

of the Payne-Aldrich debates points to glaring failures to placate the sensibilities of progressives in rebellion. During the course of the tariff debates, Taft consistently defended the prerogatives of Speaker of the House Joe Cannon and Senate Majority Leader Nelson Aldrich; he endorsed a corporation tax rather than siding with the progressive call for an income tax. Taft even failed to use the tool of political patronage to regain the loyalty of maverick western progressives. By the end of the process, Taft had alienated insurgent Republican congressmen and angered the progressive press.

This began a spiral downward, as Taft continued to enrage progressive politicians in his decision to support Secretary of the Interior Richard Ballinger in his efforts to tighten procedural rules over land use. Further controversies arose over presidential appointments. By 1910, as the party prepared for the congressional elections, relations between insurgent Republicans and the president had deteriorated completely. Taft went so far as to work with conservatives in Iowa to attempt to unseat the popular senators Jonathan Dolliver and Albert Cummins.

As Gould points out, however, the real problem for the administration was the breakdown of relations between Taft and former president Roosevelt. Ideological differences between the two quickly emerged, as Taft's commitment to process, his desire to balance the budget, and his willingness to ally himself with powerful conservatives began to alter public policy established by Roosevelt. Taft's poor choices in political advisers combined with his tendency to make rash decisions heightened tensions with his former mentor.

The inability of Roosevelt and Taft to reconcile their differences led to the party split in 1912. Both men were too proud to concede to the other. Their ideological differences were real. The result was that neither would be returned to the White House.

Gould acknowledges several important transformations initiated during the Taft presidency. Taft made the federal bureaucracy more efficient, particularly in the area of budgeting. His court appointments shifted the judiciary to the right, a change that would still have force in the 1930s. In the end, Gould argues, Taft's presidency was marked by "a pervasive sense of lost opportunity" (214).

Picture This: World War I Posters and Visual Culture, edited by Pearl James. Studies in War, Society, and the Military. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009. xi, 398 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$30.00 paper.

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The essays collected in *Picture This* challenge readers to consider the context in which World War I posters were produced and viewed. A well-established advertising tool prior to the war, posters became the most prevalent propaganda tool used by governments to build home-front support. Editor Pearl James contends in her introduction that the posters “functioned as illustrations of the war in popular understanding but also had an impact on the facts of the war, including its duration and its reach” (3). Raising different questions and examining diverse forms of evidence from several belligerent nations, not all of the authors share James’s conclusion about the power of the posters, but they all provide nuanced understandings of the posters’ historical, social, and cultural contexts. Readers’ comprehension of World War I posters will be enriched well beyond their most thorough visual observations.

The essay collection includes an introductory section followed by three other sections: “War Poster Campaigns and Images, Comparative Readings,” “Envisioning the Nation and Imagining National Aesthetics,” and “Figuring the Body in the Context of War.” Jay Winter launches the collection by asserting that posters were part of a vibrant popular culture and national discourse and “reflected an already existing and powerful consensus: they illustrated but did not manufacture consent” (42). The posters transcended class differences in ways that written propaganda did not and functioned as “signs of solidarity, not carriers of compulsion” (43). Meg Albrinck’s study of British recruitment posters, on the other hand, demonstrates that the enlistment campaign prior to conscription in 1916 shifted from an emphasis on national honor to one of gendered humiliation designed to coerce men into volunteering by calling their masculinity into question. While these messages “reflect national ideals but not necessarily actual behavior” (335), she leaves readers with the question of whether the posters, while failing to increase enlistments, had an impact on popular understandings of masculinity and self-identity.

In a cross-national essay, Nicoletta Gullace compares the use of Hun imagery in Great Britain, Australia, and the United States to symbolize the threat to civilization posed by German barbarism. Images of the Hun in Britain “tended to be tamer” than in the United States and Australia, where posters depicted the Hun as an Darwinesque gorilla-like figure and an inhuman blood-lusting ogre because their populations had to be aroused to fight in the absence of an “immediate threat” (72–73). Such depictions appealed directly to fears of “racial contamination” (73), but the anti-Hun campaign failed to resonate with Allies beyond the West.

Race also surfaces as a prominent theme in essays examining specific national campaigns. Richard S. Fogarty analyzes French posters that simultaneously praised contributions to the war efforts by non-white colonial soldiers while denigrating them as primitive "other." The posters reinforced racial prejudices and stereotypes and revealed that the French debt to colonial soldiers had limits. Jennifer D. Keene's comparison of posters made by African Americans with those produced for them by the government reveals a dialog between the government and the African American community on the meanings of service. Both government and privately produced posters emphasized a romanticized image of war in which each soldier made a difference, but Keene notes that the African American posters explicitly linked the struggle against Germany with the need for an interracial democracy at home.

Finally, editor Pearl James asserts that the multiple and often contradictory representations of women in U.S. posters "functioned as instruments of the changes affecting that status" (275). Critical of earlier scholarship that takes a less sanguine view, James is more convincing in arguing that posters offered ways of imagining changing women's roles than actually changing behavior. She offers an example of women's agency that promoted food conservation in Iowa by distributing posters and giving talks to local groups.

I have noted the contributions of essays that address race and gender, but the breadth of essay topics includes Russian folk art, French schoolgirls' poster art, depictions of the wounded, and the use of medieval iconography. Readers will be left to ponder the extent to which posters reflected popular views and understanding of the war, or the degree to which they influenced beliefs and lived experiences of people in a time of total war. It is just as important for readers to consider the ways poster art influenced the construction of memories of the war that remain salient in the twenty-first century.

African Americans on the Great Plains: An Anthology, edited by Bruce A. Glasrud and Charles A. Braithwaite. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009. vii, 404 pp. Notes, bibliography, index. \$35.00 paper.

Reviewer Michael J. Lansing is assistant professor of history and director of environmental studies at Augsburg College. His research and writing have focused on issues of race and gender in the history of the western United States.

This collection of essays, all of which first appeared in the *Great Plains Quarterly*, brings together a wide range of subjects related to African American life on the Great Plains. The editors define the Great Plains