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*When the Girls Came Out to Play: The Birth of American Sportswear* (review)

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for entertainment. Wild West Shows and circuses not only amused their audiences but also gave them a national vocabulary of shared interests and visions of America, as did the popular dime novels of the late-nineteenth century, the rags to respectability stories of Horatio Alger, and popular western novels such as *The Virginian*. Inexpensive photography further democratized the nation's recreation as even quite modestly-circumstanced individuals could capture their own private and not so private Kodak moments.

Some American intellectuals of the World War I era (the Young Americans) rejected mass culture as corroding cultural sensibilities and dehumanizing. Others embraced it as liberating and democratic. Some European commentators such as W. T. Stead, Matthew Arnold, Max Weber, Maxim Gorky, and Johan Huizinga aired their concerns over the Americanization of culture and its presumed debasement. Others, including Antonio Gramsci, defended American culture and pointed to the Babbitts in European society. For most, however, Americanization had negative connotations threatening European art forms.

The authors conclude their examination of the development of mass culture in the United States and its reception in Europe by calling for a second volume which would consider the importance of the Marshall Plan in exporting U.S. values to war-torn Europe. This book is less about Buffalo Bill in Bologna than about the development of new cultural forms in the United States. There is little on Africa, Latin America, or Asia, so perhaps the authors could consider post-World War II cultural dispersion.

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S. Jay Kleinberg

WHEN THE GIRLS CAME OUT TO PLAY: The Birth of American Sportswear. By Patricia Campbell Warner. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press. 2006.

Patricia Warner's book seeks to "explain the origins of American sportswear, the most important clothing of the twentieth century and beyond" (5). This broad, relatively casual clothing category became a dominant mode of dress for American women following World War II, but in this book it stands for much more than a conventional means of attire. Warner argues that the roots of this style stretch back to the 1860s and that an examination of its development can illuminate many aspects of change in women's roles during the intervening time period.

The type of everyday dress today designated as sportswear grew from a more literal type of sports clothing—clothing that reflected women's increasing participation in athletic activity during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The book describes women's successive involvement in croquet, skating, tennis, swimming, and bicycling during the late 1800s. Warner shows that despite the boundary-bursting implications of women's public participation in such activities, the threat to middle-class Victorian gender ideology was contained by requiring these women to appear in clothing that adhered to the highly gendered, constraining clothing styles of the era. She then describes a separate tradition of female athletics that developed in physical education classes among the growing cohort of women attending college during this period. In private, single-sex settings, more latitude in the development of clothing alternatives was socially permissible. As the humble gym suit evolved it became more practical, physically liberating, and revealing. Eventually, graduates of these institutions transported this practical approach to dress into the world, influencing both the way women dressed and their role in the wider culture.

Warner makes good use of accounts and images from contemporary women's magazines to provide support and some vivid details. The second half of the book makes even more effective use of numerous photographic archives to trace the development of col-

lege women's athletic clothing styles—some previously undocumented in any systematic way.

On the other hand, the book engages virtually none of the scholarship on gender and the history of sport that has emerged in recent decades. Likewise, it does not examine the cultural work of fashion in any depth, preferring to regard its development as a straightforward progression from “clothes for courting” to clothes that were “sensible, practical, and comfortable” (7). Some historians have argued that the influence of collegiate physical education has been overstated because available sources have tended to point researchers in that direction and obscured its limited role in a much broader and more complex re-evaluation of gender roles that occurred at that time. It is not necessarily that Warner's argument could not hold its own against such challenges, but in this book the wider debate goes unacknowledged and the counterarguments unanswered.

Nonetheless, *When The Girls Came Out To Play* provides much new information and many new insights into its subject. It also convincingly supports the contention that clothing can and should be examined as an important vehicle for the expression and transformation of historical gender identities.

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JAZZ ON THE RIVER. By William Howland Kenney. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 2005.

Jazz has not always been “America's classical music.” In the first decades of the twentieth century it was regarded by much of the black and white Establishment as unsettling, provocative, even dangerous—attitudes exacerbated by the social upheaval of the Great Migration around the time of World War I. Enter black riverboat jazz bands to negotiate the color line: to help “white Americans approach in an oblique manner underlying social and cultural changes that were too deep and too heavily laden with pain, guilt, and fear for most citizens to discuss openly” (5). Such is the thesis of *Jazz on the River* by William Howland Kenney, who, like in his earlier studies of Chicago jazz and recorded music, supports his argument with speculative but compelling historical and cultural analyses.

On the riverboat, servings of jazz-accompanied dances were diluted with generous helpings of schottisches, polkas, waltzes. Blues and very slow (or very fast) dancing in general were prohibited, and the carefully-rehearsed, tuxedo-clad musicians read from stock arrangements that left little room for improvisation. Because of these restrictions, riverboat jazz was modified into “a partially tamed adaptation of New Orleans jazz” which “eliminated violence, affirmed the possibility of social order, and offered a promise of racial reconciliation” (81).

Music on the river began early in the nineteenth century with black roustabouts, who, after loading or unloading cargo, entertained packet boat passengers on board between stops. When railroads made packet boats obsolete by the end of the century, excursion boats emerged on the nation's largest waterways in response to the public's fascination with the “swan complex”—a romantic association of river travel with “water, air, whiteness, and graceful feminine movement” (32). Kenney sees riverboat orchestras as refined extensions of roustabout culture and as stimuli to the swan complex.

Chapter One traces the history of the Streckfus family, whose four generations dominated the excursion boat business on the Mississippi and Ohio Rivers until the 1950s. Although dance bands played on Streckfus steamers as early as 1901, the hiring of Fate Marable, a light-skinned, hard-drinking pianist from Paducah, Kentucky, as band leader