

United States, establishing a fresh and important methodology for the study of Civil War memory.

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Edward Sugden (ed.), *Crossings in Nineteenth-Century American Literature: Junctures of Time, Space, Self, and Politics* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2022, \$110.00). Pp. 272. ISBN 978 1 4744 7628 7.

The essays in Edward Sugden's edited collection *Crossings in Nineteenth-Century American Literature: Junctures of Time, Space, Self, and Politics* are interested in the historical specificity of selves in crisis and the way those crises erupted in moments of crossing, exchange, and juncture in the nineteenth-century United States. Rather than reaching back into the nineteenth century to locate the roots of what Sugden calls biopolitical liberal modernity – underpinned by the notion of a coherent, embodied self – the volume offers careful expositions of the range of ways in which nineteenth-century selves are unintelligible within today's taxonomies of identity and works to define new terms by which we might come to know them. The people, places, and ideas in this study are united by their shared excesses, their disjointedness, their refusals of binary oppositions. This is not, in other words, a history of the inevitable consolidation of liberal individualism, but rather a speculative exploration of alternative possibilities, ruptures, and conflicts that surfaced during the period that many look to as a point of origin for the anchoring concepts of our present political landscape.

The book is organized thematically and divided into four parts. Part I, "Elsewheres," offers examples of historical figures attempting to place their ideas of the self within shifting material contexts. For Cody Marrs, this means exploring the ways in which Frederick Douglass's canonical writings exceed their rootedness in US American print culture and its terrestrial reach, whereas for Gordon Fraser, a growing awareness of the universe beyond Earth is foundational to the operations of national and local politics and the print discourse that upholds it. Rachel Heffner-Burns, meanwhile, reads Walt Whitman as a poet whose attempts to exceed the materiality of print result not in a rejection of the physical world but rather in a richer sense of human embodiment. These essays, though they differ substantially in method and argument, and in moments productively contradict one another's core premises, demonstrate that the question of the material body's embeddedness in its contexts – textual, terrestrial, political – was a live and deeply unsettled issue for nineteenth-century writers.

Part II, "Excess Identities," focusses on the ways certain nineteenth-century expressions of gender, race, and nationality exceed our contemporary notions of identity's political contours. Leigh Johnson points out that Latinx soldier Loreta Janeta Velazquez's gender fluidity is part of the same set of impulses that leads her to join the Confederate army, frustrating our contemporary desire to align queer identities with liberatory political formations. Likewise, Spencer Tricker looks to the example of David Fagen – a black American who defected to the Philippine army during the Philippine–American war – as cause to "resist the methodological urge ... to celebrate Fagen's defection as a luminous instance of Afro-Asian solidarity contra US imperial

subjecthood" (74). For Hannah Lauren Murray, even dominant identity categories break down in moments of crossing, as she reads Robert Montgomery Bird's *The Adventures of Robin Day* as a meditation on the fragile status of whiteness in a transforming United States. From here, Michael Jonik's essay on Thoreau zooms out from ruptures of individual identity onto the breakdown of individuality itself as an ethically or politically useful concept. Jonik reads through the works of Henry David Thoreau to arrive at the insight that collective agency "does not mean diminished responsibility but quite the opposite: it calls for an ethics and a politics worthy of the complexities of relations that we shape and that shape us" (118). Jonik recuperates some of the utopian premises that the other essays reject, insisting that the breakdown of the self is less a crisis than an opportunity for a more energetic investment in the collective. Taken together, these essays reckon with the way charismatic historical figures often frustrate our attempts to extract broad political lessons from the archival traces they leave behind, and hold space for both the optimistic and potentially threatening possibilities that extend from recognizing the limits of looking to archives to reverse engineer contemporary political formations and identity categories.

The essays in Part III, "Chance Encounters," look at what happens when people from different social, national, and political worlds meet in unexpected ways. Marisa López's essay on how Julia Pastrana's teeth made it into the collections of the Hunterian Museum takes up this question in terms of transhistorical and transnational storytelling, looking at an act of British collecting as a function of a US rejection of Mexicanness that persists today. Erin C. Singer conceives of Maria Gowen Brooks's famous encounter with Robert Southey as one node along a vast circuit of transnational, generic, gendered, and linguistic crossings that usefully troubles mainstream histories of Romanticism. Bridget Bennett, too, is interested in how one encounter is really better understood as a plurality of crossings, when she reconsiders a meeting between the British merchant Wilson Armistead and Thomas Jones, a fugitive from slavery. Bennett's is a gripping example of how imaginative acts of historical storytelling can expand the offerings of traditional archives, a methodological commitment that is implicit in the commitments of many of the essays in this collection, but that the scholarship in Part III demonstrates in particularly elegant ways.

