preferred more information in Osseo-Asare’s occasional forays into Francophone West Africa, whose histories and

geographies are summarized rather than detailed. Yet her larger argument is well sustained and supported by both a multinational, multilingual, and multi-archival battery of sources and an impressive oral history research. Because the book rightfully highlights the politics and social history of nuclear science-making “from the perspective of black scientists” in Africa (p. 171), it will pair well with Gabrielle Hecht’s *Being Nuclear: Africans and the Global Uranium Trade* (2012) in advanced undergraduate classes and graduate seminars on contemporary African history and/or science studies.

Gettysburg College

Abou B. Bamba

Animal City: The Domestication of America, by Andrew A. Robichaud. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2019. 352 pages. \$39.95, cloth. \$33.99, electronic.

Andrew Robichaud’s new book should convince even the most skeptical readers that animal history—the study of past relationships between human and other-than-human creatures—has come of age. *Animal City: The Domestication of America* explores three sets of interconnected changes. First, Robichaud shows how nuisance laws and other tools wielded by sanitary reformers forced slaughterhouses, dairies, and other animal-based enterprises to outlying districts or even beyond municipal borders. Second, Robichaud examines the emergence of humane organizations, the enactment of anti-cruelty regulations by municipal and state governments, and the uneven policing and prosecution of these rules. Although Societies for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCAs) curtailed the worst forms of abuse toward workhorses and pets, Robichaud shows that humane policing failed to protect the livestock that were increasingly shunted to the industrial outskirts of American cities. *Animal City*’s final analytical strand turns from livestock and pets to animals used by P. T. Barnum and others to entertain and edify the public. Robichaud argues that the inter-workings of this trio of processes essentially removed livestock from American cities and replaced them with household pets and “zoos and naturalistic animal displays.” This substitution, he convincingly argues, “increasingly turned urban animals into objects of human curiosity, kindness, and amusement: new forms of human consumption” (p. 8).

Unless you happen to live in Brooklyn, Portland, or some other hip locale where backyard chicken coops have become all the rage in the last decade or two, you are intimately familiar with the state of affairs with which Robichaud begins and ends *Animal City*. For most of today’s city-dwellers, the “gentlemen hogs” that Charles Dickens found so peculiar on his 1843 visit to New York City remain but a quaint footnote (p. 2). Robichaud’s chapters on the regulation of swill dairies in New York and slaughterhouses in San Francisco—particularly when read alongside Catherine McNeur’s *Taming Manhattan: Environmental*

Battles in the Antebellum City (2017) and Frederick L. Brown's *The City Is More Than Human: An Animal History of Seattle* (2016)—flesh out the genealogy of one of modernity's landmark divides: the geographic, sensory, and moral separation between the places where the animals on whom Americans depend for meat, milk, and so much else live, suffer, and die, and the places where humans consume animal products and by-products.

The uniqueness and importance of Robichaud's contribution becomes especially evident in the second and third sections of *Animal City*. A pair of chapters on the New York-based American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals and its San Francisco counterpart reveal the central role that humane reformers played in setting livestock and pets on divergent trajectories. Like Katherine Grier and others, Robichaud notes the importance of the Victorian doctrine of kindness toward animals. SPCAs earnestly "sought to improve the lives of animals, and in turn to improve human society by eliminating displays of violence toward animals" (p. 7). *Animal City* ends with a chapter each on P. T. Barnum and his lesser-known San Francisco counterpart, Robert Woodward, both of whom "repurposed" wild animals for performance and display "to fit powerful new human desires" (p. 260). Robichaud smartly wraps up his book in 1906, a year that witnessed both the San Francisco earthquake, which unleashed an anachronistic stampede of frantic wild cattle through San Francisco's Mission Street, and the publication of Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle*, two events that epitomized the transformations that *Animal City* traces so successfully. "Cities," Robichaud concludes, "had been largely sanitized of flagrant animal suffering—scenes of animal pain and animal death—that had once been commonplace" (p. 264).

Animal City belongs on the shelves of high school libraries. The present-day relevance of its subject matter and the clarity with which Robichaud expresses his claims mean that single chapters could be used, with some scaffolding, by teachers interested in historicizing animals and animal rights in the United States. Robichaud's conclusion seems particularly promising in this regard, as it helps students see Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle* in a different context. Instructors could ask their students to frame historical questions using "Animal City," a website Robichaud created through Stanford University's Spatial History Project, then use parts of the book to explore these queries.

