is a synthesis that capitalizes on recent theses and dissertations focusing on the dynamic complexity of daily black life, which the author amply summarizes.

Marvin Kay and Lorin Cary fill a demographic void for colonial slavery. Bondsmen of the pre-Revolutionary generation, they show, surprisingly comprised over 50 percent of the populace, nearly 50 percent on the Cape Fear plantations. Furthermore, the favorable sex ratio resulting from the steady influx of foreign-born slaves enabled the slave family to maintain itself and its African heritage. Obversely, using administrative records, Todd Savitt narrates the postbellum rise and fall of Leonard Medical School. His is a rich portrayal of the wrongheadedness of northern investors, insufficient government funding, and ironic twists of improved medical standards which stymied the Shaw University facility.

Likewise, but more limitedly, Linda Perkinson evinces the spectacular nature of white-guided educational efforts with an examination of five black females who taught in Raleigh from 1861-70 under the auspices of the American Missionary Association. For Howard Rabinowitz, who has broadened our understanding of urban southern race relations, the city serves primarily as corroboration of his ideas on segregation, exclusion, and disfranchisement. Finally, Leland Ferguson, in demonstrating the fertile potential for historical archeology, presents an interesting but pedestrian present-day model concerning refuse at a bus stop. Thus, in varying degrees, these scholars illuminate paths previously untraveled that can make all the difference to North Carolina black historiography.

University of Georgia


Terry G. Jordan, a University of Texas geography professor, refutes the British origins of American log buildings through field research in Europe and the United States. He conducted his domestic field studies from New Hampshire to Georgia and west to Louisiana, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Missouri, and Iowa, but excluded Florida as inconsequential even though it has examples of “bellcast” roof profiles from the German-Slavic Borderland which he claims are rare. Although Jordan concentrates on southwest New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Delaware, he notes the migration patterns of cultural groups into North Carolina, the Appalachians, Georgia, and Texas and compares domestic log buildings with their European forebears. He examined extant European log buildings in situ and in museums, categorized them by construction type and floor plan, and divided them into three cultural areas: Northern Europe, The Alps and Southwestern Germany, and the German-Slavic Borderland.

Jordan revives and defends the Fenno-Scandinian origin thesis. Although the New Sweden population was small compared to the Dutch-English-German enclaves, Jordan postulates that the intermarriage of the Delaware Valley Swedes with other nationalities dispersed their methods of log construction throughout the country. He argues that Zelinsky’s doctrine of the first effective settlement having the most impact upon an area is borne out by the Fenno-Scandinian influence. Jordan also suggests that “the later a group arrives in successive waves or immigration, the less cultural impact it has” (54). The British, although the later dominant culture, influenced only the floor
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plans and contributed subtle pressure for other groups to acculturate. Jorden concludes that this conformity is responsible for the lack of unBritish-looking Bernese, Black Forest German, and lower Silesian architecture and the acceptance of Pennsylvanian types.

American Log Buildings provides the floor plans, log planing and notching types, and photographs for the Southern historian to determine the origins of a building in question. Jorden’s argument is convincingly substantiated by his research although he too often equivocates with “possibly” and “maybe.”

Florida State University

Susan Hamburger


Richard Beeman’s book is an important addition to the history of frontier settlement. In this work, he uses Lunenburg to describe “the transmission of culture from older and more settled regions to the frontier” (10), showing that Lunenburg followed the same pattern of development as Tidewater society but did so one hundred years later. This time difference, combined with the diverse ethnic and religious background of Lunenburg, produced a vastly different society.

He supports his conclusions by examining the economic, religious, and demographic growth of Lunenburg. He shows how settlers of different ethnicity and religion settled Lunenburg, and by the 1770s how these various cultures had not coalesced. The Revolutionary War, Beeman believes, and the subsequent economic growth finally drew these disparate cultures together. The war cooled societal conflicts, the opposite experience that Edward Countryman found in New York. Then Lunenburg’s tobacco industry flourished, and as tobacco production increased, so too did the need for slave labor. There then emerged “a middle-class, slave-based society” (176). Racism and slavery, and the need to defend these institutions against outside attack, produced a common identity.

Unlike some historians, Beeman studies the big picture, placing Lunenburg within the context of the settlement of Virginia and the whole Southern backcountry. He demonstrates how trends that swept through the interior, such as the flow of settlers south through the Valley, influenced Lunenburg’s growth, and argues that attitudes and opinions prevalent in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries affected Southside development. Unfortunately, he only presents this idea of an era’s attitudes influencing societal development in the final pages. He should have combined the concepts of time and ethnic differences earlier to produce a stronger argument for why Lunenburg developed a different society than Tidewater Virginia.

This study, however, is informative and well-written. Beeman makes excellent use of several primary sources, including court and church records, tax lists, and wills, from which he compiles statistics and tables to support his findings. This all adds up to a book that helps explain why American society, and particularly Southern society, developed as it did.

Ohio State University

Mark V. Kwany