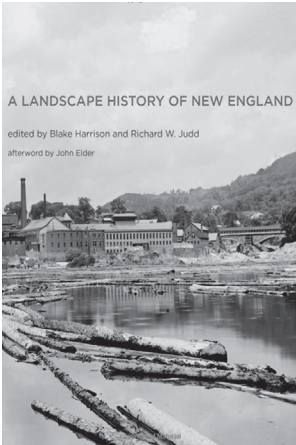


BOOK REVIEWS

***A Landscape History of New England.* Edited by Blake Harrison and Richard W. Judd. Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2011. 413 pages. \$24.95 (paperback).**

Harrison and Judd's edited volume of more than twenty essays on New England's landscape history is ambitious in scope and in depth, covering a range of themes, historical periods, and geographic contexts, while addressing itself to three goals in particular: 1) a broad historical overview of landscape change and perception, 2) an introduction to methodological approaches in landscape studies, and 3) an overview of recent scholarship on the subject of New England landscape history.



The book begins with two introductory essays under the section heading “Region and Identity,” including an insightful piece by Joseph A. Conforti titled “Regional Identity and New England Landscapes.” Conforti offers a concise appreciation of the economic, social, political, and environmental processes that have shaped New England's cities, towns, and associated political institutions. He sets a tone for the book

of critical analyses of the received truths about landscape and New England identity. He shows that the idea of the colonial ‘white village’ as the crucible for republican values and political institutions was largely an invention of the mid- to late-nineteenth century, which had the effect of marginalizing working landscapes such as the “red-brick mill town that emerged at the same time” (28). The privileging of certain historical landscapes and their myths lives on in today's heritage tourism industry, which Conforti sees, in the case of waterfronts, as creating “cityscapes of leisure and consumption that threaten, where they have not already displaced, traditional maritime activities and working waterfronts” (32).

The remaining essays are grouped around the spatial contexts of “Forests and Mountains,” “Rural Landscapes,” “Coasts,” and “Villages, Towns, and Cities.” Additionally, the editors identify five key forces as having been particularly significant in landscape formation: social memory, diversity, work, leisure, and conservation. The diverse approaches to landscape as a concept are well elucidated and a reader new to landscape studies will come

away with a better understanding of how the concept is elaborated in a variety of disciplines, history and geography chief among them.

Numerous chapters will be of interest for those concerned specifically with Massachusetts landscapes. Lloyd C. Irland's chapter on New England forests is relevant to those concerned with the history and future of that important, ubiquitous, yet fluctuating landscape feature. Readers learn that although Massachusetts is only 63 percent forested compared to the regional average of 79 percent, Massachusetts leads the region in public ownership of forests at 31 percent. In another chapter, Joseph S. Wood uses the Connecticut River Valley town of Deerfield to illustrate the key geographic factors of New England's "Legacy Landscape." Deerfield's location on an *intervale*, a floodplain meadow in the Connecticut River Valley, led to its success in the colonial and early-republican eras, while that same geographic location contributed to its loss of competitive advantage and its decline in the industrial era.

Linear historical accounts of landscape evolution are balanced with fresh perspectives as in Michael Rawson's chapter on Boston Harbor in which he argues for expanding the concept of landscape to encompass unseen spaces such as the submarine environments of harbors. Similarly, Birge-Liberman's essay "Landscape and Class: Public Parks as Environmental Amenities in Nineteenth Century Boston" considers the many ways that the built environments of Boston's Emerald Necklace served the interests of Boston's elite.

Often, landscape histories fall short in providing adequate discussion of current issues and forces shaping the landscape. *A Landscape History of New England* avoids this fate in the final chapters, which provide insights into the contemporary issues of sprawl and pollution. In the chapter "The Evolution of Twentieth-Century Boston's Metropolitan Landscape," planner James C. O'Connell lucidly explores the processes of suburbanization in tandem with the region's transportation history. O'Connell is careful to point out that it is not simply technological change that drives suburbanization and sprawl but a set of identifiable cultural and socio-economic trends as well.

In his afterword to *A Landscape History of New England*, John Elder discusses Robert Frost's masterful poem "Directive" which places the reader in the lonely ruins of an abandoned New England homestead. Frost's poem is not nostalgic, Elder asserts, but it captures something of the difficulty and promise inherent in change and loss. For Elder, the shattering of illusory notions of New England's landscape myths is important, as much for what these critiques reveal about the elite agendas behind such illusions as for the ability of such analyses to further the goals of justice, democracy,

environmental conservation, and sustainability in the region today. “What is culture,” Elder asks, “but a dialogue between a community’s inherited stories and the urgencies . . . that demand formulations more adequate to the new moment?” (390). The essays in *A Landscape History of New England* help to further this dialogue.

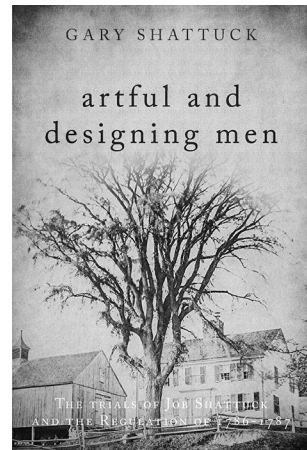
Brian W. Conz is an associate professor in the Geography and Regional Planning department at Westfield State University.

