

interventionism and in connecting his personal odyssey to the broader political and cultural climate. However, despite Birdwell's argument that York's association with Harry Warner and his collaboration on the film version of his life was the critical factor in his political transformation, the second half of the book has only a tenuous connection to the Warner Bros. campaign against Nazism. *Celluloid Soldiers* aims high, but as a whole, it misses the mark.

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Diane Winston, *Red-Hot and Righteous: The Urban Religion of the Salvation Army* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999).

"A donut's just a donut, boys," chimed a rhyme extolling the work of American Salvation Army "Sallies" who baked and distributed thousands of the sweet pastries to front-line soldiers during World War One. However, a donut is never "just" a donut; in the muddy trenches of France, it becomes "a sweet-scented wreath which in God's garden grows" and a reminder of "a slice of mother's love." (219-220) The donut is layered with even more meanings by Diane Winston in *Red-Hot and Righteous*, an account of the Salvation Army's "urban religion" in the United States. In the hands of the Sallies, the lowly donut embodied religious symbols in the form of a simple circle of wholeness, composed of the manna of that most sacred of foods, bread. Coffee and donuts were a "secular communion of a nonsectarian character" that offered a means of communicating the Army's underlying Holiness, theology, and activism. (5, 217) If the "doughnut girls" were a public relations coup, determining the relative "success" of the Army in engaging popular culture is a far stickier problem. Donut sales rose exponentially after the war, but measuring the relationship between religion and culture requires a deeper analysis. Winston serves us with a tantalizing piece of work, but it is one that ultimately leaves the reader looking for more satisfying nourishment.

As a cultural history of the Salvation Army in the United States from 1880 to 1950, *Red-Hot and Righteous* is obviously concerned with far more than donuts. The scope and variety of material elements explored in this work are its greatest strength. Salvationists employed open-air meetings and boisterous parades as a means to sacralize secular space, building a "Cathedral of the Open Air" that both evangelised the unchurched and mocked Victorian conventions of respectability. Symbols such as the distinctive Army uniform and the Christmas kettle were themselves appropriated by the surrounding culture and recognised as identifiable elements of American urban life. The Army was successively involved and featured in vaudeville shows, theatrical productions, and movies; cultural activities that both shaped and reflected

popular conceptions of the Army itself. Because the development of commercial entertainment was an important factor in the transformation of urban life at the turn of the century, Winston characterizes the Salvation Army as a distinctly “urban religion.” At times, this label is misleading. It is true that cultural elements of the Army were incorporated within the overall image of American urban life, but the Army’s symbols were hardly confined to the metropolitan environment. Not everyone could see a Broadway show, but most Americans did, at some point, have access to donuts, parades, movies, and Christmas kettles. Even Winston admits that most of the Army’s own recruits, particularly women converts, were drawn from small towns. (34)

Red Hot and Righteous is less a history of “urban religion” than it is a history of an image and the urban context in which that image was perceived. It is not the city itself, but the interpretive lens of “commercial culture” that Winston uses to situate the cultural forms and symbols of the Salvation Army. In staging vaudeville shows and epic pageants, the Army was “suffusing secular forms with religious content” that “subverted the very culture that gave rise to these entertainments.”(3-4) Somewhere along the line, however, both the evangelical message and the subversive edge of the Army were blunted by the need to “sell” itself as a charitable organization, worthy of the attention of wealthy benefactors. Unlike other recent treatments of Salvationist history that have regarded the cultural elements of the Army as a religious expression of working class culture, Winston views them as part of a successful engagement with consumerism. From this perspective, the Salvation Army did not challenge class and gender norms as much as it offended Victorian sensibilities by turning religion to spectacle. As American society became more favourably disposed towards consumer culture, it could also accept and even support the Army.

The problem with this interpretive strategy is that it assumes that culture only operates in one direction and on one level. Even if Winston’s analysis of the middle and upper class “consumerist” perception of the Army is correct, did the popular culture of the Army not operate differently for working-class participants and converts? Instead of simply examining how the Army incorporated elements of popular culture, historians also need to be aware of how the working class itself accepted or rejected elements of the Army’s religiosity. Except for a brief discussion of various charitable enterprises, *Red-Hot and Righteous* offers few insights into how the Army operated within working class culture, on either a structural or a spiritual level.