The final section, "Impossible Systems," takes up similar questions to Part II, examining how systems and institutions that seem to be built on opposing premises come together in unexpected ways. For Tomos Hughes, this means thinking together slavery and free-market capitalism by rereading "Bartleby the Scrivener" as a story about wage slavery. Mark Storey troubles the opposition between classicism and modernity through a close reading of an 1889 issue of *Puck* magazine, in which ancient Rome, the antebellum South, and Gilded Age New York "collapse into one another in an apocalyptic now" (12), troubling teleologies that celebrate the classical roots of US democracy. Cécile Roudeau, meanwhile, insists that there is no inherent contradiction between investments in the power of the nation-state and the idea of democratic freedom; for Roudeau, James Fennimore Cooper's *The Last of the Mohicans* is thus best understood not as a critique of the state's incursions on personal liberty, but as an exploration of the democratic possibilities of statehood. Jared Hickman, likewise interested in the genre of historical romance, looks at the ways Irish American novelist James McHenry uses stories of seventeenth-century Ireland to justify the exertion of settler colonial power in the nineteenth-century United States. By telling stories of different settler societies across time and geography, McHenry insists upon the inevitability of colonial dominance. For Hickman, Storey, and Hughes, such stories of

inevitability are a compensatory response to the ruptures and upheavals of a fragile and ever-shifting political landscape.

Perhaps most urgently at stake in the volume is a methodological question: how much weight should we give to the material and literal dimensions of identity formation, especially when it comes at the expense of more figurative, abstract, and potentially redemptive forms of identification. In some essays, the impulse to set the historical against the universal feels forced, or like a misreading of the commitments of transcendentalism. The best essays in the volume, however, offer a model for how to bring together the most useful elements of scholarship that is attentive to material and historical specificity with big ambitious questions. The resulting collection is an invigorating and satisfying scholarly conversation that challenges traditional accounts of teleological consolidation of US American selfhood, nationhood, temporality, and politics, and demonstrates that scholarly accounts of the nineteenth century can be as various, unsettled, nuanced, and open to productive contradictions as the period and culture in question. If there are conflicting methods, scopes, timelines, and political commitments in this book, it is because these essays and the collection that houses them do justice to the complexity and richness of their period of study.

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Simon P. Newman, *Freedom Seekers: Escaping from Slavery in Restoration London* (London: University of London Press, 2022, £12.00). Pp. 250. ISBN 978 1 9127 0293 0.

Scholars of transatlantic slavery use fugitive slave advertisements to piece together stories of resistance. This worthwhile pursuit is even more impressive in understudied cities like the European metropolises. Simon P. Newman's *Freedom Seekers: Escaping from Slavery in Restoration London* unpacks slavery and bondage in seventeenth-century England through these popular newspaper documents. This research upends our understanding of how pro-slavery print culture like fugitive advertisements developed. Until now, these announcements were understood as an invention of the colonies, but Newman reveals that this newspaper practice was exported from Europe to the Atlantic colonies. The birth of the runaway slave advertisement in London "provides telling evidence of a much deeper and more direct English engagement in the construction of racial slavery than historians have appreciated" (xxvii). *Freedom Seekers* reveals a new precedent of the print technology, but also underlines the connections between London and the colonial projects of the Caribbean, Chesapeake, and New England in the early modern Atlantic world.

While scholars of the colonies and cultural exchange have successfully pushed against the one-way flow of information from Europe to "New World," Newman reasserts that line and with good reason. His research positions fugitive slave advertisements as an English invention. The first advertisement unearthed dates from 1655 London and begins a data set of almost two hundred fugitive slave advertisements ending in 1704. This pre-dates printing in the colonies of Barbados, South Carolina, Jamaica, and Virginia, with their emerging slave economies. Until now, scholars working with fugitive slave advertisements had cited a 1704 advertisement in Boston as the first in the English, Atlantic world. This new set of British late