

sions about the colonialism and race in key reprinted texts, but here the matter comes to the fore through Irving's subject's central role in the story of modern European and American empires.

Colonial Revivals concludes with an epilogue that fittingly explores how the current work of digitizing the archive is following a similar path to the history of reprinting in the nineteenth century. As she notes, "A digitally reborn book cannot slough of layers of material history nor can it be disengaged from the history of its own records and its methods of safekeeping" (182). The current moment of digitization becomes an opportunity to revisit the histories of these texts and their role in fabricating a particular narrative of a national culture. How might we avail ourselves of this opportunity to decolonize that cultural history and generate more inclusive narratives that challenge us to rethink our understanding of the stories shaping our culture? One of the lessons of DiCuirci's book is that making sense of the past requires more than simply recovering and reprinting texts. The fantasy of transparency both activates the work of recovery and reprinting and haunts it. Which texts are recovered and reprinted? Who decides what will obtain the status of representative text? What is the nature of the conversation that a culture has about itself via these archival materials? Those are some of the vexing questions for the book. DiCuirci has done a marvelous job of showing us how those debates played out in key publication projects over the course of the nineteenth century that continue to shape our perception and understanding of American history today.

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GODDU, Teresa A. 2020. *Selling Antislavery: Abolition and Mass Media in Antebellum America*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press. Pp. 344. ISBN 9780812251999, Hardback \$55.00.

Teresa Goddu's *Selling Antislavery* opens with an incredibly thick description and evocative analysis of a box — a collection box for sale in the 1830s that one could take into one's home as a signal to others and as reminder to oneself to contribute generously to "the cause". This meticulously researched and crisply argued book manages the interlocking commercial, sentimental, and political formations of 19th-century U.S. print and material cultures with nuance and analytical dexterity. Like the box that appeared in middle-class white domestic households, one can hardly imagine how the field existed without it once your eyes lock onto Goddu's

interventions that reshape the myriad ways we interpret the formation of U.S. middle-class white northern identity in the 19th century.

Which is to say that Goddu's book represents the crucial work that print and material culture studies do. Her readings texture conversations of the literary with material and print cultures' tangible, quotidian presences. Her earlier work on gothic genre serves well here as she understands the various affordances of antislavery commodity forms, from the collection box to the atlas/compendium to the antislavery fair to the panorama. She lays out her argument in crystal clear prose, "demonstrat[ing] institutional abolition's centrality to the formation of the northern white middle class by explicating how antislavery media promoted specific regional, racial, and class identities" (7) that crucially place "moral virtue and market aspiration" (7) as linked conspirators through abolitionist forms. This book explores the mass media institutional life of antislavery, not just those forms of whiteness that buttress the peculiar institution in the antebellum period.

Goddu's work also makes tangible intersections between material cultures, media studies, and data studies/histories of science in the period and around Black Studies. She begins by looking at the American Anti-Slavery Society's organizational model, particularly its focus on systematized fund raising as a "branding", dovetailing with transatlantic Victorian development of middle-class women's philanthropy. Collecting data on both enslavement and on the donors to the AASS was a key focus and strategy of the organization. Goddu does astute readings of "collector's cards" that imagine, compel, and track ongoing contributions to the AASS, as well as the rise of "numeracy" — statistics and quantification — in the 1830s that produces the AASS's almanac of facts about enslavement as its key genre. Reading against prevailing critical paradigms of sentimentalism, Goddu makes the case for facts as the major interpretative component in third chapter on the slave narrative form. Here, Goddu gives us an even wider view of "Black message/white envelope" that focuses on white authentication of Black veracity in the genre. Goddu is in a shadow conversation with Saidiya Hartman's *Scenes of Subjection* (1997), which famously argues that enslaved humanity was in fact constructed through codes and laws that recognized Black humanness largely through criminal culpability, by arguing that the compendium of facts "as a whole [. . .] plays down the runaways' resistance and figures the slaves' humanity only in terms of their suffering" (GODDU 63). Goddu also engages data in her deep dive into the book history of the AASS, representing figures and technology around production, distribution, and sales in the form of the book catalog of the organization

— its libraries and its material catalog of books for sale to its donors — as “corroboration”.

The second part of Goddu’s book takes on the material object’s relationship to women’s consumer culture and the production of middle-class identity around moral virtue. Antislavery fairs are her object of study here, ones that include “antislavery objects” as a white feminized corollary to the “talking book” trope of African American literature. Calling objects like the collection box “speaking objects” (90), Goddu traces their history to “underscore women’s organizations and entrepreneurial innovations as integral to institutional antislavery’s accomplishments — and reveal their material objects, whose ephemeral nature has relegated them to obscurity, as essential to its appeal” (90). Even more powerful is the way that she analyzes the cultural capital that antislavery sentiment traffics in next to the literal cents it produced that “figure[d] their markets as not just moral but emancipatory” (91). Arguing that the fairs and their souvenir forms, like the gift books that commemorated them filled with white authors on antislavery, helped to form antislavery into a “status symbol” (120), Goddu marks the ways that Black emancipation was a key object of white northern middle-class identity even as its forms disallowed Black visions of freedom or agency.

