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Contents

Editors' Note	v
Articles	
Divided Loyalties in a "Predatory War": Plantation Overseers and Slavery during the American Revolution LAURA SANDY	357
"All America Is a Prison": The Nation of Islam and the Politicization of African American Prisoners, 1955–1965 ZOE COLLEY	393
More Than a Passive Interest NIALL PALMER	417
"The Beauty of Other Horizons": Sartorial Self-Fashioning in Claude McKay's <i>Banjo: A Story without a Plot</i> Graeme Abernethy	445
Creeping Forest and (Dis)Placed Bodies: Relocating Racial Trauma in Angelina Weld Grimké's "Blackness" and "Goldie" LINDSEY PHILLIPS	461
Transcendental Democracy: Ralph Waldo Emerson's Political Thought, the Legacy of Federalism, and the Ironies of America's Democratic Tradition Benjamin E. Park	481
The International Dimension of the Federal Constitution Tom Cutterham	501
Whither Industrial Democracy? The Federal Government and Organized Labour in the Telegraph Industry during the First World War STEVEN PARFITT	517
Thinking about Empire: The Administration of Ulysses S. Grant, Spanish Colonialism and the Ten Years' War in Cuba Andrew Priest	541
US Seizure, Exploitation, and Restitution of Saddam Hussein's Archive of Atrocity BRUCE P. MONTGOMERY	559

l Mo	oral Issues	595
nd S	ocial/Political/Economic	613
r and	d Diplomacy	639
		657
657	of an Exceptional Concept in American Foreign Relations Victoria W. Wolcott, Race, Riots, and Roller Coasters: The Struggle over Segregated	671
659	Recreation in America Landon R. Y. Storrs, The Second Red Scare and the Unmaking of the	673
661	John Burnham (ed.), <i>After Freud Left:</i> A Century of Psychoanalysis in America Darryl Jones, Elizabeth McCarthy, and	675 677
662	the 1950s! Popular Culture, Popular Anxieties	678
664	Damion L. Thomas, Globetrotting: African American Athletes and Cold War Politics Zoe A. Colley, Ain't Scared of Your Jail:	680
665	Rights Movement	682
667	Madison and the New Left in the Sixties Timothy Melley, The Covert Sphere:	684
668	Security State Cathy Schlund-Vials, War, Genocide, and Justice: Cambodian American Memory	685
670	Work Georgiana Banita, Plotting Justice: Narrative Ethics and Literary Culture after 9/11	686 688
	1 Modern And See All Materials And See All Materials And See All Materials And See All Materials And See All And S	657 Foreign Relations Victoria W. Wolcott, Race, Riots, and Roller Coasters: The Struggle over Segregated Recreation in America Landon R. Y. Storrs, The Second Red Scare and the Unmaking of the New Deal Left 661 John Burnham (ed.), After Freud Left: A Century of Psychoanalysis in America Darryl Jones, Elizabeth McCarthy, and 662 Bernice M. Murphy (eds.), It Came from the 1950s! Popular Culture, Popular Anxieties 664 Damion L. Thomas, Globetrotting: African American Athletes and Cold War Politics Zoe A. Colley, Ain't Scared of Your Jail: Arrest, Imprisonment, and the Civil Rights Movement Matthew Levin, Cold War University: Madison and the New Left in the Sixties Timothy Melley, The Covert Sphere: Secrecy, Fiction, and the National Security State Cathy Schlund-Vials, War, Genocide, and Justice: Cambodian American Memory Work Georgiana Banita, Plotting Justice: Narrative

Electronic content

Roundtable: Fredrik Logevall, *Embers of War: The Fall of an Empire and the Making of America's Vietnam*Edward Miller, Jessica M. Chapman, Louisa Rice,
Matthew Masur, Fredrik Logevall

Anna Mae Duane, Suffering Childhood in Early America: Violence, Race, and the Making of the Child Victim Angela Sorby, Monika Elbert

Exclusive Online Reviews

The following reviews are freely available in the online version of this issue at www.journals.cambridge.org/ams

