

goods. Helgren deftly teases out the contradictory messages inherent in such activities, shedding light on Americans' own ambivalence about materialism and consumption at mid-century.

While contemporary adults saw girls, by virtue of their feminine relationship-building skills, as uniquely capable of bridging national divides, girls' gender would eventually throw into jeopardy their role of goodwill ambassadors. During the Red Scare in the early 1950s, popular support for "one world" rapidly eroded. Both the YWCA and the Girl Scouts found themselves facing accusations from male leaders that their feminine naiveté had rendered them guileless pawns for un-American interests. Such accusations helped push girls' organizations into partnerships with the U.S. government, a move that allowed them to preserve their internationalist programs but cast such programs as serving the interests of the Cold War nation-state. President Eisenhower's People-to-People program, Helgren demonstrates, built upon international connections that private organizations like the Girl Scouts had already fostered for many years.

Helgren's narrative ends in the late 1950s, but girls' organizations would continue to embrace internationalism for decades to come. Readers would have benefited had Helgren extended her nuanced analysis of the global girl citizen into the 1960s and beyond. The same is true for the pre-World War II years. While Helgren succeeds in dismantling "a popular misperception that young people's internationalism began with the Peace Corps," her assertion that girls' internationalism represented "a new relation to the world" during the postwar period could have been better supported (158). To what extent was girls' early Cold War internationalism novel, and to what extent did it connect to global activities pursued both earlier and later? Nonetheless, *American Girls and Global Responsibility* is well-researched and incisive. It earns a welcome place on the bookshelves of scholars interested in the histories of childhood, gender, and the early Cold War.

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The Making of a White Settler Nation

Paul Frymer. *Building an American Empire: The Era of Territorial and Political Expansion*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2017. 312 pp. \$35.00 (hardcover).

Although neither "white" nor "race" appear in the title, this is a book about how white racism and racialist thinking shaped the westward expansion of the United States. In seven meticulously researched, carefully argued chapters, Paul

Frymer focuses on federal land policy between the Treaty of Paris, which ended the War of the American Revolution in 1783, and the admission of New Mexico and Arizona to the union in 1912. Throughout this period, writes Frymer, “Americans were united in their belief that the United States was a white nation and that . . . expansion was a project of furthering this racial exclusivity” (221). Toward that end, the federal government removed hundreds of thousands of Native Americans from Florida and the trans-Appalachian and trans-Mississippi West, using methods that “current-day international law” would define as “genocide” (4). With the blessing of Congress and a host of federal agencies, most of the land went to white settlers. The result was a “white settler nation” whose legacy remains with us to the present day (276).

A political scientist whose previous work has been about race and political parties in modern America, Frymer writes as a scholar of American political development (APD), though he hopes to correct three misconceptions common to the field. The first is APD’s tendency to take the western European nation state as normative and to emphasize the federal government’s apparent (and anomalous) weakness in areas like social welfare and bureaucratic development. If we think of the United States as a settler nation, one with a vast western domain under federal control, the government appears much stronger, albeit with most of its strength coming not from military and civil bureaucracies but from the legal authority to oversee the allocation of land. For that reason, Frymer rightly suggests, APD scholars looking for comparative frameworks would be well-served by shifting their focus from Europe to settler nations like Canada, Australia, and Israel. Placed in that group, the United States seems much less exceptional.

Another APD misconception that Frymer hopes to correct is that the United States’ racial system was exclusively a product of the North-South divide over slavery. Although Frymer doesn’t dispute slavery’s importance, he argues that the racial conflicts caused by the nation’s westward expansion were equally significant and produced much more agreement among white Americans. Unlike questions of slavery and abolition, which split the union apart between 1861 and 1865, whites everywhere accepted the desirability of replacing Indians in Florida and the West with white majority populations or—in the case of southern planters looking to expand slave-based monoculture into Missouri and Texas—with white-dominated populations of enslaved African Americans. Finally, Frymer takes issue with the tendency in the APD literature to minimize the United States’ long and brutal “engagement with Native Americans.” “Native Americans,” he writes, “were pivotal actors who forced the American state to strengthen their [sic] institutional commitments, revise their founding warrants, and innovate governing authority” (278). They need to be part of the story.

