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*California Vieja: Culture and Memory in a Modern American Place* (review)

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to peddle their goods were imagined as friendly visitors who enabled people around the world to share in the progress represented by their prepared foods.

Domosh connects these case studies as examples of “flexible racism,” arguing that “because American companies set out to ‘civilize’ through consumption and because these new consumers remained, spatially and discursively, outside the bounds of political citizenship, they could be represented as historical agents in their own right, able to become white through consumption” (189). Domosh thus points to the potential for commodities to erase difference and demonstrates that racial identity and stages along the “civilizational hierarchy” were not fixed (194). Domosh’s provocative and engaging study will be especially valuable for scholars interested in race and empire, the circulation of commodities, and the history of capitalism.

Harvard University

Amy Spellacy

CALIFORNIA VIEJA: Culture and Memory in a Modern American Place. By Phoebe S. Krupp. Berkeley: University of California Press. 2006.

*California Vieja* meticulously chronicles five distinct triggers that set off waves of pseudo-Spanish-Mexicanism in the cultural symbolism of Anglo California in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The first is the publication of the wildly popular novel, *Ramona*, in 1884. Written by Helen Hunt Jackson and crammed with moonlight and roses romance about an ideal *rancho* society of the past, it sent winter tourists scrambling for California by train in search of picturesque adobes and souvenir shops purporting to be the place where the fictional Ramona was married. At the ranch that might have been the home of Ramona—had she been real, of course—family members dressed up as characters from the book and enacted *tableaux vivants* for the camera.

The second is “El Camino Real,” the king’s highway better known as the route taken by the barefoot friars who built a chain of missions from the Mexican border to San Francisco. Beginning in 1902, the road was revived (or reinvented) with the considerable help of local women’s clubs and was soon espoused by local automobilists in a period in which route signs were rarer than gas stations. Harrie Forbes, one of the prime activists, joined her husband to create a thriving business out of manufacturing guideposts for the Camino: picturesque mission bells dangling from otherwise undistinguished route signage. The couple also sold smaller replicas for travelers, of course.

The third story is that of the Panama–California Exposition of 1915. The younger brother of San Francisco’s Panama–Pacific fair of the same year, San Diego’s was a regional show, spotlighting California products. Its buildings and ambiance, however, were steeped in a kind of neo-Spanish atmosphere, including guards in pointy sombreros, senioritas in shawls, strolling guitarists, periodic fiestas, and a wonderful pseudo-churrigueresque architectural fantasy village by Bertram Goodhue. If the Spanish could have afforded to rebuild Spain in Southern California, the San Diego Fair is undoubtedly what they would have built.

The fourth example is the planned suburb of Rancho Santa Fe, where Mary Pickford (star of the 1910 film version of *Ramona*) and Douglas Fairbanks (star of 1920’s *Zorro*) settled into marital bliss in a home called “Rancho Zorro.” The development itself took its name from the railroad, which owned an unprofitable tract outside San Diego. The houses—still settling the style for California homes today—were largely the work of Lillian Rice, who managed to combine all the modern amenities with the shady arcades and tile roofs of some idyllic past.

Finally, Ms. Kropp takes up Olvera Street, a foul alley adjacent to Los Angeles' mission-style Union Station which became a Mexican market and a major tourist magnet in the 1930s, under the guidance of Christine Sterling, would-be actress and historic-preservation activist. (Women get their due throughout!)

The book is a goldmine of new information. Its argument, however, is somewhat elderly: namely, that Anglos took parts of the Spanish-Indian-Mexican past while mistreating and despising actual members of these groups. That they compensated for the perils of modernity by retreating into an imagined region of history. That memory's mystic chords were played out of tune throughout. *California Vieja* could have benefitted from a less formulaic approach. Is escapism always a bad thing? Was California's particular brand of historicism influenced by the movies? By the existing "fantasy" architecture of the region? How does the California Mission/Rancho fantasy stand up to all the others so vividly described in the fiction of James M. Cain and Nathanael West? Or the proto-theme park proposed by Frank Baum, author of the Oz books, for Catalina Island? Less theory, perhaps—and more imagination!

University of Minnesota

Karal Ann Marling

FRONT-PAGE GIRLS: Women Journalists in American Culture and Fiction, 1880–1930. By Jean-Marie Lutes. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press. 2006.

The most striking images from Jean-Marie Lutes's analysis of gendered publicity in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries are of the bodily violations that female journalists endure—or nearly escape—in the interests of getting a story. By invoking such reported incidents as Nellie Bly's brush with a doctor bent on performing an unnecessary tonsilectomy and Djuna Barnes's submission to a grisly force-feeding procedure, Lutes underscores her central concern, namely that the body of the female journalist of this period was inseparable from her reportage. Through the spectacle of her journalism, the female journalist became newsworthy herself.

But this is just one of the thematic threads of *Front-Page Girls*. Lutes, an assistant professor of English at Villanova University, also is interested in the "channels of influence between journalism and literature" (5), the discursive kinship between women's reportage during this period and fiction by and about women journalists. Lutes offers a series of fascinating analyses—in which she reads women's bodies, as both subject and object, against a variety of news and literary texts—and demonstrates the logical interdependence of the two genres in this context.

Even so, the narrative lacks unity. Wedged between chapters on the writing of "girl stunt reporters" and the "sob sisters" is a chapter on Ida B. Wells and other African-American newswomen of the period. The analysis of black women's journalism foregrounds the whiteness of the other writers under discussion as well as the differences in the common sense that attached to white and non-white bodies. At the same time, Lutes' discussion of the black women journalists' role in the black counterpublic is not woven into the narrative and feels like a tangent.

Similarly, the narrative fails to lay sufficient groundwork for the analysis, in Chapter 4, of Henry James' two versions of *The Portrait of a Lady* or the discussion in Chapter 5 of the interplay of the journalism and fiction of Edna Ferber, Willa Cather, and Djuna Barnes. Located in the book's final chapters, these discussions are another departure from the narrative's initial focus. This lack of cohesion is emphasized by the presence of a short epilogue that opens a new discussion of the portrayal of the woman journalist in film.