***Artful and Designing Men: The Trials of Job Shattuck and the Regulation of 1786–1787.* Gary Shattuck. Mustang, OK: Tate Publishing, 2013. 411 pages. \$29.99 (paperback).**

Artful and Designing Men will be a revelation for even the most zealous of Shays’ Rebellion enthusiasts. They will be presented with new material concerning the trial of Job Shattuck, who was the initial, and arguably the most prominent, leader of the movement. Penned by first-time author Gary Shattuck, a direct descendent of Job, this book presents an exposé of the harsh economic realities that drove the farmers of Massachusetts to the grave acts that they were eventually forced to undertake. This work started as a genealogical project and blossomed into a highly readable account of a major figure of the Regulation of 1786-1787.

In the course of his research, the author unearthed previously unreported eyewitness testimony and a Supreme Judicial Court justice’s notes on Job Shattuck’s trial. This material, located in the archives of the Massachusetts Historical Society, provides a fresh perspective on the motivations driving the rebellion. The narrative also sheds light on the opposing viewpoint of the ruling establishment that strove so mightily to vilify the participants.

The roots of Shays’ Rebellion compare to the Great Depression in terms of economic consequence but were heightened by eighteenth-century factors. Prolonged economic stagnation, high taxes, and a recently enacted law stipulating the payment of taxes in specie—in coins rather than in paper currency—made it almost impossible for the small farmer to fulfill his debt obligations. Whatever small amounts of money the farmers held were



usually in the form of notes and script, essentially made worthless by the new law and by the ravages of inflation. These issues, combined with the use of debtor prison, almost assured that tax obligations could not be met. A farmer could not earn money to pay his debts while wasting away in prison. The inability of the small farmer to pay his taxes inevitably led the hated Court of Common Pleas to take the farmer's only thing of value: his farm. When a farm was seized, the farmer and his family lost their home, their self-respect, their standing in the community, and, most importantly, their sole means of support. All of this happened in a time when there was no social safety net. Farmers faced not only economic deprivation but also destitution and possibly even starvation. Hence, their desperation led to rebellion.

Initially, they presented demands to the regulators. They requested a delay in Court of Common Pleas proceedings as well as a reduction of taxes and a repeal of the specie payment law. These seemingly reasonable requests were ignored by the governing class. The very same people who had, just a short time before, rebelled against their mother country because of economic grievances, neglected their own people when the situation was reversed and they were in control. As history has shown so many times, some people learn from the mistakes of the past and some people feel compelled to repeat them. Unfortunately in this case the formerly oppressed all too easily assumed the guise of the oppressor, insisting that the letter of the law be followed, regardless of the consequences for their citizens.

In the midst of this economic crisis, Job Shattuck and others took a course of direct action, forcing many courts to close down through mob intimidation. Court proceedings were interrupted via extra-legal means, but no one was killed or injured by the rebels. However, the government response was rather forceful, and Shattuck was injured by a sword during his capture. The true violence of the rebellion was perpetrated by the militia and the long arm of the law, not by the rebels themselves. Nonetheless, the rebels' rights to habeas corpus were suspended, and they were branded as "traitors." The author makes a strong case that if the Massachusetts governor had agreed to good faith negotiations from the beginning, violence could have been averted, especially since many of the reforms advocated by the regulators were adopted after the rebellion was crushed. The author strongly asserts that the incident was unnecessary and avoidable if a spirit of reasonableness and tolerance had been adopted by the powers that be from the beginning.

Through the lens of Job Shattuck, this book provides a fascinating window into the reasons that drove the desperate farmers of Massachusetts to seek economic justice in an unstable time. It rescues a major figure of the movement from behind the shadow of the better-known Daniel Shays and

corrects some long-held misperceptions concerning the regulators. And it's a darned good read.

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***African American Heritage in the Housatonic Valley.* Edited by David Levinson. Great Barrington, MA: Berkshire Publishing Group, 2006. 230 pages. \$24.95 (hardcover).**

African American Heritage in the Housatonic Valley is the result of a long effort to preserve, protect, and celebrate the regional African American community, its rich history, and its accomplishments. Primary editor David Levinson, compiling family photographs, personal essays, enlistment records, and biographies about local individuals, created a regional history that, unlike those of local historical societies, is organized into chapters based on fields of interest, such as Business and Professional Life, Religion, Civil Rights and Social Activism, and Military Service. Each of the chapters is made up of articles focused on individuals who succeeded in that specific field, and the personal essays demonstrate the efforts that contributed to the well-being of the African American community in the area.

