

Volume **48**  
Number **2**  
May **2014**

Journal of  
**American**  
**Studies**

CAMBRIDGE  
UNIVERSITY PRESS

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*Journal of American Studies* is published four times a year in February, May, August and November. The subscription price (excluding VAT), which includes postage, of Volume 48, 2014, is £291 (USA, Canada and Mexico US \$507), for institutions print and electronic, institutions electronic only £246/\$429; individual rates are available on application to the publisher. Single parts are available at £80 net (USA, Canada and Mexico \$139) each. Orders, which must be accompanied by payment, may be sent to a bookseller, subscription agent or to the publishers: Cambridge University Press, The Edinburgh Building, Shaftesbury Road, Cambridge CB2 8RU or in the USA, Canada and Mexico to Cambridge University Press, The Journals Fulfillment Department, 100 Brook Hill Drive, West Nyack, New York 10994-2133. EU subscribers (outside the UK) who are not registered for VAT should add VAT at their country's rate. VAT registered subscribers should provide their VAT registration number. Japanese prices for institutions are available from Kinokuniya Company Ltd, P.O. Box 55, Chitose, Tokyo 156, Japan. Prices include delivery by air. Copies of the Journal for subscribers in the USA, Canada and Mexico are sent by air to New York to arrive with minimum delay.

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# Editors' Note

From discussions of antilynching legislation to nineteenth-century stage practice, the question of morality underpins the articles in this issue of the journal. We feature articles ranging from the politicization of African American prisoners to a critique Claude McKay's *Banjo: A Story without a Plot*, as well as essays on empire, organized labour, and Ralph Waldo Emerson.

The first five articles in the issue consider morality from the perspective of race and racial trauma in the United States, from the American Revolution to the Cold War, with essays by Zoe Colley, Niall Palmer, Graeme Abernethy, Lindsay Phillips, and Laura Sandy. Contributions by Benjamin Park, Tom Cutterham, and Stephen Parfitt invite us to consider how the theoretical underpinnings of the US political narrative can carve out a space to consider questions of morality in wartime and in diplomatic context, as in the examination by Andrew Priest of empire and colonialism and by Bruce Montgomery of Saddam Hussein's archive of atrocity.

Andrew Wroe et al. consider politics through the "culture war" and the polarization of American sentiment on moral issues, while Cynthia Patterson's theoretical approach to nineteenth-century ladies' magazines provides an alternative cultural interpretation of performative morality.

In the review section, we feature roundtable discussions of two prize-winning books on American foreign relations. On the print side, Ann-Marie Wilson, David Hollinger, and Steven Miller give their views on Andrew Preston's *Sword of the Spirit, Shield of Faith*, an epic account of the influence that religion has had on America's role in the world. On the electronic side, Ed Miller, Jessica Chapman, Louisa Rice, and Matt Masur analyse Fredrik Logevall's *Embers of War*, which offers a detailed examination of the first Vietnam war and charts the way that the US came to be involved in what was, effectively, a nationalist struggle against European colonialism. Following on from *Embers of War*, Angela Sorby and Monika Elbert examine Anna Mae Duane's *Suffering Childhood: Violence, Race, and the Making of the Child Victim*, which uncovers the pivotal role constructions of childhood played in early US formulations of race and nationhood.