Animal City draws on and advances numerous lines of historical scholarship. Its reach testifies to the depth and extent of Robichaud's research; he makes particularly intelligent use of historical newspapers, archival collections and annual reports from SPCAs, municipal ordinances and reports, court cases, and published memoirs, autobiographies, and travel narratives. The book mostly focuses on New York and San Francisco, yet Robichaud successfully places human-animal relationships in these cities within broader North American and transatlantic contexts. By weaving together a string of well-researched case studies, *Animal City* thus manages to elucidate developments that were not simply continental, but world-historical. Crisp and sometimes biting, Robichaud's prose moves seamlessly between sharp analysis and vivid storytelling.

The result is a major step forward for animal history, as well as a must-read for anyone seeking to understand the monumental shifts that remade human and other-than-human life during the industrial age.

University of Colorado Boulder

Thomas G. Andrews

Empires of the Senses: Bodily Encounters in Imperial India and the Philippines, by Andrew J. Rotter. New York: Oxford University Press, 2019. 370 pages. \$41.95, cloth. \$41.95, electronic.

Empires of the Senses takes a fresh approach to the histories of the British and American Empires by examining participants' recordings of their sensory encounters. Andrew Rotter follows a growing, exciting trend in historical scholarship that seeks to displace, or at least contextualize, the traditional emphasis on sight by considering the other four senses. There is certainly no shortage of material, particularly in cases of people encountering new experiences, such as is the case of Rotter's subject—when legions of Americans and Britons sought to describe their adventures to home audiences. The selected case studies of the British Raj (1857-1947) and the American occupation of the Philippines (1898-1946) are, at first, seemingly disparate choices. However, the author persuasively argues for the rough similarities of the American and British Empires and the racial hierarchies Americans and Britons generally accepted, while explaining that the two case studies decontextualize each other, thus preventing the book from being too American- or British-focused. Ultimately, this proves a savvy decision, as it gives the book greater weight to discussions about the histories of cultural imperialism.

With so much transpiring in the author's subject—over a century of chronology, multiple political entities, a range of geographic zones, numerous cultural groups, and the five senses—organization is a particularly difficult hurdle. Yet the author chooses a combination of themes and chronology that works. The book begins with a helpful introduction that makes a case for sensory history and the author's approach to it. Bookending the remaining chapters is a chronological framework that begins with a pair of chapters on the "civilizing mission" of Anglo-American imperialism during the period and on war at the empire's onset, and then finishes with a forward look at senses as the American and British withdrew from their respective empires. Between these chapters are five chapters dedicated to each of the major human senses.

Rotter ultimately adds to the compelling case for sensory history. At the very least, he provides readers with a much better sense of how people in the past interpreted new experiences, highlighting that encounters were often immersive experiences that deeply affected participants. Rotter's approach does not necessarily change the historical narrative, but certainly adds to it with sensory perspectives. Rotter describes the inherent racism and American

and British assumptions of cultural superiority that expressed themselves in descriptions of sensory experiences: Filipinos were described as unkempt and Indians were described as exuding an offensive odor. Efforts to re-order indigenous senses to conform to Anglo-American sensibilities were key to the “civilizing mission,” whether it be in the form of dark woolen business suits for men or singing Christian hymns in English accompanied by a piano for children. Rotter at times argues for a middle ground of adaption and adoption between the colonizer and colonized, but, more often, this was an age of rigidity, at least when compared to the eighteenth century, when mingling was more apparent. In consequence, Rotter’s conclusion, in which he looks at the decolonization process, is perhaps the most intriguing. While the traditional cuisine of the Philippines is comparatively harder to find in the United States, Indian food now dominates the English urban landscape with even McDonald’s UK offering a “curry” dipping sauce. Meanwhile, the feel of American and British clothes, whether denim or woolen suits, continue to hold sway amongst the elites of their former colonies.