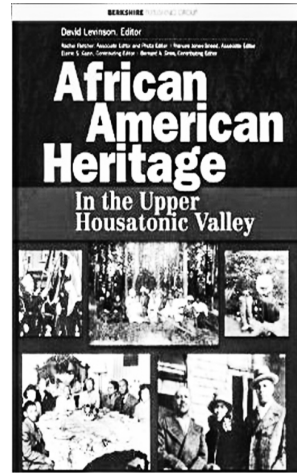
The work began in 2002 with the dedication of the Housatonic River Walk's W.E.B. DuBois River Garden. These trails served as a memorial to the accomplishments of DuBois, as well as a recognition of other African American landmarks in the area, such as the Underground Railroad homes and James Weldon Johnson's writing sanctuary. In 2004, editors Frances Jones-Sneed and David Levinson created a curriculum that served to educate students about figures in the local community who prevailed over the tremendous obstacles created by the by racial and gender ideologies at the time. From the first free African American citizens in the mid-17th century to the founding members of the NAACP, Levinson provides tremendous insight into the trials and tribulations the members of the local community endured.

Particularly admirable are the achievements of Florence Edmonds and May Edward Chinn, both of whom excelled in the medical field despite early rejection. Edmonds, turned away from a Pittsfield nursing program, received her education at the Lincoln Hospital in New York City and was awarded a scholarship to a Teacher's Program at Columbia University. Eventually returning to teach nursing at the Pittsfield Hospital that had

previously rejected her admission as a student, Edmonds remained active in the Berkshires as a member of the Pittsfield Visiting Nursing Association and the local Red Cross Bloodmobile. May Edward Chinn, the first black woman from the Berkshires to become a medical doctor and a graduate from Bellevue Medical School, focused her research on methods of cancer detection. In addition to joining the Strang Cancer Clinic in New York City in 1944, Chinn gained previously forbidden privileges at the Harlem Hospital and received an honorary doctorate in science degree from Columbia University for her contributions to medicine.

Along with Levinson, editors Richard Courage and Elaine E. Gunn provide a history of black education in the Berkshires, which further illustrates the commitment the community has had toward educating their youth from the Antebellum period through the Civil Rights Movement, despite racial or monetary restrictions. This topic is of particularly high importance, due to the lack of financial support and social protection the African American community experienced as a result of racial discrimination. Because of the community's dependence on individual achievement and perseverance, this particular chapter is dedicated to the roles and effects of numerous black educators who originated from, or based their teaching career in, the Berkshires. As in other chapters in *African American Heritage*, black educators are given individual attention, focusing on their background, contributions to the field of education, and their effects on the black community as a whole. Dorothy Amos, for example, graduated from Pittsfield High School and, after receiving her BA and MA degrees, became the first black guidance counselor in Pittsfield. Furthermore, Amos established herself as a community leader when she opened the Early Childhood Development Center, a daycare center focused on the needs of low-income families and their children.

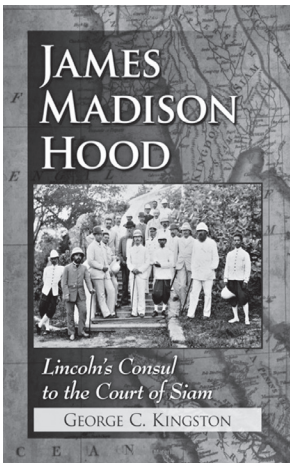
Although the text bears resemblance to publications of historical societies that focus on the development of individual towns and cities, it is unique in its focus on the African American community within the Housatonic Valley, rather specifically focusing on the regional history. The chapter titled "Personal Essays" supports the text's unique character, in offering the reader an intimate recollection of perspectives on African American life in the Berkshires. Memories of segregation, racial discrimination, and attempts to



create racial harmony in the community make up the memories of Western Massachusetts residents Elaine Gunn and Mae E. Brown, who recorded their stories specifically for the text. Gunn, in particular, provides her view on the racism that still lingers in the area, saying “I suppose one could say that these were/are attempts to bridge the racial harmony gap. However, the lack of a black presence in these areas of employment continues” (154). This distinct approach to a rich, communal history is extensively supported by primary as well as secondary sources such as enlistment records and family photographs; it serves to challenge students unfamiliar with such resources and would undoubtedly be treasured by educators.

Meaghan Halfpenny is a graduate of Westfield State University and is attending Boston University's African American Studies MA program.

***James Madison Hood: Lincoln's Consul to the Court of Siam.* George C. Kingston. Jefferson, NC: McFarland and Company, 2013. 236 pages. \$38.00 (paperback).**



James Madison Hood: Lincoln's Consul to the Court of Siam resurrects from obscurity the fascinating life story of businessman, politician, diplomat, and Massachusetts native James Madison Hood. Appointed by Lincoln shortly before his assassination, Hood was the first full-time, salaried US Consul to Siam (now Thailand). An imperfect man, especially in some of his matrimonial and business dealings, Hood was valued as a quality ship builder, an excellent legislator, and a creditable diplomat.

The author, George C. Kingston is a retired engineering research manager and a professional genealogist from East Longmeadow, MA. The writing started out as a genealogy project commissioned by Hood's descendants and blossomed into a book. Early chapters reflect the author's predilections, exhaustively detailing Hood's ancestry, and including the exact dimensions of the many clipper ships that he built.

