something is wrong with them. This reader regrets that many such interesting points are left undeveloped — e.g., the masculine romance and fear of homosocial bonds — but still recommends *Men Alone* as a study that should make it to the reading list of all interested in men, power, and American individualism.

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America was late in industrializing. Industrialization only really began after the Government decided on an official policy of westward expansion. The 'coiquest of the West' depended on an improvement and extension of the infrastructure, i.e., digging canals and putting down rails. In this period of territorial and industrial expansion, a new wave of Irish immigrants was to play a key role in supplying the necessary manpower.

When accounting for Irish immigration to the United States it is important to distinguish between different waves and groups who neither arrived at the same time nor followed the same patterns of settlement, adaptation and assimilation. Irish Protestants (mainly of Scottish descent), frustrated by the discrimination of Presbyterians in Ascendancy Ireland, started arriving even in the mid-18th century, peaking in the years after Wolfe Tone's failed republican rebellion in 1798. By contrast, Irish Catholic immigration did not get seriously under way until the beginning of the 19th century, culminating dramatically, however, in mid-century when the Great Famine forced a million and half to leave the island. Protestant immigrants had mostly been people leaving Ireland for want of land and political rights. As English speakers, they were quick to assimilate in the new world and were, moreover, capable of living isolated from compatriots wherever land and economic opportunity were offered. Hence many of them would end up as settlers immediately behind the receding western frontier. The majority of Catholics, however, had been driven out of Ireland by sheer economic and physical hunger. As Gaelic speakers they were socially dependent on each other in the new anglophone world which they often would regard with as much suspicion as they had reserved for English speaking landlords and government officials at home. Consequently, most members of this wave of immigrants would settle in the ethnic ghettos in northeastern cities.

Theii massive presence here was to cause some of the first serious confrontation in the history of the United States between 'natives' and ethnic immigrants, but it also helps to explain why the story of Irish immigration to the United States, though beginning in gloom, was to become a stoïy of a successful integration into mainstream American society. This also appears from Thomas H. O'Connor's latest book, a political history of the Boston Irish. O'Connor himself identifies as such, and is a professor of history at one of the academic strongholds of Irish America, Boston College.  

The thesis of the book is, in short, that it was the early social rejection of Irish
immigrants by the established economic uper class of Protestant Yankees which was to
determine the political fate of the ‘capital’ of New England. For this conflict taught the
Irish of Boston, and other cities of the Northeast, to organize politically. This process
began after the Civil War when they succeeded in turning Jefferson’s and Jackson’s
discarded Democratic policy into an instrument for their own adaptation to an
industrializing America, a strategy fully described and documented by Noel Ignatiev in his

Based in the ghetto network of churches, clubs and bars, the sometimes ruthless and
always populist ethnic class politics of Irish party bosses would turn out to be an effective
strategy against Anglo-American ‘bogginins’. By virtue of their sheer numbers and well
oiled (and infamous) ‘political machines’ — the boss of the local precinct (such as John F
Kennedy’s grandfather) acting the role of mediator between the individual and collective
interests of his district and the municipal government — they were able to force the leaders
of the Protestant Yankee establishment first to share and later to yield political power. With
the election of John F. Fitzgerald (Rose F. Kennedy’s father) as mayor of the city in 1905, the
Boston Irish would take full control over the city and use their political power to
further their own social and economic aspirations.

For nine decades the Irish possessed a political monopoly in Boston unequalled in any
other American city. In this unbroken ‘mayoritarian’ reign there would be colorful friends’
and ghostлектal populists like James Cuiley (recently portrayed by Jack Battersby in The
Rascal King: The Life and Times of James Michael Curley, 1992), who dominated the
political scene in Boston during the first four decades of this century. After the Second
World War, however, more ‘modern’ style politicians like John B. Hynes, John F. Collins
and Ray Flynn would take over and build the ‘new Boston’ After Flynn’s electoral defeat
in 1993, the office of mayor went to an Italian American for the first time in Boston
history. The election of Thomas M. Menino showed that the Irish today no longer make up
a social and political unity in Boston. Even from the 1950s the most successful among
them had moved out from the ghettos and into the suburbs and had gained access to the
world of higher finance and big business, which used to be a Yankee preserve.

