

though disappointing, attempts by Herbert Calvert to create an autonomous industrial colony in Kuzbass in Siberia in the early 1920s, Jacob depicts how hundreds of American workers attempted to fulfill their dream to “experience true communism” in Soviet Russia (152).

The story of the modernist architect Hannes Meyer and his experience with German Communist exiles in Mexico in the 1940s, analyzed by Georg Leidenberger, reveals the link between economic and political push factors in the creation of exile communities and how this affected the perception and the relationship with the host country. Leidenberger also shows the negative impact that internal ideological warfare—in this case between Trotskyists and Stalinists—had on the community of political exiles. The same divisions deeply affected the life in exile in America of two important members of the German labor movement: Rosi Wolfstein and Paul Frölich. Riccardo Altieri draws on their correspondence in his contribution to underline, once again, the methodological relevance of using biographies to reconstruct and examine transnational networks. In the final contribution, Kefler shows the influences that the experience of exile had on the life and ideas of the political scientist and futurologist Ossip K. Flechtheim.

It is likely that the variety of themes addressed in this volume will, as hoped by Jacob and Kefler, stimulate further interest in the transnational perspective of studies of radicalism (252).

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EVA-MARIE KRÖLLER. *Writing the Empire: The McIlwraiths, 1853–1948*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2021. Pp. 536. \$110.00 (cloth).
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Through her intricately woven cross-generational history of a single empire family, the Scottish McIlwraiths, *Writing the Empire: The McIlwraiths, 1853–1948*, Eva-Marie Kröller expertly demonstrates the roles and meanings of family and the transimperial networks that nineteenth-century families accumulated. In doing so, Kröller shows how the “practical assistance and emotional support” of such networks supported imperial projects (141). Each of the seven chapters and the conclusion takes the reader to a different node of the continuously evolving and expanding McIlwraith family network, in a “prosopography” that moves between their experiences in specific settler colonial contexts, and the literary and cultural productions that arose from travel and business within these varied spaces (10). The McIlwraith biographies, careers, movements, and materials are rich enough in places to draw out the complex interconnectedness primarily of histories of Britain, Australia, Canada, and the United States, but they are sufficiently elusive in others to suggest the limitations of the colonial archive and the genealogical creativity that researchers require to build up the chronicles of a family. Kröller shows that with “intensely populated archival islands” come equally “extensive waters of biographical silence,” giving voice to both the rewards and frustrations encountered by historians as they laboriously piece back together fragmented family histories, and follow fragile archival traces in public record offices and private repositories (170).

Writing the Empire sits within two logical and significant dates in the McIlwraith history, 1853, the year of the first emigrations of the family to Melbourne and Ontario, and 1948, which marked the eventual publication of Cambridge anthropologist T. F. McIlwraith’s *The Bella Coola Indians* and his interactions with the Nuxalk peoples. The first substantial episode brings out the complicated relationship between the British metropole and its rebellious settler colonies, pushing against dichotomies of colonizer and colonized to reveal the

multiple agendas at stake in the enlargement of the British world, justified through racial “extinction” theories and the demand for commodities and labor (50, 61). Immediately the reader is thrust into Kröller’s adept blending of official and private written sources in the episode relating to Sir Thomas McIlwraith’s attempted annexation of New Guinea in the 1880s, and the related “paper mounds” that accompanied this audacious political decision made as premier of Queensland (45). In the years between these dates, Kröller explores the intersecting networks of the middle-class but socially ambitious McIlwraiths with other empire families and the imperial nobility, largely through networking, education, and travel in Europe. This mobility brought them into contact with the granddaughters of the Marquess of Dufferin and Ava, and others, shaping their consciousness of the elite worlds of Canada, New Zealand, India, and South Africa. In later chapters that shift into the First World War and postwar contexts, Kröller suggests that war was also generative for the McIlwraiths in the creation of new and the growth of existing networks, despite the precariousness of wartime mails and cumbersome protocols of censorship (303–5).

Through these varied and rich McIlwraith micro-histories, Kröller makes three compelling arguments in the fields of colonial, postcolonial, and global history, which have in recent years lent increasing emphasis upon family, domesticity, and intimacy as modes and tools of imperial power and social mobility. She prioritizes family as the foundation of imperial enterprise, providing an emotional and financial resource for individuals as they broke out into new territories during their imperial careers. She also illustrates the importance of network theory to empire studies by reconstructing the meaningful economic, professional, and social benefits accrued from the attention the McIlwraiths devoted to kin and friendship networks, through calling, writing, recording visits, and advantageous marriage and business arrangements (73). Finally, and most strikingly, Kröller reveals the McIlwraiths’ copious writing and publishing activities that grew and maintained these extensive networking practices, drawing out the ways members were encouraged from youth to participate in the multi-media, interdisciplinary, and cross-genre writing and chronicling efforts of the family, that “continually recapitulated” and confirmed their identity as an imperial family (4).

