

Orleans that ranged from efforts to secure Mexico's independence to "the Faget sign," the unusual pairing of fever with slow heart rate—a method still used to diagnose yellow fever (p. 168).

The book provides at least three important historiographical correctives. Bell shows that the allegation that Louis-Michel Aury engaged in slave trading is thinly sourced but was amplified by James Monroe and John Quincy Adams for political purposes. She also emphasizes that Creoles of color in New Orleans praised the leadership of Haitian president Alexandre Pétion rather than Toussaint Louverture, Henri Christophe, or Jean-Jacques Dessalines. Finally, Bell notes that Gen. Benjamin Butler promoted "François [a misspelling of Francis] Ernest Dumas" to the rank of major two years before Martin Delany; that Butler commissioned a majority of the war's Black officers and the only ones to hold field command, all from the Louisiana Native Guard's 1st Regiment of Afro-Creole soldiers; and that Gen. Nathaniel Banks purged almost all these officers and arrested sympathetic white officers once he took over in New Orleans (p. 278n27).

Historians are sometimes tempted to conflate republicanism, abolitionism, racial liberalism (including support for integration and interracial marriage), French Romanticism, universalist Catholicism, spiritualism, and an attitude of hospitality as ideas that flowed into one another. At times they did, as St. Mary's Catholic Church maintained an integrated congregation until the Civil War, and the news editors of the *New Orleans l'Union* saw many of these ideas as connected and the Civil War as the opportunity to fulfill the promise of the age of revolutions. As Bell acknowledges, however, figures such as Pierre Soulé "eventually chose political expediency over humanitarian and political ideals," and Hélène Allain's immediate family joined their cousins in New Orleans only because of impending abolition in Jamaica (p. 233).

This book is a vital contribution to the histories of civil rights in the nineteenth-century Americas, migration and family identity, racism and the U.S. military, and the French Atlantic. Chapter 6 ("Les Docteurs") would also

work particularly well in an undergraduate class on the history of medicine.

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*Transoceanic Blackface: Empire, Race, Performance.* By Kellen Hoxworth. (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2024. x, 278 pp. Cloth, \$100.00. Paper, \$36.00.)

In setting studies of blackface minstrelsy within historiography, scholars have had a broad choice. They can align themselves with an older, history-based analysis, best represented by Robert Toll and Alexander Saxton, which depicted blackface as one of America's most shameful expressions of a long commitment to white supremacy. Or they can use a newer, musicology-inflected and theory-forward approach, headed by Eric Lott, Dale Cockrell, and W. T. Lhamon, which sees blackface as authentic Black music, arising from America's democratic culture of racial intermingling and committed to rebellion against bourgeois elitism. At first glance, Kellen Hoxworth appears to have followed neither path. Instead, *Transoceanic Blackface* accuses all these scholars of "American exceptionalism."

In this sense, American exceptionalism means using American sources, locating the topic within the silo of U.S. history, or simply talking about America. To correct this approach, Hoxworth shifts their research and analysis to a global context, or at least to the Anglophone globe of the British Empire. Hoxworth argues, convincingly, that blackface served both as pedagogy for understanding social relations of imperialism and as part of the "furniture" of empire. Its lessons, coded in plantation melodies, earthy dialect, and grotesque caricatures of ethnic otherness, offered theatrical evidence that colonized nonwhites were inferior, incapable of self-government, and happiest when subjugated. Blackface provided familiarity, a kind of racist safe space in the tense world of empire building.

Hoxworth's narrative is more geographical than historical. The book's five chapters

trace blackface from England and the United States to outposts of the British Empire. In the book's approach to blackface sources, Hoxworth makes what is possibly the most valuable contribution to the field. Instead of limiting the study to musical material, much of the research is "scriptive blackface"—blackface-inflected images in plays, broadsides, and prints. These sources greatly expand the subject's archive and scope. As early as 1759, the playwright James Townley featured a host of blackface characters in *High Life below Stairs*, a comedy on the antics of household staff. Decades before New York City theater audiences flocked to Thomas D. Rice's performance of the character Jim Crow, the English stage had blackface characters such as Mungo, Cubba, and Cuffy. Meanwhile, lithograph imagery, including the many "Bobolition 'Siety" broadsides of the time, targeted abolitionists for cruel caricature and provided a host of blackface dandies and hypersexualized Black males.

These blackface stereotypes became stand-ins for local colonized subjects. Here, in another particularly smart move, Hoxworth points out one of the overlooked aspects of blackface: the fungibility of its characters. From the urban Black dandy to the happy plantation slave, blackface figures were more ciphers of otherness than developed human beings. They could be easily swapped out for other ethnicities. By the mid-nineteenth century, theatrical stages in Cape Town, Sydney, and Kolkata could feature performers doing versions of the song (and the dance) *Jump Jim Crow*. In the Dutch Cape Colony, minstrels replaced Jim Crow with Kaatje Kekkelbeck, a female Hot-tentot. Much of the rest of Hoxworth's narrative is a run-through of these local characters, from Bengalee Baboo in India to Bret Harte's Heathen Chinee.

In the end, Hoxworth's analysis comes down on the older side of scholarly debates about blackface. *Transoceanic Blackface* depicts blackface as ardently racist: scriptive or staged, it was proslavery and anti-Black, supportive of Anglophone imperial projects and derogatory toward the empire's nonwhite subjects. Performers and writers invented its characters to denigrate ethnic others and enable a comfortable version of white supremacy in places where this perspective would otherwise be un-

der constant threat. Far from challenging all previous scholarship on blackface as exemplars of American exceptionalism, Hoxworth's global approach ends up as an indictment of scholarship celebrating blackface as a cross-ethnic takedown of "the man." The man of empire building and colonial exploitation was a fan of blackface.

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*The Lost War for Texas: Mexican Rebels, American Burrites, and the Texas Revolution of 1811.* By James Aalan Bernsen. (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2024. xiv, 488 pp. \$75.00.)

James Aalan Bernsen's *The Lost War for Texas* as boldly challenges our understanding of a forgotten insurrection in Spanish Texas and of transnational events of the early American Republic. The Texas Revolution of 1811, comprising the Casas Revolt in San Antonio, followed by a royalist counterrevolution, and the 1812–1813 filibustering Gutiérrez-Magee expedition, has been considered merely a footnote among Texas historians who suffer from "Alamo blindness, the inability to see beyond the brilliant glare of 1836" (p. 3, emphasis in original). Bernsen pushes against the "interventionist narrative" of American foreign policy that denies agency to Tejanos (Mexican Texans) in favor of a "continual narrative" to unveil the entangled histories of Mexico and the United States that involved many diverse actors in the drama of Texas history. His central thesis is that the people behind the Aaron Burr conspiracy of 1806 were the same ones behind the Gutiérrez-Magee Expedition six years later. However, this conflict originated with the "native Tejano rebellion of 1811" that carried the torch of freedom shortly after Father Miquel Hidalgo y Costilla's infamous "Grito de Dolores" for Mexico's independence from Spain, wherein "Americans joined but did not create this revolution" (p. 11, emphasis in original). The author seeks a paradigm shift in rethinking this early episode of a lost war