The extent to which *Empires of the Senses* as a whole lends itself to classroom use is limited. Apart from relevant graduate seminars, it does not immediately stand out for full-text course adoption for direct student use. That said, history teachers at all levels should engage more with sensory history as a way to better understand their subject and make it more relevant to students. *Empire of the Senses* is a fine example of an emerging field. It is well-written prose that is accessible to non-specialists. One does not have to be a specialist in sensory history or the histories of the British Raj and the American Empire to engage with the book, as Rotter does an excellent job of aiding the reader in navigating all three. His chapter on “The Senses and Civilization” is an especially excellent overview of the subject and could stand alone as an introduction, either to teachers or students, because of its engagement with the historiography of sensory history and the role of the senses in cultural bias and racism. This chapter, and the book as a whole, provokes empathy with the past and meaningful reflections on how we use our senses to engage with new experiences.

Texas A&M University

Troy Bickham

Red Meat Republic: A Hoof-to-Table History of How Beef Changed America, by Joshua Specht. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2020. 368 pages. \$27.95, cloth. \$18.95, paper. \$18.95, electronic.

Agricultural history is in the midst of a vibrant transformation as interdisciplinary fields such as gender and sexuality studies, food studies, animal studies, and cultural studies have taken it up in recent decades. While Joshua Specht’s analysis falls squarely within these historical methodologies and lines of inquiry,

he adeptly weaves these interdisciplinary perspectives into a wide-angle account of why the development of the beef industry was, and remains, important to dominant and exploitative American practices and mythologies.

Specht's broadest central argument is that modern beef and modern America ultimately made each other possible: "What emerged in the nineteenth century," he claims, "was truly a red meat *republic*; beef production and distribution were tightly linked to the development of the federal state and the expansion of American power west of the Mississippi" (p. 2). His analysis takes place in the years between the Civil War and the passage of the Pure Food and Drug Act and Federal Meat Inspection Act in 1906. Specht offers the term "cattle-beef complex" to describe the dense sets of links between business and government interests, but is also careful to diligently hold the tension between structural forces and individual experiences in view.

The book is divided into five overlapping yet roughly chronological chapters. The governing structure for each chapter is a key stage of the process of producing beef: bovine life on ranches; being transported from the ranch and sold in a marketplace; being slaughtered, packaged, and distributed; and, finally, being consumed as a food product. The first chapter, "War," is more properly about securing grazing land; Specht recounts the violent history of indigenous land dispossession by focusing on the strategies used by post-Civil War federal agents to gain control over native peoples' access to meat. The "spectacle of the beef ration" (p. 46) was a tool for physically subjugating native people to the will of U.S. policy, but stories about how native people consumed beef rations were also tools through which settler colonists narrativized cultural differences between themselves and native people. Specht argues that beef's centrality to the process of land dispossession is a key historical moment in cementing the importance of beef within conceptions of settler colonial American identities. Throughout the book, Specht demonstrates a similar commitment to showing both concrete and abstract realities.

The following four chapters retrace and revise the historiography of ranching and industrial meatpacking. On-the-hoof accounts of what it was like to be a cow and cowboy on the trail and in a train help concretize the structural shift towards a regionalized bovine life cycle. Visual records showing how "cow towns" like Abilene, Kansas advertised themselves anchor a complex discussion of how and why stockyards became standardized in town after town. Specht's examinations of conflicts surrounding the de-skilling of butchery into factory labor fueled by mass immigration are carefully told, and help to revise technologically focused accounts of food industrialization. These chapters provide detailed historical records of economic and business accounting practices; Specht's careful explanation of on-the-ground individual examples keeps these chapters from becoming too dizzying for those who are not well versed in marketplace abstractions.

Red Meat Republic offers a compelling introduction to complex questions surrounding the relationship of business to American identity. It would fit very well in courses surveying business and economic histories, and it would be

an excellent text for teaching historical methodologies in upper-division and graduate courses in American history; for broader American Studies courses, it offers pathways into food studies, labor studies, and animal studies.