The social, economic and political changes of the 1960s in the US caused tensions
between the liberal Irish middle class living in the ethnically mixed suburbs and the more
traditional and culturally conservative working class Irish, who had remained in the inner
city ghetto. Among the latter there was little sympathy for many of the liberal causes of the
1960s and 1970s. With their limited social experience in ethnically insulated neighborhoods,
they would feel betrayed, for instance seeing their ‘own’ inayois launch projects to urban
development threatening the future of their ghetto which once had given them their identity and self-assurance as a group. Or when they tried to enforce racial
integration in municipal schools by bussing children to and from ethnic neighborhoods.

It is by adding a wider historical perspective to his ‘political history’ of Boston that
O’Connor succeeds in writing a book which is of more than local interest. The general
history of Irish immigration to the United States has been written by William Shannon
(The American Irish, 1966) and Keiby Miller (Emigrants and Exiles, 1985) and their
political history by Steven P. Elic (Rainbow’s End: Irish Americans and the Dilemmas of
Urban Machine Politics, 1840-1985, 1988) and James B. Walsh (The Irish America’s
Political Class, 1976). O'Connor's portrait of the Boston Irish represents a new tendency in the study of the history of Irish Americans. Now our attention is directed towards the regional and local nuances in the strategies of assimilation of this first huge wave of ethnic immigrants to the United States (see, e.g., David M. Emmon, The Battle Irish Class and Ethnicity in an American Mining Town, 1875-1925, 1989, and Dennis Clark, The Irish and Regional Cultures, 1986).

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American modernists frequently sought inspiration and even identity in Europe, so it is only fitting that Duco van Oostium, a Dutch scholar who has studied and taught on both sides of the Atlantic, in a sense itcuns American modernism to us refashioned a modernist Atlantic is itself made new through Oostrum's cross-gender analyses. Focusing on men writing about 'new' women on both sides of the Atlantic in the period 1870-1920, Oostrum provides a dynamic critique to studies that approach related issues of cultural identity in isolation.

In pursuing a variety of hybridities—of cultures, gender, and modernity—Oostum's book becomes something of a hybrid itself, but does an excellent job of navigating us through what Gilbert and Gubar, whose work he addresses and takes issue with, call the 'no man's land' of feminist theory. Oostum begins with the proposition that 'in a strict binary system, men's giving voice to women leads to insurmountable problems of representation,' and uses this premise to recontextualize how cross-gender voicings intersect with cross-cultural writings. In viewing modernism through the Dutch lens, as he calls it, Oostrum introduces most American ideadies to the works of Multatuli and Frederik van Eeden, and their modernist representation of women and 'modes of resistance' to the constraints of masculine identity. Henry's James and Adams, Multatuli and Van Eeden all not only had international preoccupations, but used cross-cultural and cross gender ventriloquins and impersonations (Van Eeden, for example, even sets up communes in Holland and the United States based on Thoreau's Walden). In a now few critics could hope to emulate, Oostium is able to juxtapose Multatuli's (Eduard Douwes Dekker's) Max Havelaar, a canonical Dutch novel about colonialism in Indonesia, with the work which inspired it, Stowe's Uncle Tom's Cabin. Through that text's doctriiiie of separate spheres, Oostrum begins to reveal the cross-referential nature of modernist literary constructions of gender and national identities. Both texts are then contrasted with James's Wings of A Dove, which, in its community of women, represents another 'triangulated' response to Stowe's representation of gender identity, in this case effectively from both sides of the Atlantic.

Oostrum provides an astute account of how some feminist scholars have reductively

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