

show their age in that historians, musicologists and others have been breaking down canonic-like musics for decades now. His book thus attempts to reinforce a battered canon that really does need to be broken down and become more fluid. But Lasser does provide a potential access point to everyday music making, but as an audience member himself. If one reads his book as a report on one listener's experience with this music rather than as a definitive study of what makes an American musical canon, this book gives us access to one person's interactions with music from a different time.

These three authors point to ways in which geographic space, both actual and imagined, might move popular music studies beyond the hit record that soars to number 1 on a sales chart. As Fellezs suggests, this will be hard, requiring new research methodologies and walking across established musical boundaries. It will also require that all music makers, male and female, be examined. Moreover, it will require reimagining books with older approaches to find the ways they might contribute to understanding music making in all of its various spaces, albeit by asking different questions. In this way, popular music, the music made outside commercial barriers but always in relation to pop, can secure some better intellectual space in ethnomusicological circles.

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Greg Barnhisel, *Cold War Modernists: Art, Literature, and American Cultural Diplomacy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015, \$55.00/£44.00). Pp 336. ISBN 978 0 2311 6230 2.

Bryn Upton, *Hollywood and the End of the Cold War: Signs of Cinematic Change* (London: Rowman & Littlefield, 2015, \$100.00/£77.00). Pp 208. ISBN 978 1 4422 3793 3.

As a political conflict between the Soviets and the Americans, the Cold War dominated and defined international affairs for almost five decades, while also transforming the United States from within. Greg Barnhisel's *Cold War Modernists* and Bren Upton's *Hollywood and the End of the Cold War* explore the dynamics of culture and the production and circulation of the cultural products that American and global audiences consumed.

Methodologically, the two books are very different, as are their intended audiences. Barnhisel's beautifully written and carefully researched monograph explores the political weaponization of modernism by the United States government during the early Cold War, and provides an insightful contribution to the existing body of research on the complex private–public partnerships that characterized the period. The time frame of the project covers the late 1940s through, roughly, the 1960s, when Truman's and Eisenhower's top-down strategy of cultural diplomacy was replaced by Kennedy's pivot towards person-to-person cultural exchanges. This is a monograph that will be of great interest to scholars working on the cultural dimension of the Cold War, in American studies, English literature, or the history of art, as well as to general readers interested in the topic.

Bryn Upton's *Hollywood and the End of the Cold War*, a contribution to the Film and History series published by Rowman & Littlefield, is best described as an introductory text to the Cold War, well suited to an audience with limited or no prior knowledge of the topic. It uses popular films produced before and after 1989 to

demonstrate the shift in how various popular film genres changed in their plots, symbolism, choice of heroes and villains, and portrayal of American life after the end of the Cold War. Each chapter provides a brief historical background designed to help readers to situate the film, the theme, and the topic in its historical context. The book weaves a rich tapestry of Hollywood films, from foreign-policy topics, to superhero movies, to science fiction, teasing aside the ideological strands that reflect Cold War ideological divisions.

As American studies scholar Donald Pease points out in *The New American Exceptionalism* (2009), the Cold War marked a moment of reassessment and reinvention of American national identity to accommodate the US new global superpower status and the ideological needs of the conflict. Not surprisingly, this was also a cultural war, in which the totalizing worldviews represented by the United States and the Soviet Union competed for the hearts and minds of Europeans and Americans alike. Both sides used active psychological-warfare techniques that weaponized the arts, literature, and cultural products in general. Barnhisel's book covers a period when the US government became actively involved in cultural diplomacy. Upton's book explains how Hollywood reflected the world, and the US place in it, around the end of the twentieth century, at a time when the business of global image making rested squarely with the entertainment industry.

Cultural diplomacy, as an informal component of international relations, builds upon what Joseph Nye calls "soft power." It can be traced back to the decade that followed World War I, the rise of new mass communication technologies and of new theories about propaganda and persuasion. While cultural diplomacy had been extensively used during World War II, it was only after the Soviet Union detonated its first atomic bomb in 1949 that the US administration and Congress decisively embraced peacetime psychological warfare. The goal of these efforts was to influence foreign opinion in a direction that would be friendly to American interests and fight against the effects of Soviet propaganda.

