

From one perspective, the festival promoted “National Unity through Cultural Diversity” (p. 153), allowing visitors to interact with an array of cultural practitioners in an environment that suggested that diversity only strengthened America. Yet the festival also permitted “activist” folklorists to attempt to use “traditions to effect social, cultural, political and economic change” (p. 111), offering counter-narratives to a dominant view of American progress through capitalism. Organizers, however, could not necessarily control these counter-narratives, as the festival created sociocultural and physical space for some cultural practitioners to offer their own critiques, bringing a sense of conflict to the event.

Walker is correct that the Smithsonian’s compartmentalization contributed to the failure of the Museum of Man, but the cultural politics made apparent by the institution’s postwar expansion and the Folklife Festival suggest that in the context of an increasingly fragmented view of the

American past, it was unlikely that the Smithsonian’s leaders could continue successfully to focus their narratives upon the universal. The Smithsonian’s spatial and organizational problems did bring attention to issues of authority and control, as Walker argues, yet scholarly and political trends undoubtedly were primary factors in the recent dominance of particularizing rather than universalizing visions. Nevertheless, Walker’s analysis contributes ably to the literature on the intersection of consensus and conflict and of the official and the vernacular, demonstrating how cultural pluralism and diversity have been and still are negotiated in real space in American life.

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### *The Election of 1860 Reconsidered*

Edited by A. James Fuller

(Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 2013. Pp. ix, 271, Illustrations, notes, index. \$49.95.)

Abraham Lincoln was the successful candidate in the two most important elections in American history. The first, in 1860, elevated Lincoln to the presidency and led to the secession of the lower South and ultimately to the Civil War. The second, in 1864,

affirmed the Union’s success and its purposes in the war. A. James Fuller has brought together seven historians, including himself, to produce fresh and well-researched essays on the 1860 election. Most take the form of political biography, an approach that

has, as Fuller writes, unfortunately lost its appeal among academic historians.

Michael S. Green, drawing upon his important findings in *Lincoln and the Election of 1860* (2011), portrays Lincoln as a hands-on, skilled political organizer whose experience in understanding political issues and managing campaigns gave him an advantage in the election. Lincoln, Green reminds us, was not the passive politician depicted by some historians; party divisions played a role in the election's outcome, he concludes, but the most crucial element was Lincoln himself.

James L. Huston examines Stephen A. Douglas's electoral strategy, focusing on his Southern campaign. The "Little Giant" hoped to capture the Millard Fillmore voters of 1856 in the South as well as a sizeable number of voters from his own Democratic party. In the North, Douglas ignored the issue of the "Slave Power" conspiracy, which the Republicans cleverly exploited to their advantage. According to Huston, the Douglas strategy badly underestimated both Southern loyalty to the regular Democratic Party and the strength of the Republican appeal in the Northern states. Huston, however, points out that Douglas's fear of anarchy put him on the same page with Lincoln and influenced his own opposition to secession.

Fuller, who wrote three essays for this collection, provides an intriguing interpretation of John C. Breckinridge and the Southern Rights Democratic Party in the 1860 election. After

analyzing the various accounts of the national Democratic division at Charleston in April 1860, the author insists that historians have missed the importance of honor as the motive for the formation of the Southern party and Breckinridge's candidacy. In a separate biographical essay, Fuller rightly maintains that John Bell, the Constitutional Union candidate, has been given short shrift in accounts of the election. Bell was the compromise candidate of the remnants of the old Whig Party, but unfortunately, a compromise of the sectional troubles proved a liability in 1860 and after. Fuller reminds us, as William E. Gienapp did more than two decades ago, that even a fusion of the three anti-Republican candidates would not have defeated Lincoln.

John R. McKivigan characterizes Frederick Douglass as a pragmatist regarding electoral politics. Douglass, however, did not seem to be able to make up his mind about Lincoln, the only major antislavery candidate in the election. Having first praised Lincoln's nomination despite his concern about the lukewarm Republican platform on slavery, he soon expressed misgivings about Lincoln and said that he could not support him in the election. Instead, Douglass endorsed Gerrit Smith, the candidate of the small Radical Abolitionist Party.

Thomas E. Rodgers's essay explores the reasons for the high voter turnout in 1860, one of the largest, in its percentage, in American history. Rodgers concludes that voters went to the polls mainly because they

believed that republican political and cultural values were at stake in the election. He indicates that even in the South republicanism, or what Rodgers somewhat misleadingly refers to as “planter republicanism,” played a major role in the large voter turnout.

In his third essay, Fuller applies political realignment theory to the election, and finds it wanting as an analytical tool. Party realignment, according to this popular theory, occurs about every thirty years, and the election of 1860 seems to have fit the pattern. Using Indiana as a test case, however, Fuller concludes that the element of contingency and short-term political strategy are more useful than long-term realignment in explaining elections in United States history, including that of 1860.

Lawrence Sondhaus provides a brief though illuminating account of

the European reaction to the election. Diplomats in Washington, Sondhaus writes, believed that Lincoln’s nomination was a fluke, while the European press generally concluded that his election would not create a danger to the Union. The last essay, by Douglas G. Gardner, provides an informative historiography that no reader should miss. This reviewer, however, would have preferred the piece at the beginning of the volume. This fine collection of essays is recommended for anyone interested in the election of 1860.

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### *Union Heartland: The Midwestern Home Front during the Civil War*

Edited by Ginette Aley and J. L. Anderson

(Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2013. Pp. xvi, 196. Illustrations. \$39.50.)

Histories of the Southern home front have long outnumbered histories of the Northern home front. Lately, however, there has been a minor surge of books and anthologies on the Civil War in places other than the South and the Northeast; *Union Heartland: The Midwestern Home Front during the Civil War* is another effort to fill

that lacuna. As the editors point out in their very useful introduction, the Midwest differed from the rest of the North in several ways: not only was it “newer” than the East (with several states entering the Union during the decade or two before the war), it was also more ethnically heterogeneous, more rural and more dependent on