

understand her life and the implications of exoticization and subjugation of a commercialized Asian woman in a white male power differential, Skeehan paints her as an immigrant and tokenizes her as an example of “the Orient as it was produced and imagined by American consumer and Chinese artists and designers” (p. 110). This section in particular fails to acknowledge how such early ethnic and gender prejudices and inequities shaped future racial bigotry, policies, and commercial practices in the United States. Similarly, and despite the intentions of its premise, the book’s centering of women like Virginia Ferrar and Susanna Rowson perpetuates the privileging of elite, white, highly educated American and British women as headlining narratives.

Overall, while the difficulty of textiles as books or written texts proves provocative and enticing, the book’s sweeping treatments present the necessary opportunity for further careful re-centering of diminished or once-known voices, participation with scholarship from diverse backgrounds and disciplines, and requisite mediation between “text” and “textile” through a more exhaustive methodological and historiographic participation and dialogue.

*Cynthia E. Chin is an art and material culture historian. She is a researcher at the University of Glasgow and was formerly a strategy and analytics consultant at Deloitte.*

. . .

Brewing a Boycott: How a Grassroots Coalition Fought Coors and Remade American Consumer Activism. *By Allyson P. Brantley*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2021. 304 pp. Half-tones, notes, bibliography, index. Paperback, \$29.95. ISBN: 978-1-4696-6103-2.

doi:10.1017/S0007680521000970

Reviewed by Wendy Wiedenhoft Murphy

This detailed history of the decades-long boycott against Coors should give anyone pause when ordering their next beer, especially if it is a “Silver Bullet” or other Coors product. Integrating archival records from activists, mainstream and grassroots periodicals, and oral history interviews, Allyson Brantley offers an illuminating account of how boycotters organized a diverse coalition to fight the anti-union, discriminatory practices of Coors and its neoliberal ideology. Her narrative offers valuable lessons on how activists can mobilize supporters via the tactic of the boycott to fight corporate power. However, it also provides insights into strategies that corporate leaders can employ to contest and

ultimately co-opt boycotts, particularly boycotts that have divergent goals. Labor historians, social movement scholars, and researchers who study how politics influence consumer behavior will find notable contributions in Brantley's book.

The Coors boycott began as a labor boycott in 1957, when union workers at the Golden, Colorado, brewery used the tactic in coordination with a strike to demand higher wages and a stronger position when negotiating contracts with management. Neither materialized and though Coors permitted strikebreakers to keep their jobs, its employment policies became determinedly more anti-union and its politics increasing conservative. However, the boycott continued and gained support from Chicano and gay and lesbian grassroots activists, who aimed to challenge the company's discriminatory hiring and employment practices and embrace of the New Right. This coalition building helped to strengthen the power of the boycott, especially as it broadened from Colorado and the West to other parts of the country. But it also shifted the focus away from the interests of the union to identity-based rights, which ultimately fragmented boycotters. Coors took advantage of these internal divisions, continuing its anti-unionism at the same time its workforce became more diverse, its marketing campaigns more inclusive, and its commitment to conservative politics more pervasive.

So, was the boycott against Coors successful? Though boycotters did succeed at organizing a long-term, broad-based, coordinated movement and persevered "because they had fun and were bound together by anger, bitterness, and shared vision of liberation and solidarity," they failed to make much difference on the shop floor for the union (p. 191). While sales dropped temporarily and its reputation suffered periodically, Coors was able to capitalize on divisions within the boycott coalition and rebrand itself as an exemplar of corporate social responsibility. Paradoxically, this rebranding could be interpreted as success for the boycotters, or at least for boycotters who were most concerned with discrimination at the company. Over the course of the boycott, Coors funded efforts to recruit more people of color, invested money in Black and Latino communities, extended employment benefits to partners in same-sex relationships, and sponsored numerous events for gay and lesbian organizations. Without pressure from the boycott coalition, Coors may not have been so eager to do so—at least until the company realized it was alienating a growing segment of its potential consumer base. Though ardent boycotters still refuse to purchase Coors products, the boycott has lost organizational support, perhaps most significantly from the AFL-CIO, which officially lifted its boycott against Coors in 1987.

Brantley's research on the Coors boycott coalition and individual activists is extensive and she makes a convincing case that "boycotts can be radical, transformative, and successful forms of political praxis" (p. 4). For readers unfamiliar with the history of boycotts and consumer activism, her case study could have been situated more broadly in the existing literature, particularly in terms of studies that have highlighted solidarity between workers and consumers. Indeed, the consumer is mostly absent from Brantley's study. Specialists may benefit from an elaboration on how the boycott interacts with other tactics that activists employ, such as the union label or other so-called boycott tactics. Though admittedly outside of the scope of her study one wonders how the two dominant breweries, Anheuser-Busch and Miller, and their unionized workers responded to and perhaps benefited from the Coors boycott. After all, boycotters likely desired a substitute for their Silver Bullets and surely a cold Bud or Miller High Life would have sufficed.

*Wendy Wiedenhoft Murphy is professor of sociology at John Carroll University. She is the author of several works, including Consumer Culture and Society (2017) and co-editor of The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Sociology (with George Ritzer; 2020).*

. . .

**Heartland Blues: Labor Rights in the Industrial Midwest** *By Marc Dixon.* New York: Oxford University Press, 2021. 192 pp. Illustrations, bibliography, notes. Hardcover, \$39.95. ISBN: 978-0-19-091703-6.

doi:10.1017/S0007680521000799

Reviewed by Robert Bussel

In rapid succession between 2010 and 2015, state legislatures in Wisconsin, Indiana, Ohio, and Michigan either passed right-to-work laws or approved other limits on unions and the practice of collective bargaining. Although voters subsequently repealed Ohio's collective bargaining restrictions, these mostly successful efforts represented a stunning assault on union legitimacy in a region long perceived as a labor stronghold.

As Marc Dixon explains in *Heartland Blues*, these assaults were not of recent vintage. Rather, they represented new manifestations of political efforts to undermine unions that occurred even during labor's glory days in the decades immediately following World War II.

In examining labor's vulnerabilities during this period, Dixon aligns himself with scholars who have questioned the concept of a post-World War II "capital-labor accord" as an exaggeration of union power and an underestimation of ongoing corporate and political resistance.