For educators and students looking for historical guidance in shaping contemporary challenges to the existing red meat system, however, they may find Specht's final analysis disappointing. Across the whole book, Specht carefully and determinedly proves, from several angles, that the "cattle-beef complex" works because consumers, then and now, value low price and product safety above concerns about human worker safety, corporate monopolization, and animal welfare. Using strong contemporary cultural analysis, he argues that environmental, labor, and economic interests all intersect in the cattle-beef complex, and the hegemony of the system continues because it effectively splits challenges to its exploitation into separate factions. Specht is equally determined to stay well shy of prescribing a set of actions that would help shape an alternative to this solid, old, and very well-functioning system. Despite his commitment to avoiding a "predestination" narrative for how this system came to be, and offering a closing plea for a "more equitable system" (p. 260), Specht leaves it to his readers to figure out how such a system—one better for humans and non-humans alike—might come about.

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Jeannette Vaught

The Girls Next Door: Bringing the Home Front to the Front Lines, by Kara Dixon Vuic. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2019. 392 pages. \$29.95, cloth. \$29.95, electronic.

Historian Kara Dixon Vuic's latest work is an ambitious and rich study of American women and entertainers who engaged in "bringing the home front to the front lines." Each chapter opens with the story of a woman who worked in wartime entertainment during the world wars, the Cold War, the Vietnam War, and the era of the All-Volunteer Force. Invited to look "behind the stage and through the doughnuts" (p. 2), readers will discover a social and cultural history of war that complicates understandings of wartime entertainment. Contributing to the fields of gender, labor, and military history, this work explores the ways gender and sexuality influenced military policies and culture, whether through the regulation of sexualities, officer attempts to boost morale, or entertainment as foreign diplomacy. Furthermore, it illuminates how women's citizenship and role in the nation was defined through their emotional work.

During the world wars, the U.S. military and civilian organizations recruited women deemed as distracting and desirable alternatives to prostitutes and foreign women. Female workers needed to remind men of the comforts of home and the ideal American "girl next door." As many women would in the years to come, female volunteers performed the roles of mothers, sisters, and

sweethearts—all while keeping men at a distance. The supposed girl next door was also racially constructed, with the media emphasizing an image of middle-class white women while promoting the segregation of clubs due to public fears about interracial relationships.

Connecting martial masculinity to men's heteronormative sexuality, the Army and Navy both regulated overseas prostitution and continued to rely on civilian agencies to provide American women as distractions during World War II. Motivated to aid the war effort, experience adventure, or honor loved ones, many of these Red Cross and USO women described the experience as reminiscent of a "goldfish bowl" due to servicemen's attentions (p. 62). Vuic utilizes memorable anecdotes to establish this atmosphere in readers' minds, as in the example of USO singer Frances Langford, who noted that men climbed trees when she used the latrine (p. 87). This story, and others about women sleeping behind barbed wire and escorted by armed guards, serve as a reminder of the sexual dangers of this work.

In the Cold War era, the military again turned to the Red Cross and USO to provide women who could serve as reminders of domestic life on the home front. With the increasing availability of penicillin, the military was less concerned about rates of venereal disease and more concerned about soldiers' character development and future family lives. In Vietnam, the U.S. government had less control over wartime entertainment, as the South Vietnamese government granted performers visas. Another marked difference was that military officials believed these women reminded servicemen that they were remembered, despite waning public support. These Donut Dollies, USO performers, and Special Services women were still expected to represent the All-American girl next door, and many of the women engaged in performative labor that referenced romantic sexuality.

American women who served during the Persian Gulf War and conflicts in the Balkans were the first who were not selected based on their potential image as mothers, sisters, wives, or sweethearts. Yet women still found themselves navigating friendships with men who wanted to date them, as generations of women had before them. While women could finally remain in recreation work if they married or had children, they still experienced a lack of support for their careers back home, and military spouses found themselves engaged in the unpaid labor of boosting morale. Contradictory messages about women workers were also sent as female strippers appeared in officers' clubs and as the Dallas Cowboys Cheerleaders performed in the Balkans.

For the past century, military and civilian leaders have asserted American women's fundamental roles in soldier performance and success during their military service. Kara Dixon Vuic deftly constructs this comprehensive history of wartime entertainment from a diverse range of sources and archival material, providing an excellent model for history students. Her work has ramifications for the ways the American military and public negotiated bringing home front reminders to military personnel. It will remain influential in the fields of gender and military history for years to come, and will serve as a point of inspiration

to students and professional historians alike for continued research into studies of race, labor historians' theories of emotional labor, as well as citizenship and sexuality studies.