The narrative gains strength when Kingston describes Hood's political and diplomatic career. The author has a flair for explaining issues in the

context of their time in a compact and coherent manner. He details Hood's rise to prominence as a Whig state legislator in Massachusetts as well as his brief, expedient entry to the Know Nothing Party as the Whigs began to self-destruct. Despite the well-known negative platform of the Know Nothing Party, much of which Hood did not support, they were an anti-slavery party which did align with Hood's beliefs. Though he was not a militant abolitionist, he did oppose slavery, which led him to support Abraham Lincoln and the Republican Party when he later moved to Illinois.

As a Massachusetts state legislator, Hood initiated a number of insurance reforms that still have an effect today. As a businessman, he was often the victim of loose or non-existent regulations that allowed undercapitalized insurance companies to avoid paying their obligations. Therefore, partially out of self-interest, he initiated a number of reforms to address these issues, which have ultimately benefitted succeeding generations.

Hood moved to Illinois to avoid business failure and capitalize on the new opportunities developing in the Midwest. He became a Republican state legislator and threw his support behind Lincoln in the Presidential election. Lincoln endorsed him for a position in the Department of State, indicating that he knew Hood personally and felt that he was a qualified candidate. This eventually led to Hood's appointment as the US Consul in Bangkok, Siam.

As consul, Hood was involved in adjudicating disputes between American expatriates. This, in turn, led to petty jealousies and ceaseless controversies among people who either coveted the Consul position for themselves, or who would profit from a Consul of their own acquaintance. Hood was frequently compelled to write to the State Department in order to justify his actions, some of which may not have been entirely blameless. The most noteworthy of these controversies almost led to a diplomatic incident with France, soured his relationship to the King, and contributed to his eventual departure from Siam. Throughout this incident, Anna Leonowens, the King's confidential secretary and royal governess to his children, was a hidden ally. A widow and English mole, Anna provided inside information that was damaging to the French. This incident led to her estrangement from the King and her departure from the country. Hood was mentioned in her famous memoirs, *Anna and the King of Siam*, popularized by Margaret Landon.

This book provides an interesting and enjoyable glimpse into local politics, the business of building clipper ships, and the early diplomatic maneuverings of our young republic.

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***Emma Spaulding Bryant: Civil War Bride, Carpetbagger's Wife, Ardent Feminist—Letters and Diaries, 1860–1900.* Ruth Douglas Currie. New York: Fordham University Press, 2004. 504 pages. \$75.00 (hardcover).**

When researching and writing her dissertation on John Emory Bryant, a Civil War soldier and Radical Republican, Ruth Douglas Currie discovered that, “while John’s was a significant political career, the story still to be told was that of the carpetbagger’s wife, Emma Spaulding Bryant. Her diaries and the correspondence between Emma and John were engaging and revealed much about the public as well as the private lives of them both” (ix). Therefore, after publishing *Carpetbagger of Conscience: A Biography of John Emory Bryant*, Currie turned her attention to Emma. Historians and anyone interested in the Civil War, Reconstruction, and Gilded Age America should be glad Currie did so. Currie transcribed and edited a majority of the correspondence between Emma and John, letters from their daughter Alice, and portions of Emma’s diaries to offer the reader a compelling portrait of the era.

Currie’s book is significant for several reasons. First, it provides the reader with documents spanning a period of four decades. While there are gaps and omissions in the correspondence, the collected documents allow readers to think about the post-bellum period without breaking it into neat categories or, as many monographs do, terminating the discussion of Reconstruction in 1877.

In addition, the book places the focus on Emma, offering a detailed analysis of her life and struggles. While there are many fine accounts of carpetbaggers, there are far fewer studies of their wives. Beyond the redoubtable Blanche Ames, there are few other well-known carpetbaggers’ wives from this period. Currie, however, foregrounds Emma and thus presents an often overlooked perspective: what exactly it meant to be the wife of a “carpetbagger of conscience.”

The book contains far too much detail to be analyzed successfully in a brief review, so I will confine my discussion to several important points. Currie begins with the correspondence of Emma and John during the Civil War. Like many collections of letters between Civil War soldiers and their families, this portion of the correspondence is heavily tilted in favor of John’s letters. Emma’s voice, therefore, must be inferred through John’s letters or in the very few extant letters from Emma to John. The bias in favor of John’s letters in this section is not a fault of Currie’s, but an occupational hazard of working with the correspondence of Civil War soldiers.

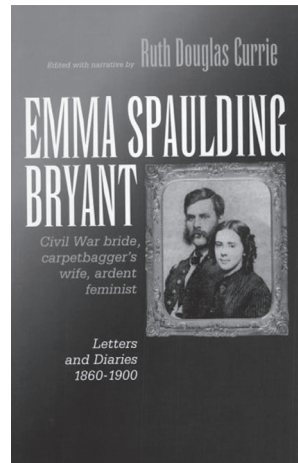
Collections of soldier letters usually feature many letters by the soldier,

but few entries from their families because many soldiers found it difficult to hang on to the letters in the field. Though Emma's voice is subsumed beneath John's in the first section, it seems that John, to this reader at least, is also something of a mystery. At one point, John was court-martialed for insubordination, which seems odd for a man so focused on discipline. Was John's court-martial a result of character flaws? Was it politically motivated? This is a small point, but merely one example of a place where readers might have benefitted from additional context.

