light in London's gas industry. It is usually argued that artificial light produced a "colonization of the night", expunging natural rhythms, but also accentuating the difference between lit and unlit areas. Nead shows that gas was a much more nuanced commodity, disrupting a narrative of modernity focused on shorter working hours and an orderly distinction between times and places of work and non-work. Gas was a vulgar, ostentatious form of light, and it produced an irregular, uncertain illumination—hallucinatory, mysterious, uncanny. Hence its appropriateness for theatrical displays and for the deceptive, flirtatious activities associated with Cremorne. More mundanely, gas was dangerous. It was feared that central London gasworks would provide the catalyst for the material destruction of modern Babylon.

There *are* elements in this book which I found less convincing. I am not persuaded by Houghton's paintings of street life whose clumsiness Nead celebrates as "strange and slightly disturbing", withholding "the comfort of easy legibility" (p. 47); and the implication that the Indian Mutiny gave heightened purpose to obscene publications legislation simultaneously going through parliament, that Delhi and Holywell Street were complementary "manifestations of the other for imperial Britain" (p. 194) seems to me an interpretation too far. On the other hand, there is a fascinating discussion of the trope of blindness in illustrations of street life; and a superb section, "The Rape of the Glances", based on etiquette guides, newspaper correspondence and illustrations of women and men on the streets of the city; while the chapters on Cremorne explore a cornucopia of metropolitan modernity. A speciality of Cremorne entertainment was "Madame Poitevin, seated on a bull and, in the mythological guise of Europa, suspended from the basket of an ascending balloon" (p. 115). *Victorian Babylon* is an altogether more edifying and revealing *tour de force*. My students liked it too.

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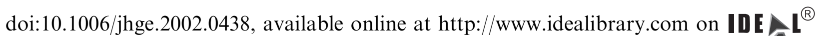
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KRISTIN HOGANSON, *Fighting for American Manhood: How Gender Provoked the Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000. Pp. 320. $16.00 paperback)

This book joins a small but distinguished bookshelf in US history that takes masculinity seriously. Like Gail Bederman's *Manliness* and *Civilization* (Chicago 1994) and E. Anthony Rotundo's *American Manhood* (New York 1994), Hoganson's book invites us to consider ideologies of maleness as contested, mutable, and important—in short, as worthy and indeed necessary, subjects of historical inquiry. She argues that idioms of manhood constituted the language in which all phases of the late nineteenth century US wars were debated, from sympathy for the Cuban insurgents to the jingo press to the pressures on President McKinley. Ultimately—and this is one of the book's smartest moves—ideologies of masculinity could do battle for either side, and composed both the argument for participation in the more than a decade-long war to put down the nationalists in the Philippines, as well as the argument against it. A combination of factors led the 1890s to be a particularly contentious time in American cultural and political history, including movements for woman suffrage, depression and class battles over free silver, skirmishes over race (both in Indian Wars and Jim Crow), and medical and scientific accounts of degeneration. Hoganson argues that rhetorics of gender underlay them all.

The late nineteenth century US overseas wars and conquest incite endless historiographic conflict; as Hoganson says, the sheer number of explanations for them "seem to

explain the Spanish-American and Philippine-American wars four or five times over" (p. 7). The problem of how to explain a national tradition at once anti-colonialist in rhetoric and expansionist in effect cannot be evaded for historians of the 1890s, and it is for this period that this paradox, so often silenced in the historiography of other times, implodes. The desire for markets, Social Darwinism and racial superiority, militarism and the Maine, humanitarian concern for Cuba, annexationism and strategic ambition, psychic crisis and the American desire to be counted among the imperial nations have all stood as explanation for the wars of 1898–1902 (and after). Hoganson offers manhood as the cornerstone of them all, a single, elegant explanation under which all others can be subsumed. Deploying truly impressive research, Hoganson explores the nuances of the gendered rhetoric of policy debate, and shows quite persuasively that it was omnipresent. Whether characterizing the Cuban plight in chivalric terms, requiring a courtly, manly US response; describing arbitration and diplomacy as womanly and militarism as key to national honor; or accusing McKinley or later George Hoar of effeminacy when they displayed reticence over military solutions, the different factions were consistent in using languages of gender to fight for desired policy outcomes.

Both the strength and the weakness of this book is that it was written in conversation with diplomatic history, a field characterized on the whole by profound opposition to considering gender an important area of study. Thus, the book proceeds single-mindedly to establish that rhetorics of manliness mattered in the US to debates over the entry, conduct, and conclusion of these wars. It overwhelms any opposition through sheer quantity of archival evidence. Judging from reviews and recent conferences, it succeeds: a number of hardened skeptics in diplomatic history have been persuaded, against their inclination, to believe that rhetorics of masculinity might have mattered to the debates over and conduct of the war. For those already persuaded that gender matters, however, the book is less satisfying. Where the feminist historical scholarship of the last twenty years has urged us to consider gender as simultaneously a trope of difference, a binary logic organizing US worldviews, (public/private, commercial/noncommercial, and so forth), and an awkwardly taken up and lived identity, this account is less than deft at keeping all these levels in play. The book seems often to revert to a belief that the gender rhetoric is about actual women and men, that what is at stake in these debates over war is suffrage and civic roles for women, on the one hand, and the actual decline of men on the other. The point that these are metaphors (albeit metaphors with real implications for women and men) gets lost. This debilitating literalism goes a long way toward explaining why the book sees so many things as mutually exclusive; why, for example, should we see struggles over Social Darwinism and conflicts over masculinity as divergent explanations of the cause of the Spanish-American War? Is it impossible that contests over gender and race could work together to influence policy outcomes? This narrow focus on US women and men, rather than gender, also means that many things that seemingly ought to merit attention in a book like this one are missing—evidence from Cuban and Philippine archives, for example; one might suspect that gender could have been significant to the *insurrectos*' prosecution of their wars, too. Strikingly homophilic comments—that the war would provide the opportunity for soldiers who had been on opposite sides of the civil war to be reunited in "true brotherhood and love, side by side, heart in heart, and hand in hand" (p. 74)—or homophobic imagery, as in "a cartoon, exploiting less than subtle phallic imagery, [that] depicts Uncle Sam shoving a rifle down McKinley's coat to provide him with a backbone" (pp. 91–92)—go unremarked, except as having to do with manhood. The book, with its wealth of new research, establishes that manhood was an important terrain for public policy debate, but it leaves a multitude of questions unasked and unanswered. Perhaps, though, this is the best thing one could say about a book—that it opens doors to worlds of new scholarship. In that, it succeeds admirably.

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