

convey the most complicated, changing, frustrating of human social, racial, and legal relationships. Based on an impressive range of archival, newspaper, and other primary sources (over 30 pages of endnotes), it convincingly shows both the unique and, to an extent, representative nature of the Chicago Indian experiences. It emphasizes just how divided Indian peoples themselves could be on major issues. And it demonstrates – a major thrust of recent Indian Studies research - how adaptive Native Americans strove to exploit often paternalistic white programs designed for their supposed improvement. There are almost thirty pages of detailed appendices: on Indian population in Chicago, 1830-2010; and census information on Indian population in the city in 1920, and in 1930.

Although I have no major criticisms, a few issues deserved further examination (especially as the book, at 18 pages of preface/acknowledgements, and 173 pages of actual text, is not over-long). While the focus on Chicago is clearly valid, the writers might have placed it more effectively within a broader contemporaneous American context. Also, while they suggest the exemplary nature of the 1893-1934 Chicago experience, they could have speculated more on actual ways these events influenced Indian-white encounters in the later twentieth century and beyond. The First World War surely deserves more attention, especially in relation to Indian participation in the armed forces of the United States, and in the so-called modern world. To claim that the Federal Government, reformers, and academics “continued to view and treat American Indians as inferior” (p.58), surely simplifies far more complex and evolving racial/cultural/political/legal attitudes?

Finally, a minor point. Who was it said that “Heaven hath no joy like an academic cited”? ‘Tis true! But: in their bibliography the writers get my middle initial wrong. It is not “J”.

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Aaron J. Palmer, *Rule of Law: Elite Political Authority and the Coming of the Revolution in the South Carolina Lowcountry, 1763–1776*. Brill Academic Publishers. 318 pp. ISBN 9004272348.

In *Rule of Law*, Aaron J. Palmer pledges to go beyond accounts of other historians in explicating the plight of the South Carolina elite to wield and maintain its political power during the 14-years period from 1763 to 1776.

All such accounts “have focused almost exclusively on the traditional battles between legislative privilege and royal prerogative,” e.g., issues such as finances and taxation. Though each provides a different piece to the etiological puzzle, they investigate merely “the assembly and its membership in isolation” (3). Palmer essays to examine how political power was exercised outside the assembly—*viz.*, how the elite exercised control over non-legislative institutions—to ensure continuancy of a manner of living for the elite that secured “wealth, power, and status” (23).

The breakdown of the book is as follows. The first chapter provides an overview of the legal culture, the courts, and elite political power in South Carolina as well as many of the problems the elite faced—e.g., how the assembly shut out backcountry residents (lower Whites) from legal and political institutions to protect their own interests (56). Chapter 2 looks at the relationship between the assembly and criminal law and its system of justice from the scraps of records extant from this period. Chapter 3, “Slavery and the Law,” examines how the elite used the law for economic benefit—i.e., by oppressing slaveholders and “tyrannizing slaves.” The fourth chapter explicates how the assembly kept a leash on the mudsills of white society through limiting relief to the poor. “The lowcountry elite used the political power of their legislature to define poverty, and they used the parish vestries and the Charles Town workhouse to govern the lowest orders of society” (161). Chapter 5 gives an account of how the assembly managed to control British “placemen,” who very often interfered with the assembly’s capacity to govern the province. The last chapter sums the challenges that the lowcountry elite faced—slave resistance, crime, disorder, rampant poverty, British placemen, and backcountry uneasiness—and ends with discussion of a final, pressing challenge: the imperial crisis, caused by colonial resistance to oppressive British policies. The crisis made it clear that provincial autonomy could not be maintained “within the old system.” That led to a push for independence, which brought about “new opportunities for lower class whites to enter the world of politics” (230). Throughout those sundry crises, however, the planter elite of South Carolina survived intact (277).

Palmer throughout the book makes it clear that his project is descriptive, not normative. A fine illustration is in chapter 3, on slavery in South Carolina. It begins with some discussion of Crèvecoeur’s condemnation of slavery in his *Letters from an American Farmer*—“the horrors of slavery, the hardship of incessant toils”—in a manner to soften the mood for serious examination of just how slavery was viewed by owners and slaves in

the province and whether those views were consonant with the practice of slavery. Slave owners had a vision that “usually entailed working toward some kind of balance between disciplining, caring for, and making concessions ... to the slaves,” yet that vision was not reality. “Governing slaves and plantations ... actually served to secure the forced labor system and contain the resistance that system naturally produced” (115–16). However, the slave code in practice was brutal. The system was established to secure economic wellbeing. All blacks were considered slaves unless they could prove otherwise. Again, the code aimed to limit cruelty to slaves, but “cruelty” was defined in the slave owner’s terms. For example, there was no penalty for an owner who accidentally killed a slave, who was being punished (119–20).

Palmer sums his findings concerning the elite political authority in South Carolina in the years leading up to the revolution in a nine-pages-long epilogue. One of the most significant findings is the political and social conservatism of South Carolina at the time of the revolution. Thus, “it is difficult to see the revolution—at least in this colony—as the transformative stage in the creation of liberal democracy or a moment when ‘Americans suddenly saw themselves as a new society ideally equipped for a republican future’” (284). The target is none other than Gordon Wood. It is just one more reminder of the significance of “small” or “parochial” studies such as Palmer’s. They remind us to be cautious of sweepy generalizations concerning complex phenomena such as the American Revolution.

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Terence McSweeney, *The “War on Terror” and American Film: 9/11 Frames Per Second*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press. 2014. 242 pp. ISBN 978-0-74869309-2.

Several books have been written about the war on terror already, from anthologies like *Reframing 9/11 Film* (of which McSweeney himself is part) to monographs like Peter Markert’s both exhaustive and superficial *Post 9/11 Cinema: Through a Lens Darkly* (2011). McSweeney’s monograph manages to be survey-like without losing analytical depth. It is grounded in a rather sweeping assertion; that “American film in the first decade of