However, on the whole, this is a rich and detailed correspondence. From occasional bits of humor to sharp disagreements between Emma and John, the letters are compelling in their intensity and speak to important issues. In addition to receiving a view of reconstruction in Georgia through the eyes of a carpetbagger and his wife, readers also gain insight into the problems facing a post-bellum family. For instance, the letters reveal that the couple was buffeted by the constant struggle to make ends meet, John's frustrated ambitions, and arguments over money. John's focus on Georgia politics and, later, education meant that he spent long periods of time away from his family and thus did not adequately support his wife and child. In addition, the letters reveal sharp disagreements between Emma and John about the "woman question" and women's role in society.

At one point, John and Emma faced a major crisis because she sought treatment from a male doctor for "uterine difficulties" (166). This fact angered John, much as his assumptions about the subordinate role women were supposed to play in society angered Emma. Still, though this marriage was at times turbulent, it is also clear that they loved each other deeply. Their letters are filled with advice and counsel as well as analysis of the great cause dominating the post-bellum period. "The real Cause," John wrote, "is American civilization against the feudal civilization of the South. We are the leaders in Georgia of the great cause. It is coming to be recognized at the North that this conflict between these two civilizations is not over" (251). Thus, their stormy, but ultimately loving, marriage helps readers gain a better sense of the period.

For best effect, *Emma Spaulding Bryant* should be read in conjunction with *Carpetbagger of Conscience*. Currie's introductions to each chapter are



somewhat lacking in detail, and reading the two books together will clear up questions about people, places, and events. Currie leaves the reader with the assertion that “Emma’s story is more than these bare statistics of her life as defined by others. The portrait which emerges from the reading of her correspondence and diaries reveals a true sense of her own being: a woman of character, strength, and remarkable tenacity” (477).

While there is nothing wrong with this statement, this reader would have appreciated Currie spending more time explaining why Emma was a feminist. Leaving aside the thorny question of whether Emma would have recognized herself as such, Currie contends that “it was the realities of her life that made her an ardent feminist” (479). But were not the realities of Emma’s life similar to the realities of the lives of many other women who have not received this label? Currie might also have considered, in more detail, the costs of being the wife of “a carpetbagger of conscience.”

Emma and John lived a peripatetic life, were often separated, and John sometimes left Emma bereft of resources because of his commitment to radicalism. One of the most persistent stereotypes of the radical Republicans is that they were dogmatic, inflexible, and self-righteous. John, Currie tells us, was not corrupt and his commitment to African Americans was genuine. However, based on the letters, John seems to fit the classic stereotype. The case of John and Emma, therefore, offers an opportunity to think about the consequences of the shortcomings of a radical politician, not merely on state and national politics, but on his family. These points aside, lay readers and students of the period will find much of use in this compelling volume.

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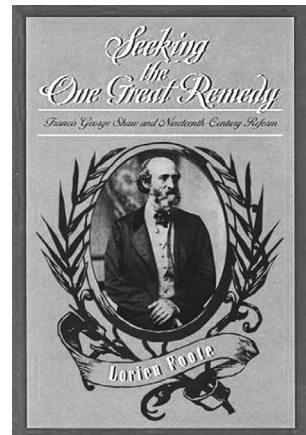
***Seeking the One Great Remedy: Francis George Shaw and Nineteenth-Century Reform.* Lorien Foote. Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2003. 224 pages. \$39.95 (hardcover).**

The perfectionist impulse in antebellum American reform generated a number of highly idealistic but often impractical efforts at complete social improvement—panaceas for all manner of social dysfunctions. The dietary and health reforms of Sylvester Graham; the dress reforms of Libby Miller and Amelia Bloomer; the many temperance movements; the advocacy of free love in Oneida, New York; or the Fourierist socialism of Brook Farm—all offered varied solutions that promised to set the nation on the course towards

perfection. Even the abolitionist movement, as a distinct ideology within the broader anti-slavery movement, was grounded in this pursuit of individual and social perfectibility.

Numerous studies have addressed the various careers of these reform-minded Americans, many of whom were leaders and visionaries or simply the rank-and-file of ordinary men and women. To this spectrum of scholarship we can add Lorien Foote's biography *Seeking the One Great Remedy: Francis George Shaw and Nineteenth Century Reform*. The life of wealthy businessman and philanthropist Francis George Shaw of Boston provides a useful lens to examine questions of who joined these movements and why. Shaw's wealth and extensive connections made him a valued member of some of the most influential groups, like Brook Farm and the Garrisonian American Antislavery Society, and he ended his career as an advocate of Henry George's Single Tax, which he believed at last to be the "one great remedy" to America's ills. Shaw was not quite among the shapers of the movements he joined and to which he contributed; nevertheless, his experiences illuminate much about the era, these reform movements, and the motives of activists.