While making a persuasive case for the role played by white racism in the United States’ expansion, Frymer shows, in what is probably his most original contribution, how white racism also placed limits on that expansion. From the

Revolution onward, Americans looked south (and north) as well as west and saw parts of Spanish America as potential additions to the union. Places that the United States considered acquiring included Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Nicaragua, Guatemala, and—during the mid-1840s—the northern half of Mexico. As Frymer shows, the debates over whether to acquire these territories were far more hotly contested than is often remembered today. After Winfield Scott occupied Mexico City in 1847, some Americans advocated taking the rest of the union's southern neighbor along with Texas, California, and New Mexico. In explaining why the United States pulled back from such schemes, historians have offered a variety of reasons, from the power of natural borders like the Gulf of Mexico to fears of offending Britain and Europe's other great powers. More than anything else, Frymer argues, it was white racism that kept Cuba and southern Mexico out of the union, and the recognition that white Americans would be a minority in places that were already densely populated. Of the Mexican territories that the United States annexed in 1848, only New Mexico had a substantial Spanish American population. Not coincidentally, Congress waited more than sixty years to admit it to the union. Similar calculations lay behind the federal government's willingness to annex Hawai'i as a potential state in 1898 while relegating the Philippines to a "foreign" dependency (269). Hawai'i appeared ripe for white settlement; the Philippines, not so much.

Writing a synthesis like this is not easy. Frymer is to be congratulated for pulling together so much disparate material and crafting a coherent narrative. As can happen with a synthesis on such a grand scale, however, his larger claims occasionally sit uneasily with the particularities of the evidence being used to support them. Ironically, the overarching category of whiteness is one such area. In the book's introduction and conclusion, Frymer presents whiteness as stable and fixed. In the main body, the category comes off as more fluid and porous. Spanish Americans and mixed race Native Americans, we learn, were occasionally defined as white, even as Europeans, including Catholics, Jews, Italians, Spaniards, French, and (according to Benjamin Franklin) Germans, were sometimes classified as nonwhite. I also wondered about the relationship between whiteness and cultural categories like civility and Christianity. Sometimes the language of whiteness was a language of racial supremacy, but it could also denote other, more culturally-inflected hierarchies. Not for nothing did the term WASP, acronym for the narrower, more specific category White Anglo Saxon Protestant, once occupy the emotional center of American bigotry.

Hovering over questions like these is the existential question of whether, at least in the United States, the categories of race and nation were (or are) necessarily conjoined. Frymer appears to believe that the answer is yes. "The idea and ideal of a nation of white settlers," he writes on the book's final page, "remains embedded in our [i.e., Americans'] understanding of the nation" (281). True enough. Is it, however, the whole truth? In his hugely influential study

Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism, Benedict Anderson insisted that the nation did not originate as an inherently racial formation and has always had the potential to be a bulwark against race-based hierarchies and exclusions, especially when deployed by subaltern peoples seeking to create their own postcolonial nations.¹ Without for a moment doubting the depressing accuracy of the story that Frymer tells, I would have liked to see some discussion of Anderson's alternative. What, for example, was the idea of the nation used by white humanitarians who criticized Indian removal during the 1830s? Did they accept the white settler nation ideal? Or did they have a different, more inclusive vision? And what about Native Americans? What did their imagined communities look like, and how did those communities relate to the community of the United States?

As Frymer notes in the book's closing pages, we are currently in a moment when ethno-nationalist ideas are once again in the ascendant—most clearly on the Right but at times on the Left as well—so passing over questions like these is perhaps understandable. As it is, Paul Frymer has written one of the best available accounts of the United States' long and troubled history as a white settler nation. For anyone wanting to know why that particular form of nationalism continues to resonate so forcefully today, *Building an American Empire* should be required reading.

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GRETCHEN HEEFNER

After Armies: Lessons in Occupation

Susan L. Carruthers. *The Good Occupation: American Soldiers and the Hazards of Peace*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016. 400 pp. \$29.95 (hardcover).

The Good Occupation is one of those books that you are surprised hadn't already been written. Fortunately, Susan Carruthers has elegantly and capably taken it on. Indeed, though there is no shortage of books on World War Two, little has been written about the "after armies," the men and women left to clean up the mess of war. According to Carruthers, the postwar occupations of Japan and Germany have become little more than "hollow abstractions," defined by the same mythical "goodness" that has long marked descriptions of American involvement in World War Two. Her goal is to correct that

1. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism* (London, 1983).