This government activism in culture was rather unusual. Historically, the US had relied primarily on the private sector to promote American culture for diplomatic purposes, mostly through initiatives funded by "plutocrat philanthropists" like Rockefeller, Carnegie, or Ford (12). Truman and Eisenhower were the first two Presidents to embrace propaganda as an official peacetime strategy. During the first half of the Cold War, the National Security Council (NSC) promoted the creation of the USIA, which coordinated cultural-diplomacy efforts for the coming decade, and later, as new technologies emerged, of broadcasting organizations like VOA (Voice of America) or RFE (Radio Free Europe). The old reliance on the private sector continued in new guises, and various private-public partnerships worked towards the same goal: to showcase the value of American culture to the world.

Whether focussing on visual arts, literature, or radio broadcasting, an amazing amount of thought, energy, and money was poured into government-sanctioned cultural initiatives targeting the rest of the world. One common thread that runs through the various initiatives described by *Cold War Modernists* was Washington's concern with existing stereotypes about the United States, particularly among European intellectuals. The US was viewed as a hedonistic and materialistic place, whose population was hooked on popular culture and consumer goods, and where intellectual pursuits were at best irrelevant and at worst looked down upon. The Department of State (and occasionally the CIA) subsidized overtly and covertly a whole range of cultural projects, from art exhibits and translation projects to libraries and literary magazines.

American modernism in painting, literature, architecture, and music became proof of the unique and valuable cultural output of the United States, worthy to be ranked alongside European culture, and far better than anything the Soviet Union could produce. “Cold War modernism cast modernist art as a successful competitor in a free market of culture” (92), although the US government firmly kept a finger on the scale. In the process modernism became associated with a new understanding of “freedom” which was directly linked to the American economic model, and therefore relevant to the ideological needs of the Cold War.

The book’s five chapters are organized around the various areas in which modernism was weaponized in the cultural Cold War. Chapter 1 introduces readers to modernism, a loosely organized artistic movement that emerged in Europe around the late nineteenth century, and was later coopted during the Cold War. In the process, modernism was transformed from a radical art form which American conservatives initially decried as decadent, subversive, and un-American into merely a style, the result of the individual and artistic freedoms that could only flourish in a liberal bourgeois Western society. Chapter 2 looks specifically at painting and examines the role of the State Department in promoting American abstract expressionism first abroad and, against much domestic pressure, at home. The sudden popularity of artists like Jackson Pollock and Robert Motherwell was the direct result of the alliance between the State Department and the USIA; seemingly nonpolitical institutions like MOMA or organizations like AFA also embraced modernist art, framing it as the antithesis of Soviet realism and the ultimate proof of the creative freedoms that American artists enjoyed.

The State Department’s book programs, described in chapter 3, targeted primarily intellectuals and opinion-makers. At a time when the Soviet Union was flooding Europe with cheap books, magazines, and pamphlets extolling the virtues of communism and promoting Soviet writers, the US government turned to books to tell America’s story to the world. Tens of thousands of copies of American publications were purchased and made available to foreign readers. American libraries opened across Europe and novels by American authors were offered for translation to European publishers, with a hefty subsidy, to be available in various languages. Collectively the USIA book programs created and promoted an American literary canon, complete with works of criticism that explained how American literature differed from, or was similar to, the Anglo-European tradition. They also promoted, albeit indirectly, a particular version of capitalism and liberalism, one that aligned with the ideological objectives of the State Department. Barnhisel comments, “Although the US book program never compared to the Soviet programs in terms of top-down government direction, the US government subsidized, facilitated, and underwrote the publication for many books arguing against excessive government involvement in the markets” (118). Occasionally, these initiatives became the center of the domestic ideological tug-of-war. “The Smith-Mundt Act explicitly called for the private sector to be the dominant partner in the postwar book program, with government playing a facilitative or advisory role” (99). During the McCarthy years, not only the amount, but also the content, of those books was subject to Congress scrutiny, with specific books or authors purged from the shelves of American libraries abroad, then brought back, as the political tides shifted.

Due to its focus mostly on realist novels, the USIA book program did not allow modernist works to take center stage; it was mostly highbrow magazines that promoted American literary modernism abroad. Two of these magazines are covered in chapters 4 and 5. *Encounter* and *Perspectives USA* were founded specifically in order

to use high culture to lure European intellectuals – most of them leftists – to the American side. Both were published by cultural organizations deeply committed to the project of the cultural Cold War. *Encounter* benefited from secret government subvention, and thrived for decades, as one of the most respected literary journals of the Anglo-American world. *Perspectives* had a shorter life, but Barnhisel argues that its impact was significant. Backed by the wealthiest foundation in the US, the Ford Foundation, *Perspectives* “implicated modernism ... in the collaboration between intellectuals, universities, foundations, the business world, the publishing industry and the national-security state” (180).