Messiah University

Sarah Parry Myers

Amritsar 1919: An Empire of Fear and the Making of a Massacre, by Kim A. Wagner. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2020. 325 pages. \$32.50, cloth. \$18.00, paper. \$18.00, electronic.

Kim Wagner's book is a retelling of the events surrounding the massacre of unarmed civilians by British troops in Amritsar in April 1919. A key event in the lead-up to Indian independence, it served as a catalyst for Gandhi's non-cooperation movement and represented an important moment in the delegitimization of British imperial power. Wagner tells the story as a "microhistory of a global event" and analyzes the Amritsar massacre as the "final stage" in a longer colonial process that began with the Indian Mutiny of 1857 (p. xxi). By drawing a line from the Victorian period to the moment of Indian Independence in 1947, the book attempts to understand the nature of colonial violence as a process that began well before the fateful moment of the massacre. It also suggests that Amritsar had ramifications well beyond the Indian case in terms of the practice of British colonial rule and, ultimately, decolonization.

This is a narrative-driven study where, after a prologue that takes the reader back to the nineteenth-century events of British rule in India, individual chapters focus on the events of the one or two days leading up to and then following the massacre at Jallianwala Bagh by troops led by General Reginald Dyer. Wagner takes this approach in order to understand how events "were experienced at the time" (p. xxii) and includes eyewitness reports from British and Indian participants and observers, which he intersperses with fictional accounts of related events and colonial violence more generally.

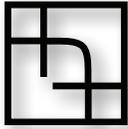
The story is one that will not be unfamiliar to Indian, British, and imperial historians. No new evidence or revelations are uncovered about what happened. Rather, the novelty lies in the interpretative frame that attempts to understand colonial violence as a longer narrative of the distinct and often contradictory remembrances of past events and injustices that constituted the colonial relationship between Britain and India. The 1857 Mutiny looms large in the British attempts to understand Indian resistance and protest, while a long line of broken promises and oppressive violence shapes Indian perceptions of colonial rule. According to Wagner, these different views of history produce a narrative of violence and fear that determines the actions and responses to the massacre in 1919. These misunderstandings create the conditions for violence: "Just as the British misread the nature of the protests, so too did the population of Amritsar fail to grasp the extent to which their mass protests sent the authorities

into paroxysms of panic” (p. 85). But such explanations centered on deeply entrenched anxieties over colonial rule do little to explain the nature of violence as practiced by the British Empire in this moment. Durba Ghosh’s *Gentlemanly Terrorists: Political Violence and the Colonial State in India, 1919-1947* (2017) offers a more compelling and nuanced structural and ideological explanation for the violence rooted as it was in racial and liberal politics. While Wagner’s immediate focus is on the Indian and domestic British context, one must also acknowledge the importance of the global crisis that shaped Amritsar. World War I still remained unresolved, and the attempt to broker peace with the Ottoman Empire in 1919 created tensions with Britain’s view of itself as a benevolent empire and the world’s largest Muslim power. Wagner might further have pushed his acknowledgement that the “end of the war did not bring peace” (p. 41) to include a larger discussion of postwar peacemaking and concerns about the future of the British Empire in explaining colonial violence.

Written for the centennial commemoration of these events, *Amritsar 1919* targets a general educated audience and would be suitable for advanced undergraduates or graduate students enrolled in courses on the British Empire and Indian nationalism. The book is well written, engaging, and full of interesting insights about interactions between the various actors who participated in both the event itself and the response. It has an extensive bibliography, including both primary and secondary sources and endnotes. Instructors on the secondary level would also find much of interest for inclusion in lectures on decolonization, World War I, and the history of mass violence. In terms of methodology, the microhistorical approach provides a model for those trying to place singular events in a broad and meaningful context. Overall, this detailed, well-researched, and carefully reconstructed story of Amritsar deserves a place in the history curriculum of universities and high schools alike that seek to help students better understand imperialism and its consequences.

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Michelle Tusan



The History Teacher

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In 1972, the association transferred guardianship of *The History Teacher* to coordinating faculty members at the Department of History at California State University, Long Beach. In the interest of independence and self-determination, the associated teachers incorporated as a non-profit organization.

The Society for History Education, Inc. (SHE) was recognized by the State of California in 1972.

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