Foote's biography of Francis George Shaw introduces readers to a man whose life intersected many of the familiar characters in nineteenth-century New England. From the beginning, Shaw was well placed to move in whatever social circles he might choose. Scion of a wealthy mercantile family and educated at Harvard, he might have pursued cultural interests or other respectable extracurricular activities of his class. Instead, Shaw threw himself into American reform. Although he seemed to move on the dilettante fringes as a sort of nineteenth-century "limousine liberal," one does not doubt his sincerity because he certainly seemed to be a passionate advocate for change. Foote begins her study with the origins of the Shaw family fortunes, which accumulated from a variety of enterprises such as land speculation and even the China trade. Individual fortunes rose and fell, but the emphasis here should be on family: the Shaws stuck together. Frank Shaw's father would go on to make his great business success during the Market Revolution of the early nineteenth century, investing in a wide range of enterprises in Boston and passing along to his family a handsome family fortune and an established standing among the Boston elite.



Unfortunately, it was this family fortune that, in Foote's telling, proved to be a psychic burden to Francis George Shaw. The young Shaw, sent out to learn the ropes of the family business, was repelled by the greed and ambition of the capitalist class into which he was born. Ever after, he searched for some remedy for the injustices and inequities that he perceived. Returning home, Shaw wooed and wed a daughter of privilege and wealth, Sarah Sturgis, who also shared his reformist ideals. Sarah added much of her own zeal as the couple pursued a lifelong quest for one great remedy to the ills and injustices of the world.

This quest for "one great remedy," of course, could also be interpreted as a personal search, and Shaw's search for a remedy to his own philosophical and ethical concerns led him through a variety of schemes, organizations, and causes. Francis and Sarah embraced Swedenborgian Christianity and were early adherents to Transcendentalist thought. The couple cultivated friendships with people like Margaret Fuller and Lydia Maria Child and joined Theodore Parker's West Roxbury Church. Later, when Shaw became aware of George Ripley's Fourierist Associationist experiment at Brook Farm, he threw himself and his family into the enterprise.

Although Shaw hoped that the Fourierist movement would have a socially transformative effect, he did not make a commitment to actually join the Brook Farm community. Because Shaw valued his privacy and the security of his family circle, he declined to sacrifice them to the movement. Indeed, it is Shaw's commitment to family that Foote argues was the incubator of much of Shaw's beliefs about reform. Family—particularly the role of women within it—and friendships with some of the leading female thinkers of his day exposed him to dynamic new ideas. By inculcating these new values within his own family, Shaw was able to expand his influence to the next generation, most notably through the career of his daughter, Josephine Shaw Lowell.

While Josephine Shaw reflected the family legacy of reform, probably the best known of Frank and Susan Shaw's children was their son Robert Gould Shaw. Robert Shaw was not as eager as his sisters to engage in reform or charitable work—a reluctance that was frustrating to his parents but which they did not attempt to force. The Civil War, however, gave Robert Shaw an opportunity that his parents heartily approved: he became a soldier in the struggle to destroy slavery. Robert Shaw was slow in coming to embrace that interpretation of the War, but his eventual acceptance of command of the 54th Massachusetts Infantry and his death at the Battle of Fort Wagner in 1863 would seal his place in the memory of the fight against slavery. Indeed, Frank and Susan moved quickly to establish Robert's memory in the public

mind, publishing tributes that highlighted the young officer's martyrdom for the cause of freedom. Public memorials and popular culture would come later, but the Shaw family, Foote asserts, took the lead.

The destruction of slavery did not end Shaw's commitment to justice for African Americans. Although some abolitionists moved on to different pursuits after the war, the Shaws remained involved in various schemes to improve the lives of freed people through education as well as access to land and other economic opportunities. The success of the improvement organizations Shaw supported was limited by competition from other groups, but the waning of northern support for the freed people significantly undercut all such efforts and left Shaw with no small amount of bitterness about the cost of emancipation—a cost that included his own son—and what little it seemed to have bought.

But bitterness did not lead Shaw to despair because, at around the same time, he discovered a key to social improvement in the writings of Henry George. George advocated that a Single Tax be levied on rents rather than on production and, therefore, would not unduly burden the people at large who would now be able to enjoy the just fruits of their own labors. This was the one great remedy Shaw sought—a way for society to secure the funding necessary for social improvements such as public education without burdening the poorest who ought to benefit most from them. Shaw's support was greatly appreciated by George, who was quick to exploit the connection, and the author even dedicated one of his books to Shaw.

The central question in examining Shaw's life as a reformer is ultimately one of motive. As much as the movements and causes with which he was associated were directed towards the improvement, if not the perfection, of American society, Shaw seems to have been searching for the cure for his own internal questions and troubled conscience. What led him to pursue so many radical social reforms? In this regard the book raises many questions. Foote argues that Shaw was drawn away from capitalism by its immorality and repudiated his place in the capitalist economy. However, this seems unsatisfactory given that Shaw continued to run his family's business ventures with an eye towards profit and the family's financial security.