- Jamie Harker, Middlebrow Queer: Christopher Isherwood in America
- M. Carmen Gómez-Galisteo, Early Visions and Representations of America: Alvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca's Naufragios and William Bradford's Of Plymouth Plantation
- Robert J. Cook, William L. Barney, and Elizabeth R. Varon, Secession Winter: When the Union Fell Apart
- Jacob Rama Berman, American Arabesque: Arabs, Islam, and the 19th-Century Imaginary
- Christine L. Ridarsky and Mary M. Huth (eds.), Susan B. Anthony and the Struggle for Equal Rights
- Natalie J. Ring, The Problem South: Region, Empire, and the New Liberal State, 1880–1930
- David E. Nye, America's Assembly Line Thomas Doherty, Hollywood and Hitler, 1933–1939
- Susanne Hamscha, The Fiction of America: Performance and the Cultural Imaginary in Literature and Film
- Aaron Lecklider, Inventing the Egghead: The Battle over Brainpower in American Culture
- Michael R. Auslin, Pacific Cosmopolitans: A Cultural History of U.S.-Japan Relations
- T. Austin Graham, The Great American Songbooks: Musical Texts, Modernism, and the Value of Popular Culture
- Karen Kuo, East Is West and West Is East: Gender, Culture, and Interwar

- Encounters between Asia and
- Karen L. Cox (ed.), Destination Dixie:
 Tourism and Southern History
- Nancy Beck Young, Why We Fight: Congress and the Politics of World War II
- Robert L. Fleegler, Ellis Island Nation: Immigration Policy and American Identity in the Twentieth Century
- Thomas Devine, Henry Wallace's 1948 Presidential Campaign and the Future of Postwar Liberalism
- Lawrence J. Friedman, assisted by Anke M. Schreiber, *The Lives of Erich Fromm:* Love's Prophet
- Inger Stole, Advertising at War: Business, Consumers, and Government in the 1940s
- Neil Verma, Theater of the Mind: Imagination, Aesthetics, and American Radio Drama
- Ana Sobral, Opting Out: Deviance and Generational Identities in American Postwar Cult Fiction
- Robert E. Terrill (ed.), The Cambridge Companion to Malcolm X
- Min Hyoung Song, The Children of 1965: On Writing, and Not Writing, as an Asian American
- William G. Howell with David Milton Brent, Thinking about the Presidency: The Primacy of Power
- Mérida Rúa, À Grounded Identidad: Making New Lives in Chicago's Puerto Rican Neighborhoods
- Alison R. Holmes and J. Simon Rofe (eds.), *The Embassy in Grosvenor*

Square: American Ambassadors to the United Kingdom, 1938–2008 Andrew Taylor and Aine Kelly (eds.), Stanley Cavell, Literature, and Film: The Idea of America Tessa Roynon, The Cambridge Introduction to Toni Morrison

Caroline B. Brettell and Deborah
Reed-Danahay, Civic Engagements:
The Citizenship Practices of Indian &
Vietnamese Immigrants
Michael P. Jeffries, Paint the White House
Black: Barack Obama and the Meaning of
Race in America

Editors' Note

From discussions of antilynching legislation to nineteenth-century stage practice, the question of morality underpins the articles in this issue of the journal. We feature articles ranging from the politicization of African American prisoners to a critique Claude McKay's *Banjo: A Story without a Plot*, as well as essays on empire, organized labour, and Ralph Waldo Emerson.

The first five articles in the issue consider morality from the perspective of race and racial trauma in the United States, from the American Revolution to the Cold War, with essays by Zoe Colley, Niall Palmer, Graeme Abernethy, Lindsay Phillips, and Laura Sandy. Contributions by Benjamin Park, Tom Cutterham, and Stephen Parfitt invite us to consider how the theoretical underpinnings of the US political narrative can carve out a space to consider questions of morality in wartime and in diplomatic context, as in the examination by Andrew Priest of empire and colonialism and by Bruce Montgomery of Saddam Hussein's archive of atrocity.

Andrew Wroe et al. consider politics through the "culture war" and the polarization of American sentiment on moral issues, while Cynthia Patterson's theoretical approach to nineteenth-century ladies' magazines provides an alternative cultural interpretation of performative morality.

In the review section, we feature roundtable discussions of two prizewinning books on American foreign relations. On the print side, Ann-Marie Wilson, David Hollinger, and Steven Miller give their views on Andrew Preston's Sword of the Spirit, Shield of Faith, an epic account of the influence that religion has had on America's role in the world. On the electronic side, Ed Miller, Jessica Chapman, Louisa Rice, and Matt Masur analyse Fredrik Logevall's Embers of War, which offers a detailed examination of the first Vietnam war and charts the way that the US came to be involved in what was, effectively, a nationalist struggle against European colonialism. Following on from Embers of War, Angela Sorby and Monika Elbert examine Anna Mae Duane's Suffering Childhood: Violence, Race, and the Making of the Child Victim, which uncovers the pivotal role constructions of childhood played in early US formulations of race and nationhood.