

homogenize experience over the long period she considers. The Civil War is discussed, but it forms less of a turning point than it does in other studies, and the agrarian depression of the later seventeenth century is made into less, rather than more, of a distinctive period.

Overall this is a good book to have. It will not have been an easy book to research or write and Dr. Croot is to be congratulated in bringing it to a conclusion. It fully describes a species of rural economy that has attracted little attention since the pioneering work of Joan Thirsk on Lincolnshire nearly seventy years ago. I hope it brings the present-day inhabitants of Somerset as much pleasure as it will bring Dr. Croot's professional peers.

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JAMES DELBOURGO. *Collecting the World: Hans Sloane and the Origins of the British Museum*. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2017. Pp. 504. \$35.00 (cloth). doi: 10.1017/jbr.2018.92

James Delbourgo has written a remarkable book that evaluates the life of Hans Sloane (1660–1753), as well as his collections—a massive achievement, matching in proportion to the collections themselves. The collections consisted of specimens of plants and animals, crafts from other cultures, manuscripts, books, and paintings. First displayed in Sloane's house in Bloomsbury Square and later expanded to his manor house in Chelsea, the collections became part of the basis for the British Museum, an institution that Sloane himself initiated by calling for it in his will. The figure that emerges through Delbourgo's perceptive analysis of Sloane is that of a very intelligent man on the make: rising from his servant family in northern Ireland to wealth and celebrity in London as a famous doctor and president of the Royal Society, using the objects of the developing British Empire to place himself at the center of it, preserving the knowledge gained through the new science, and concerned about British society as a whole by establishing the British Museum as a public institution. Delbourgo demonstrates why the previous methods of the history of science have obscured the significance of Sloane through “triumphalist narratives of scientific progress” and of heroic single figures like Newton working alone, rather than “reconstructing past structures of thought and practice” to illuminate “the pursuit of natural history on a global stage through the many exchanges of knowledge that took place across cultures in this era” (xxiii, xxvi). Delbourgo uses the methods of Atlantic studies to show how indigenous cultures and Africans transplanted by slavery made significant contributions to the collections and to the knowledge of the new science. Delbourgo proves the virtue of his approach in this work, certainly an extraordinary achievement. However, he does not quite acknowledge, as in general the practitioners of Atlantic studies do not, that other cultures are valued in this approach only to the extent that they contributed to Western science.

Delbourgo does justice to the colonial origins and travels of Sloane in the first part of the book, aptly called “Empire of Curiosities.” Sloane's upbringing as a member of the Anglo-Irish community in northern Ireland sets the stage for his zealous justification of Protestant colonization in his travels to Jamaica. His father's success at social mobility and the rule of primogeniture that left Sloane with no inheritance explain the energy with which he embraced his study of medicine in London and Paris, and his effective cultivation of influential contacts. The two chapters on his journey to and residence in Jamaica as physician to the governor display the power of the Atlantic studies approach. Delbourgo brings out the contribution of Indians and Africans to the remarkable collection of specimens that Sloane gathered and the botanical

significance of the plant engravings made by Everhardus Kickius for Sloane's published work on the natural history of Jamaica (these influenced Linneaus), as well as the bigotry that marked Sloane's treatment of Africans, particularly African healers. Although Delbourgo rightly reminds us that "race" as a concept had not yet coalesced, he shows that Sloane's "curiosity about the bodies of Africans reflected a sustained interest in collecting physical evidence for demonstrating racial difference" (77, 266).

In the second part of the book, "Assembling the World," Delbourgo analyzes Sloane's growing celebrity in London, as well as his increasing wealth, in part because of the Jamaican plantation inherited by his wife, and in part because of the fees paid by his elite patients, including queens and kings. He used his specimens from Jamaica to set up a private exhibition in his home, but he quickly expanded on them to include the natural history collections of others, and objects sent from correspondents in Europe, Asia, and America. Chapter 6, "Putting the World in Order," is one of the most impressive, because Delbourgo sifts through the amazing miscellany of Sloane's collection to pinpoint some key principles in the system of classification: aside from the division between "natural" and "artificial" items, which he inherited from others, "Sloane liked to draw together as many objects as possible of a given type to document variation within that group" (265). The concluding chapter on the origins of the British Museum evaluates its public status and imperial reach.

Despite Delbourgo's diligence, the West remains at the center of this book. There are times when the summaries of the collections seem to reproduce Sloane's own methodology: lists of so-called "exotic" items meant to impress (see 212, 218, 298–99, 324). Although careful attention is given to possible indigenous or African contributors of these items, they are rarely considered in the context of their own culture, except in the chapters on Jamaica. I wish that Delbourgo had at times expanded on what an item in one of the lists meant culturally to the makers or contributors of it and juxtaposed this to how Sloane used it in his collections. Perhaps then we would have both a clearer sense of the colonial transfiguration operating in the collections and in the practice of natural history itself and a more precise understanding of attitudes toward nature and society in the other cultures being "collected." Delbourgo could also have presented a bit earlier and more fully the problems with featuring the word *world* so prominently. Whose world was being collected, and whose interests did it serve? What worlds were subordinated, colonized, excluded? Delbourgo certainly knows the answers to these questions (see 256–57, 329–30, 340–42), and a careful reader will, too, but the use of the word at all is problematic and calls for more consistent explanation. These questions and concerns do not undermine in the least the extraordinary achievement of this book, but rather they suggest some directions for further study.

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DANIEL DEWISPELARE. *Multilingual Subjects: On Standard English, Its Speakers, and Others in the Long Eighteenth Century*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2017. Pp. 344. \$69.95 (cloth).
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In the conclusion to his book *Multilingual Subjects*, Daniel DeWispelare comments on the implications his thesis might have for the subject of English as it is conceptualized in academia today, as well as on the concept of English itself in the era of globalization. In doing so he takes to task the trend in populist tracts on global English that, in his words, "paint the global reach