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*Jazz on the River* (review)

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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

in 1907 was to make history. From 1917 until 1940, Marable, the topic of Chapter Two, ran a waterborne jazz “conservatory” for black musicians that emphasized music literacy and professional discipline. Louis Armstrong, Marable’s most famous “graduate” and the subject of Chapter Three, became, for three summers (1919–1921), “the focus of a highly symbolic cultural struggle between oral and literate approaches to musical performance” (75). Subsequent chapters investigate the musical cultures of Memphis and St. Louis; the riverboat careers of Bix Beiderbecke and Jess Stacey; riverboat jazz on the Ohio; and the decline of jazz on the river. Appendices include exhaustive lists of excursion boat musicians and river songs and tunes.

The book is well written and well researched. Jazz may have been born in the Crescent City and attained its first maturity in the Windy City, but it “grew up” on the Mississippi. Kenney’s account of the music’s little-known adolescence helps to explain its appeal and acceptance by the general public.

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AMERICAN COMMODITIES IN AN AGE OF EMPIRE. By Mona Domosh. New York: Routledge. 2006.

In *American Commodities in an Age of Empire*, Mona Domosh explores how U.S. companies established an “informal” empire during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as they expanded into international markets and used images of foreign people and places to promote their products to domestic consumers. Domosh focuses on the experiences of five of the largest American international companies during this period: Singer Manufacturing Company, McCormick Harvesting Machine Company, H. J. Heinz Company, Eastman Kodak Company, and the New York Life Insurance Company.

In individual chapters on Singer, McCormick, and Heinz, Domosh considers how these companies created visual and textual images that associated their products with ideologies of civilization and progress. In the chapter on Singer, Domosh examines magazine advertisements and a series of promotional trade cards that feature people in different countries using Singer sewing machines. The cards emphasize the ways that people around the world are similar to Americans and have the potential to become “white” through the acquisition and use of American commercial products, but set limits on this idea by reasserting geographical difference in order to keep others at a safe distance.

Domosh’s chapter on McCormick offers critical readings of the company’s illustrated catalogs, which associate foreign spaces with premodern farming techniques and link McCormick equipment with progress. Domosh argues that the catalogs relocate the U.S. frontier narrative to foreign lands in order to show that foreigners may be able to emulate the conquest of the West in their own countries through the use of American technology.

From the 1880s on, H. J. Heinz Company emphasized the purity of their commercially prepared food and represented the company as a patriarchal family concerned with the well being of its workers and the people who consumed its pickles and sauces. In order to reinforce its family image, Heinz presented its factory as a domestic space, and encouraged American consumers to tour the factory to witness the sanitary and hospitable conditions for the workers, largely girls and women (the “girl in the white cap” in Heinz advertisements). Domosh draws on reports of corporate travels to show how Heinz naturalized their expansion into international markets by positioning foreign consumers as members of their extended corporate family. In this scenario, the Heinz representatives sent abroad