The final chapter of the book tells the story of how radio broadcasting was harnessed in the cultural Cold War, as a new technology able to reach large numbers of people globally. The story of VOA and RFE as agents of cultural propaganda abroad shares the same trends as that of the art exhibits, book programs, or literary magazines covered by earlier chapters. Founded in 1942, VOA grew into a central part of the peacetime psychological-warfare efforts behind the Iron Curtain. It produced programming for foreign consumption, and focussed mostly on providing news, descriptions of American politics and society, and anticommunist propaganda for the general public. It also offered some cultural content: poetry readings, lectures by modernist authors such as William Faulkner (a darling of the USIA cultural-diplomacy projects), plays by Thornton Wilder, and lots of jazz. *Music USA* was VOA’s most popular program, and it effectively brought jazz to the world. VOA’s news and feature programming contextualized jazz by presenting it as a new and modern musical genre worthy of respect by European intellectuals and music aficionados. By the time modernism entered VOA, it had been fully domesticated, shorn of its radical roots, and turned into a signifier of American cultural sophistication and uniqueness.

Barnhisel concludes that, overall, these programs attained their goals. By the 1960s, not only had art elites on both sides of the Atlantic embraced modernism, but the American middle class had as well. This transformation was not the result of crude government propaganda, nor was it entirely a product of the free market. Rather, it was a slow and multifaceted process, “carried out through a wide variety of official and unofficial programs,” some run by government offices (the USIA), by government-supported secret groups (the CCF), or by private organizations such as the Found Foundation. They were mediated by a diverse group of individuals with their own agendas – journalists, academics, ambassadors, and plutocrat philanthropists whose private initiatives operated alongside, and often in tandem with, the government-run programs. Starting with the Kennedy administration, government efforts to coordinate cultural diplomacy were gradually scaled down and defunded, and in 1999 the USIA was abolished.

By the first decade of the twenty-first century, popular culture remained the main window into American life for global populations. Bryn Upton’s *Hollywood and the End of the Cold War* compares films from the late Cold War era with films of the same genre or themes from the 1990s and early 2000s. Its premise is that the interpretive framework of American film after the 1950s was strongly shaped by the Cold War; the end of the Cold War is assumed to have changed those aesthetic interventions because it changed how Americans saw themselves and their country’s new role in the world. Despite the promise of the book’s title, the Cold War is mostly a temporal landmark for a period understood strictly within the parameters of the US-versus-Soviet Union paradigm. The deeper ideological dynamics of the conflict are never explored in

depth, nor is its different impact on American society at different points in time, despite the very significant variations between, for example, the cultural and political atmosphere of the 1950s, the 1970s, and the 1980s, both within the US and globally.

Hollywood And the End of the Cold War is divided into nine chapters organized thematically. The main criterion used in selecting the films was “that they were popular enough to have made an impact on American culture, or because they were emblematic of important cultural memes or ideals” (14). Some of Upton’s insights are valuable, particularly his engaging analyses in the first three chapters, which cover the action movie and superhero genres and discuss popular franchises such as *Batman*, *Superman*, *X-Men*, *James Bond*, and *Bourne*. In all cases, the end of the Cold War marked the end of the recognizable villains whose motivations could be easily grasped by audiences who shared a set of basic assumptions about the Soviet Union and its allies. Another change is that protagonists (superheroes or not) who used to work alongside the government, and to operate within a system understood as on the side of “good,” became outsiders in the post-1990s films, either fighting the system or acting independently of it. This realignment extends the cultural trends of the Reagan years in the 1990s and early 2000s. For instance, Upton notes that Tony Stark (Iron Man) “represents the libertarian impulse that has been growing in America since the 1980s.” Like him, the other superheroes of the post-Cold War era embody a privatized, individual response to the new external threats to the nation, rather than a collective, government-driven one. Iron Man has “privatized peace” (34).