Moving effortlessly between parliamentary papers, press reports, and other documentation in the imperial bureaucratic machine, Kröller highlights the blurry distinctions between the “imperial family and the personal family” in the inflections that political events gave to the family correspondence (4). Each phase of the McIlwraith family history was so deeply embedded in imperialistic and patriotic allegiance to Britain and the dominions that such networks, Kröller explains, were thus highly exclusive, registering gender, class, and racial difference, which served to tighten the boundaries of the family at the same time these webs were rapidly stretching across empire (324). Kröller shows most effectively how the McIlwraith children were socialized into these imperial vocabularies and mentalities through engendering habits of writing. Selective reading patterns and fervent interests in empire literature such as that of Kipling, and an inculcated culture of writing and editing, prepared the McIlwraiths for more substantial engagements with the “written taxonomies” through which colonial society was managed, conceptualized, and surveyed (21, 68). Male and female McIlwraiths were participants in collective writing schemes in which a collaboratively produced “family album,” diaries, and correspondence often complemented the family’s scientific, specifically ornithological and anthropological, research and their strong links to New York publishing houses.

Kröller herself has worked tirelessly across a staggering array of archival collections, entering into fruitful collaboration with family descendants and archivists. She provides an exemplary methodological framework for other researchers to replicate, in the daunting tasks of recovering the relatively obscure middle-class families who propped up empire. As more imperial families come to light, Kröller’s masterful study will provide a crucial reference point for the productivity of family and biographical histories. It will provoke further understanding of the mapping and expansion of the British Empire through familial and affective networks,

that were led and protected by the men, women, and children who kept up an often indefatigable flow of correspondences. Through this intense examination of the McIlwraith family, Kröller has attested powerfully to the dependence of empires on the profuse writing and networking energies of British families, and the intimacies that structured these regimes.

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JOANNA MARTIN. *Georgina Weldon: The Fearless Life of a Victorian Celebrity*. Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2021. Pp. 488. \$39.95 (cloth).
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In *Georgina Weldon: The Fearless Life of a Victorian Celebrity*, Joanna Martin offers a vivid and balanced encounter with her extraordinary subject: performer, teacher, entrepreneur, and terror of the legal profession, Georgina Weldon (1837–1914). Martin, a descendent of Weldon's brother, took possession of her subject's archive, including twenty-four journals and unpublished memoirs, and she privileges these primary sources in her narrative. As such, Martin is able to provide a fuller and more nuanced account than have earlier biographers, which largely based their work on Weldon's published writings and secondary material.

Georgina Weldon, née Thomas, was born into a comfortable family with society connections, although her parents displayed some unconventional attitudes that may have helped shape their daughter's outlook. Despite her talent and desire for a singing career, Weldon was expected to conform to the typical Victorian pathway of marriage and motherhood. Pursued by a number of suitors, she chose Harry Weldon, a charming but feckless army officer. Following a stillbirth early in the marriage, Weldon was unable to sustain a further pregnancy, and the journal entries offer fascinating insights into a nineteenth-century woman's perspectives on fertility and the trials of managing a household on a limited income.

As her marriage proved increasingly unsatisfying, Weldon directed her energies toward the arts, performing at recitals and concerts. She planned to open a music school, taking on orphans for instruction and holding concerts to raise money for the enterprise. Weldon developed an intense relationship with French composer Charles Gounod, in which she acted variously as his agent, muse, caregiver, and—in the eyes of the press, at least—mistress. Weldon's involvement with the legal system, with which she had already had some experience, intensified as she supported the composer's claims against his English publishers. When her own relationship with Gounod broke down, Weldon brought disputes against him over copyright. This pattern was repeated in other relationships, notably with concert organizer Jules Rivière; Weldon's one-time business partner Anacharsis Ménier; and her companion Angèle Ménier. Time and again Weldon formed attachments, developing grand artistic and business schemes with an individual and offering emotional and financial support before falling out with them and seeking redress through the courts.

Weldon's fiercest legal battles concerned her husband's attempts to have her committed to an insane asylum in 1878. Martin describes the steps involved in this process and Weldon's measures to counter it in precise and often chilling detail. What becomes clear is Weldon's vulnerability to such an accusation, not only for her supposedly unconventional lifestyle but also for the use of her voice in public to air personal grievances. Weldon reimagined herself as an instrument of reform, thereby initiating the period of her greatest celebrity—as author, as advocate, as litigant. Seeking compensation through the courts against the doctors who would have her committed, Weldon also published accounts of her experience and delivered