Vision — or more particularly perspective — is the focus of the final section of *Selling Antislavery*. Here, Goddu distinguishes the panorama with its “graphic accuracy and expansive view” as the key visual genre of white antislavery that promises “to present a clear and comprehensive survey of slavery’s inner workings” (147). Arguing that the panorama’s “elevated viewpoint” (147) seduces the viewer in an imagined empirical relationship to the facts of enslavement — always at a distance — Goddu analyzes with a view to the visual as key to both AASS’s print and material objects and the culture it produced around antislavery as a whole.

The final chapter is a departure and an extension of the book’s thoroughgoing critical lens on the formation of white northern middle-class identity, and the shift feels both abrupt and understandable. Goddu offers a reading of African American engagements with the panorama that often challenge AASS’s perspective: “In black activists’ panoramic pictures the enslaved are more than blind bodies in pain or carriers (but never possessors) of freedom’s perspective; they envision and claim their own emancipation” (176). Mapping “emancipatory geographies” — like Frederick Douglass’s *North Star* — “the fugitive’s version of the bird’s eye view” (190), Goddu spends quality time on Black uses of and responses to the over-

whelming white branding of antislavery, offering readings of resistance with the constraints of those “inheritors of the AASS’s visual genealogy and sometimes even its plates” (174). Readers might understand the will to include a chapter that jumps off the previous materials and arguments as both a gesture to work left to be done in the wake of such amazing material history and as a way to cap off a book that so sharply focuses on whiteness with important attention to Black subjectivity.

To that end, and with an eye to how to incorporate this feat of scholarship into work and teaching on 19th-century African American literary and cultural studies, I offer some pairings that illuminate the strengths of Goddu’s work without leaving Black subject formation to the side. Her work is surely a companion to Derrick Spire’s *The Practice of Citizenship* (2019) on early African American print culture, as well as to Daina Ramey Berry’s *The Price for Their Pound of Flesh* (2017) on the monetary trade in Black bodies. I would also put Goddu’s articulation of the 1830s formation of white identity with Kyla Schuller’s *The Biopolitics of Feeling* (2018) as two books with very different and yet companionate takes on the formation of whiteness through anti-Blackness in the period. Goddu’s work on visual culture would be an amazing companion to Deborah Willis’s entire oeuvre (written and editorial) on envisioning enslaved and emancipated subjects, as well as scholarship by Matthew Fox-Amato and Jasmine Nichole Cobb and artwork by Carrie Mae Weems that contextualizes Black portraiture of the era.

I’d be remiss if I didn’t bring up the ways that Goddu’s work resonates in today’s mass media culture of white liberalism, with its performative demands to share anti-racist reading lists on social media and other signifiers of virtue that translate to middle-class white liberals as core parts of that identity. Like lawn signs for Black Lives Matter, the abolitionist material cultures of the 19th century constituted a strained signaling of middle-class racial cosmopolitanism and good political taste that acted as a commodified network of belonging and citizenship. Goddu’s work is a model of how to contextualize whiteness and its various communities and identities and practices, helping us to think about how whiteness as an identity mobilizes racial politics to define itself not just seemingly against Blackness, but also seemingly against racism and anti-Blackness. That these mobilizations participate in complicated and compromised markets of white selfhood that reproduce white supremacy is a key takeaway of Goddu’s book, and a warning for how we construct white liberal anti-racism across media platforms today. As she argues to close her book: antislavery’s “media archive, however, holds a less liberatory narrative — one that discloses white selfhood

as grounded in black subjugation, a formation that has yet to be undone” (225).

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SCHAEFER, Heike, and Alexander STARRE, eds. 2019. *The Printed Book in Contemporary American Culture: Medium, Object, Metaphor*. Cham, CH: Palgrave Macmillan. Pp. xv + 277. ISBN 9783030225445, Hardback \$119.99. ISBN 9783030225476, Paper \$84.99. ISBN 9783030225452, eBook \$64.99.

This relevant and timely book asks what does “book” even mean anymore? We know in 2021 that reading a book no longer necessarily involves print and paper. I’m certain this is something that you will have an opinion about already. The opposition between physical books and digital ones is, as Schaefer and Starre point out, not best served by antagonistic accounts. This collection doesn’t take a side but observes that “the onrush of all things digital revitalizes book culture rather than threatening it” (5). Times have changed.

At the turn of the millennium and shortly after I was arguing, in *Reading the Graphic Surface: The Presence of the Book in Fiction* (2005), that historic and chronic critical neglect of texts which made full and unconventional use of the codex form had hampered the reception of Beckett’s early novels and of the work of B. S. Johnson, Christine Brooke-Rose, and Alasdair Gray. I made the point that the form of the book grounded the reader rather than being the distraction it tended to be for critics expecting the codex to be used as what Schaefer and Starre call a “passive container” (8). Their editors’ introduction helps cast new light on what has changed: “For the longest time, the medial specificities of books were obscured by their pervasive presence and constant use in everyday life” (6). Familiarity with digital culture, particularly desktop publishing, has changed our attitude to pages. Devices that would have caused trouble for typesetters in the past now regularly appear in mainstream novels that have little interest in being innovative, avant-garde or experimental. Aleida Assman’s chapter places the key generational split roughly between Jonathan Franzen and Jonathan Safran Foer (born, respectively, in 1959 and 1977) (140). Both are still novelists and both use their pages as they see fit, but Franzen’s use of italics for thought passages or representations of letter and e-mail layouts are far less challenging to the reader than Safran Foer’s use of colored text,