Other parts of the book are less well structured or fail to provide convincing evidence. Chapter 4 takes up the theme of redemption by contrasting the portrayal of the Vietnam War in films made in the 1980s, 1990s, and early 2000s. It lumps such disparate productions as *Taxi Driver*; classic Vietnam films such as *Platoon*, *Full Metal Jacket*, and *Apocalypse Now*; the *Rambo* franchise; and 1980s action thrillers *Top Gun* and *Iron Eagle* together with superhero films such as *Thor*, *Spiderman*, and *Captain America*. This is a rather confusing chapter, which starts with a discussion of the concept of “civil religion” in relation to American attitudes towards the Vietnam intervention, linking it with a discussion of the lessons that a post-Cold War America supposedly learned from 9/11, and returning to the genre of superhero films and the theme of redemption – personal and collective.

The lack of theoretical and conceptual anchoring is also felt in chapter 5, which compares films pertaining to the coming-of-age genre from the 1950s and 1980s with those made after 1990. A concatenation of plot summaries guides the reader along the variations in ideas of adulthood before and after the end of the Cold War, but does not link these ideas to the social and political trends of 1960s and 1980s. The same lack of contextualization informs chapter 6, which analyzes Hollywood’s portrayal of corporate culture; the American business world, as reflected in film, is discussed mostly in gender terms, although arguably capitalism was a central part of the ideological battles of the Cold War. A deeper exploration of these films’ engagement with the ideological tropes of the Cold War would have enriched the discussion. The trope of emasculation and male loss of purpose in the films of the 1990s is at the center of chapter 7 (on midlife-crisis films). After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the culture wars have replaced the Cold War; bereft of communist foes to crush and threatened by their wives’ careers, American men are alienated and unhappy, withering away in cubicles (*Fight Club*) or basements (*American Beauty*). In the final two chapters the author again picks up the thread

of the Cold War as global conflict between the Soviets and the US, and convincingly links the evolving imaginary of catastrophe in film to the shift in national anxieties away from nuclear apocalypse and towards ecological disaster and societal collapse, as Hollywood turned to pandemics and environmental catastrophes of all sorts as replacements for the tropes of atomic war and global communist takeover which had served it so well during the previous decades.

Although it does not fully explore the signs of cinematic change promised in the title, and, crucially, does not engage existing scholarship on the topic in American studies, film history, or Cold War studies, *Hollywood and the End of the Cold War* remains an accessible text, clearly and engagingly written, which can be a useful source of information for a reader approaching the topic for the first time or for instructors teaching at undergraduate level about the Cold War and its film cultures.

Looking back upon the Cold War, it is highly ironic that the cultural initiatives of the early Cold War, covered by Barnhisel's book, partly stemmed from the desire not to have the United States defined abroad only by its popular culture. By the 1990s, Hollywood emerged as the country's main cultural ambassador, the de facto window through which, for better or worse, American values and American ideas were communicated to viewers abroad, even though, as Upton's book shows, America's self-image was in flux, altered yet again by the new global context.

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Kenneth Dauber, *The Logic of Sentiment: Stowe, Hawthorne, and Melville* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2019, \$23.06). Pp. 164. ISBN 978 1 5013 5736 7.

Xine Yao, *Disaffected: The Cultural Politics of Unfeeling in Nineteenth-Century America* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2021, \$28.95). Pp. 304. ISBN 978 1 4780 1483 6.

Kenneth Dauber's introduction to *The Logic of Sentiment* highlights one of the problems that scholars of nineteenth-century US sentimentalism face today: concern that our work simply echoes the now well-established debates as to whether this literature proves subversive or hegemonic. Yet this general mood of skepticism toward sentimentalism and scholarship on the topic proves generative for both Dauber and Yao. In their respective work, each invigorates critical conversations around sympathy by analyzing how nineteenth-century writers themselves grappled with sentimentalism's limits. Dauber explores how sentimentalists "contend with" the realization "that not even a perfect understanding can bridge the gulf between us" (11), that the "I" and "you" always remain separate. Yao investigates who resisted sympathy, even within sentimental literature. In particular, she attends to how people of color refuse demands that they prove their humanity by displaying their affective attachments to whiteness. Together this scholarship expands conversations about what prompted doubt as to the efficacy or desirability of shared feeling.

Lest I overemphasize the commonality between Dauber's and Yao's works, let me note that they differ in their theoretical approaches, text selections, and conclusions. To distinguish his work from earlier studies, Dauber declares, "I wish to look at sentimentality from a somewhat less cultural lens" (10). As a counterpoint to exploring sentimentalism's relation to "solidarity, an assertion of the marginalized against the