

author investigates paintings, popular songs, advertisements, and other cultural production. The final section explores racial theories contributing to the “whitening” of Quebec’s population and its embrace of paternalist attitudes towards Blacks (such as through the missionary activities of the Catholic Church).

Gay’s chief strength is his exhaustive research. He draws material from an impressive diversity of sources in both English and French and includes in his corpus everything from visits by nineteenth-century Black American entertainers and abolitionist lecturers (although interestingly, he neglects the celebrated visits of virtuoso American pianist Blind Tom) to stories of Black migrations to rural areas, considered previously as lacking any past Black population. The author also deserves credit for his emphasis on the transnational experience of Quebec’s Blacks and their longstanding links with the Caribbean, the United States, Europe, and Africa.

The work is not without certain drawbacks, in many cases tied up with its benefits. The author’s analysis of iconography is sometimes superficial, and he fails to draw on the rich historiography of slavery and resistance produced by such historians as Kenneth Stampp, Eugene Genovese, Peter Wood, and others. The work also suffers from a lack of coherence and even a certain sloppiness, which dilutes the power of its conclusions. For example, Gay’s statistical reckoning is unclear. Although he convincingly adds to the numbers previously considered, he also reproduces these numbers in future census totals, ignoring the distinct possibility that Blacks present in Quebec during one decade had died or left before the next. Similarly, the author exaggerates the rate of intermarriage by including among his “racially mixed” marriages unions between Blacks and “mulattos”, people who would also be considered Black under the “one drop of blood” rule dominant in North America. The same over-counting occurs on a more symbolic level: on two occasions the author reproduces nineteenth-century paintings of Quebec scenes with Black representation, and each time overstates the number of discernibly Black faces. (One trivial but perhaps indicative error: the author’s name is misspelled as “Guay” on the book’s spine.) Still, the work provides a new and powerful reinterpretation of Black life, and one that rightly moves the racial question back to the centre in the history of Quebec. As an immigrant myself who studies racial minorities, I can only cheer the determination of Gay, who arrived from Haiti in 1971, to sensitize the people of his adopted country to the history in their midst.

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GRAFF, Harvey J., Leslie Page MOCH, and Philip MCMICHAEL (eds.) — *Looking Backward and Looking Forward: Perspectives on Social Science History*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2005. Pp. 235.

At its annual meeting in Pittsburgh in October 2000, the Social Science History Association (SSHA) celebrated its twenty-fifth anniversary by devoting a portion of its programme to reflections on “social science history”. This volume includes

papers and summaries of panel sessions from the conference that essentially fall into two categories: those that focus on the SSHA as an institution and social science history as a field of study; and those that showcase social science history research. It is a curious mix, but one that helps to illuminate important developments in the field of social history in the United States.

As the editors note in their introduction, the SSHA appeared at a particular moment in the interstices between modern social sciences and the humanities. By the early 1970s higher education was expanding, new disciplines were emerging, and history seemed hobbled by “traditional” and “narrative” approaches. Harvey J. Graff, who was president of the SSHA in 2000, offers a thoughtful reflection on the evolution of the organization and a spirited defence of a field that he has played a major role in shaping. He makes it clear that one just had to be there to understand how exciting it was to be engaged in laying the foundations for the new social science history with its emphasis on interdisciplinarity, quantitative methods, collaborative practices, theoretical rigour, and relevance to contemporary issues. It was also a heady experience to be on the receiving end of denunciations from those who were less enamoured of the methodological approaches and political stances of the “new histories”.

A quarter of a century later, the SSHA, social science history, and the once “new” social history movement of which both were a part are under attack, their disruptive potential reputedly spent or compromised. Graff is quick to point out that social science history and the new social history are not synonymous or interchangeable; nor are they fixed categories. Change, flexibility, and pluralism, he argues, are characteristic features of the SSHA. In its early years, the association privileged quantification, but never exclusively so, and was always open to other “new histories” as they arose. This is confirmed by Richard H. Steckel’s paper, which traces the evolution of the SSHA from a small organization of social science enthusiasts largely from the Northeast and Midwest of the United States to one that included a significant international membership (over 20 per cent in 1999) and supported networks on women, race/ethnicity, religion, and culture and states/societies. As a result, the term “social science history”, which in the 1970s seemed so edgy, may now misrepresent the interests of many of the association’s members, who are increasingly turning to humanist approaches such as literary theory and post-structuralist philosophy.

The success of the SSHA can be traced by the expanding range of its interests, the productivity of its interdisciplinary networks, the growth of its membership, and its role in encouraging the “historical turn” in the social sciences (in 1999 nearly 40 per cent of the presenters on the programme were from disciplines other than history). Nevertheless, several commentators pointed out that they had initially hoped to accomplish much more — nothing less than the total transformation of academic disciplines on the anvil of interdisciplinarity and social change, broadly conceived, through historically grounded research. Daniel Scott Smith suggests that “the main agent of declension was disciplinarity” (p. 66), but it is more than that. In the roundtable on literacy (one of the success stories of interdisciplinary research), Chad Gaffield acknowledges that scholars had failed miserably in convincing policy makers, the media, and educators to abandon the “literacy myths” debunked by the

research community and suggested that they needed to develop more effective ways of communicating research findings (p. 161). Communication is a problem, to be sure, but so, too, is the narrow academic focus that blunts the policy potential of social science research. While those assembled in Pittsburgh in 2000 were enthusiastic about extending their global reach, less interest was expressed in expanding research networks, wherever they were located, to include not only the policy-makers who might mobilize research findings to practical ends, but also the people being researched, who could benefit directly by reflecting on their condition. In Canada the success of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council's Community-University Research Alliances (CURA) programme suggests that there are ways of conducting research that might help the SSHA to regain some of its earlier missionary zeal.

Policy-driven research must also be delivered in a timely fashion. One of the strengths of this volume is the inclusion of essay-length pieces — Daniel Segal's deconstruction of world history texts to expose their inherent Western bias; James Z. Lee's (with Richard Steckel) exploration of demography and family history; Michael K. Brown's reflection on changing conceptions of race and racial inequality; and Richard Biernacki's analysis of space and place — but they were written in 2000 and therefore lack references to relevant sources published in the following five years. These essays should have been in our hands much sooner. Ultimately, of course, this book, like the association that generated it, is a reflection of a particular moment in history and, as such, is a splendid record of "the way we were" at beginning of a new millennium.

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HARVEY, Karen — *Reading Sex in the Eighteenth Century: Bodies and Gender in English Erotic Culture*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004. Pp. 261.

In a carefully researched and wide-ranging study of erotic culture in eighteenth-century England, Karen Harvey reveals the links and the tensions between prurience and politeness. Erotica, she argues, absorbed and reflected upon contemporary developments as diverse as the expansion of empire, the popularity of botany, and the growth of a new reading public; it was "firmly embedded in eighteenth-century culture" (p. 222). As a genre, it was distinctly male. Written by men for men and concerned with issues of male power and sexual satisfaction, it valorized certain models of masculinity, particularly that of the man of wit, "the man of the world ... the *bon vivant*, the friend of the fair sex, the bottle and song" (William Hewardine, quoted p. 52).

Harvey is careful in differentiating erotica from pornography. For her, erotica neither refers to all publications dealing with sex, nor is it deemed a better, lighter, less explicit, or less violent precursor to, or variant of, pornography. She also separates it from the often openly erotic amatory fiction of female authors, such as Aphra Behn, Mary Delarivier Manley, and Eliza Haywood. While both amatory fiction and erotica