One might also wonder to what degree self-interest motivated his quest for one great remedy that would solve society's woes without requiring the sacrifice of his family fortunes. I don't mean to suggest an unworthy motivation here; after all, Shaw was keenly aware that his family fortune was in fact his family's—not his alone—and that he bore the responsibility for its management on their behalf. To what degree was his social activism an extension of exactly this sort of paternal feeling? In a telling quotation, Lydia

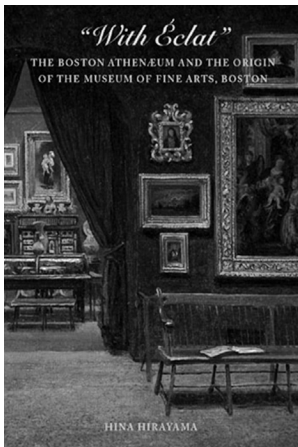
Maria Child, a longtime friend of Shaw, noted her amusement that he and his circle of wealthy, comfortable elite men and women regarded themselves as middling class folk. The Shaws were not snobbish, she noted, but definitely used to viewing the world from a position of advantage.

In some ways, Shaw's view of the world paralleled that of southern slaveholders. Paternalism has been recognized as a feature of northern industrialism, but here we see it channeled in a critic of that materialist society that industrialism and slavery made. Introducing readers to Francis George Shaw gives us a new appreciation for the complexities and opportunities of nineteenth-century life.

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***“With Éclat”: The Boston Athenaeum and the Origin of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.* Hina Hirayama. Boston: The Boston Athenaeum (distributed by University Press of New England), 2013. 240 pages, 81 illustrations. \$29.95 (paperback).**

The Boston Athenaeum, a membership library founded in 1807, was rooted in the Enlightenment belief that the world in all respects, “can be understood by the systematic attainment of knowledge” (13). Such knowledge could be acquired through the study of books, the observation of nature, or the contemplation of objects. The library’s relationship with fine arts began in the 1820s with annual art exhibits. Eventually, an art collection was also formed, sharing space with books in a succession of cramped temporary quarters, before relocating to a donated mansion on Pearl Street in 1822. As Boston’s nineteenth-century wealth accrued through maritime trade and textile manufacture, the city’s “economic elite coalesced . . . into a self-conscious and increasingly insular group linked through business and family,” a clique that controlled and financed most of the region’s cultural and philanthropic enterprises (13). This close-knit nature of Boston’s upper class was an important factor in the formation of institutional alliances.



Hina Hirayama's *"With Éclat": The Boston Athenaeum and the Origin of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston*, reconstructs the largely forgotten history of cooperation and conflict between the Boston Athenaeum and the Museum of Fine Arts (MFA) in their formative years. The museum started in 1870 without collections, a building of its own, or sufficient funding. Public aid was scarce: the City of Boston gave a tract of land but no other assistance. This paucity of resources forced the fledgling MFA to rely heavily on individual benefactors (including Charles Callahan Perkins and his brother Edward Newton Perkins, who were instrumental in bringing together various groups) and other cultural institutions. It was closely tied to a web of cultural and educational organizations, especially the Athenaeum, with which it had many trustees in common.

By the mid-nineteenth century, conflicts between the Athenaeum's Library Committee and its Fine Arts Committee had become increasingly acrimonious. Especially contentious was the allotment of space at the Beacon Street building that became the institution's new home in 1849. The Fine Arts Committee, aware by the late 1860s of its tenuous position, was eager to retain at least some of its functions by cooperating with the proposed MFA. Casts of famous statues and copies of noteworthy paintings were freely placed on deposit for exhibits at the museum. The Athenaeum "played a critical role in bringing the MFA into existence and ensuring its survival" (161), but the ensuing arrangement developed into a complex and sometimes troubled relationship, due in part to changing ideas about education, the mission of art museums, and art itself.

Art museums, including the MFA, were changing their priorities at the end of the nineteenth century, shifting from an emphasis on education to the mission of acquiring and exhibiting original art. Starting in the 1880s and continuing through the early twentieth century, the MFA returned most of the borrowed copies to the Athenaeum, which was often reluctant to accept them. Some pieces were destroyed or placed with other institutions, such as public schools. Space constraints at the Athenaeum tested the patience of trustees and committee members, and a once mutually beneficial relationship with the MFA became increasingly strained. By the time of its 1909 relocation from Copley Square to Huntington Avenue, the MFA had substantially transformed itself into "a temple of aesthetic contemplation, rather than a school of mass education" (154). By the mid-twentieth century, the Athenaeum and the MFA had distinctly different missions and catered to largely different constituencies.

The phrase "Brahmin caste of New England" (177), which first appeared in Oliver Wendell Holmes's novel *Elsie Venner*, originally implied "a hereditary intellectual superiority" (14). It later acquired additional

connotations, e.g., advanced social standing, venerable New England roots, political conservatism, comfortable wealth, noblesse oblige, and opposition to change (including the encroachment of immigrant masses, egalitarianism, and modern trends in art). Some writers, Hirayama reminds us, have alleged that Brahmin efforts to promote cultural institutions in Boston were a veiled attempt to control immigrants through “culture” in order to compensate for the waning political power of establishment families (52-53).

A useful appendix to the main text contains brief biographies of the MFA’s incorporators, including their educational backgrounds, offices held at the Boston Athenaeum and the MFA, and lists of other affiliations (163-173). The biographies indicate how truly entwined Boston’s elite families were amongst themselves and with the city’s cultural and philanthropic organizations. The book is well illustrated, thoroughly documented, and supplemented by a well-chosen bibliography. It contains more detail (and a surplus of lengthy quotations from institutional correspondence and reports) than most readers will need or desire, but it is, nevertheless, a valuable resource and a welcome addition to scholarship about the reception of art and the politics of culture in nineteenth-century Boston.

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***John F. Kennedy: World Leader.* Stephen G. Rabe. Dulles, VA: Potomac Books, 2010. 189 pages. \$22.50 (paperback).**

Stephen G. Rabe’s latest book, *John F. Kennedy: World Leader*, offers a fresh perspective on Kennedy and his foreign policy leadership. Rabe, a professor of history at the University of Texas at Dallas, argues that Kennedy does not receive the credit he deserves for his foreign policy decisions. The book is part of the Issues in the History of American Foreign Relations series, which offers students and general audiences concise books with straightforward narratives. While this book does succeed in substantiating its argument, it lacks additional depth that would make it a more enjoyable read.

Throughout the book’s nine chapters, Rabe explores Kennedy’s involvement with various nations and the handling of multiple crises. The first two chapters are more historiographical but important for understanding Kennedy’s beliefs about foreign policy and the reasons he chose certain people to be part of his administration. As Rabe explains, Kennedy, “unable to persuade the U.S. Congress to pass his domestic agenda,” turned to

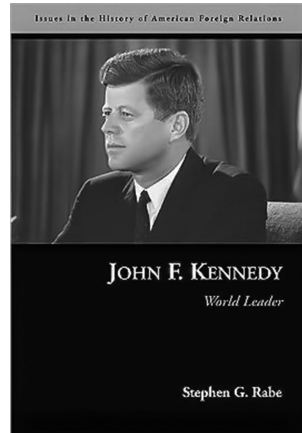
foreign affairs (8). In addition, Kennedy sought to set himself apart from Eisenhower, who took a top-down approach and got opinions from a wide group of advisors; Kennedy chose a select group and then engaged in small discussions. This effectively allowed Kennedy to act, in some ways, like his own Secretary of State.

The remaining chapters focus on Kennedy's efforts with various countries: from Cuba and the Soviet Union to Vietnam and Latin America. Chapter three focuses on Kennedy's relations with the Soviet Union and his first challenge: dispelling the myth that there was a missile gap between the US and the Soviet Union. In addition, the chapter covers Kennedy's relationship with Nikita Khrushchev, who initially saw Kennedy as a young, controllable upstart, only to find out that he had underestimated Kennedy's skills, as was proven with the Berlin Crisis.

Chapter four focuses on Cuba. Rabe takes a mostly sympathetic view of Kennedy and the Bay of Pigs incident, noting that much of the advice that he received was either bad or one-sided. For instance, the Joint Chiefs told Kennedy that the exile army could take on Castro's forces, because many within the administration wanted Castro out of power as soon as possible (57). Rabe also covers Operation Mongoose, which sought to destabilize Cuba by returning Cuban exiles to recruit dissidents and cause sabotage throughout the country. Although this plan failed, Rabe indicates that the one bright spot was the embargo that continues more than forty years later.

The chapter on Latin America highlights the tensions in Kennedy's foreign policy. For example, Kennedy did not want communism spreading into Latin America, but he also wanted free nations. Because of this, in some cases Kennedy chose to ally with dictators the administration knew were bad for their respective countries because Kennedy preferred to support a dictator rather than a leader who was sympathetic to communism.

One theme that runs throughout much of the book is that the Bay of Pigs affected Kennedy's decision-making for the rest of his presidency. After the Bay of Pigs incident, he preferred not to get militarily involved in conflicts in Laos even though it was under a communist regime. The



same was true in Vietnam, where Kennedy sought to send advisors and aid rather than to take military action.

The most interesting part of the book is the appendix of seventeen primary source documents, including speeches, lectures, and notes written by or for Kennedy. These include his inaugural address and advice from Eisenhower on Cuba. Many of these excerpts are short, but they give the reader useful insights into Kennedy and the motives driving his foreign policy decisions.

Although the book is well written and insightful, it does suffer from some minor issues. The historiographical section of the book relies on secondary sources from people who worked with Kennedy, such as Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., or more recent work that focuses on Kennedy's foreign policy without giving or countering with opposing viewpoints. The book also mentions the economic development aid provided for other nations but fails to mention the simultaneous increase in defense spending to fight foreign wars that in turn helped stimulate the US economy. Further, Rabe points out the differences between Kennedy and Eisenhower but neglects the differences between Kennedy and Truman, such as the interpretation of NSC 68/2, a National Security Council Report issued in 1950 that guided Cold War diplomacy, which is referenced several times throughout the book.

Despite the minor flaws, Rabe has accomplished something that many historians of the Kennedy administration have not done, which is to provide a detailed view of Kennedy's accomplishments and failures in foreign policy. The book is well suited for an undergraduate classroom or for a general audience interested in an introductory look at Kennedy and his foreign policy, but the book is not as well suited for those looking for a more diplomatic view of Kennedy's relationship with other nations.

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