In light of her affiliation with the Material History of Christianity Project, it is surprising that Winston’s perspective on the relationship between material culture and spirituality is so limited. Occasionally, the multiple meanings of material objects are explored, such as the welcome examinations of donuts and uniforms. However, the overall narrative of *Red-Hot and Righteous* is directed towards portraying the culture and image of the Army as something that is

possessed and controlled by the Army itself. Hence there is a strong emphasis on the upper echelons of the Army ranks and the strategies employed by the various commanders. Given the hierarchical nature of the Salvation Army, it can be argued that this approach is appropriate, since cultural production was controlled at the highest levels. More questionable is the assumption that culture and the cultural forms of religion are themselves neutral vehicles, simply waiting to be embodied with religious (or secular) meaning. The Army employs popular culture to its own end, but is never altered by its engagement in this process. Instead, the organization consciously adopts consumerism in order to promote its own social reform aims. At certain points, the lines between secular and sacred blur as the Army's religious symbols become part of the American landscape, but for Winston the Salvation Army is eminently successful in using popular culture for its own ends.

This autonomous control remains in force until the 1920s, when movie moguls (and, to a lesser extent, Broadway) started to adopt and reshape symbolic expressions of the Army. The wholesome image of the lassie after the war was marketable, but the power of the uniform on young female bodies was also sexually ambiguous. Moving pictures were less interested in religious commitment than they were in exploring whether "bad girls became good by putting on the uniform and, conversely, whether good girls became bad when they took it off." (203) Because culture is commodified in Winston's analysis, it is only a corporate entity like Hollywood that can wrest the power of cultural control away from the Army. It is only at this point that the Army was "forced to share the power to define itself with the very cultural forces it hoped to reform." (195)

Locating the reins of cultural production in the hands of publicists is an unfortunate symptom of the author's tendency to conflate elements of popular culture and various forms of consumer entertainment with a diffuse notion of "public opinion." It is not the act itself in which the Army engages that is important, but the public reaction to it. This awareness of public opinion was certainly important to the hierarchy, particularly when charitable enterprises required ever larger amounts of funding, but how did the evolving material culture of the Salvation Army relate to its own piety and devotions? There are glimpses of this type of analysis, such as the discussion of uniforms which served as a "social skin that signified the wearer's commitment to God," a statement repudiating the consumer ethos of fashion, and a protective badge for women who evangelised in unsavoury social spaces. (85-94) Even here, however, it is unclear how Winston's use of "performance" and "costume" are related to an individual religious understanding of wearing an Army uniform, particularly in the twentieth century.

The use of gender is similarly problematic, despite the sustained attention paid to the role and image of women in *Red-Hot and Righteous*. The Army challenged social conventions by transforming Hallelujah lassies into "women

warriors” and offering single male officers tips on housekeeping. This potentially subversive image was abruptly modified, however, with a change in leadership in 1896. The image of the Sallie was altered to project a “womanly woman,” embodying domestic, feminine traits of “wife, mother, and helpmeet.” (111) When Evangeline Booth began her long tenure at the head of the Army in 1904, gender roles were complicated by her tendency to espouse feminine ideals while enacting masculine behaviours. If the sight of women preaching in the ranks of the Army was a cause for scandal in the 1880s, the “doughnut girls” sent to the front lines of World War I were lauded. This patriotic adoration arose despite the fact that far more men than women served the Salvation Army overseas, but the Army had recognized the popular appeal of young lassies serving soldiers and it was this image that was emblazoned upon promotional posters and pictures. What remains unclear is how these competing images of Salvationist women related to gender and female self-understanding within the lower ranks of the Army.

Despite its shortcomings, *Red-Hot and Righteous* offers a refreshing perspective on religious history by suggesting that there are deeper interactions between religion and culture than many historians have suspected. It is in illustrating how a supposedly secularizing society adopted and incorporated the religious symbols of the Army within the fabric of American life that Winston is most successful and innovative. And it is here that the paradigm of urban religion operates most effectively; however “success” is judged in relation to religion, it is clear that through such diverse vehicles as movies, theatre productions, and popular magazines, the Salvation Army lassies, brass bands, and Christmas kettles all became recognisable elements of urban culture. Even if many of the Army’s symbols were promoted as a means to “sell” itself as worthy of support, their presence offers a suggestive glimpse of the subtle religious discourses that underlie the formation of modern American society.

In the genealogy of pioneer religious modernizers, Winston places the Army somewhere between Dwight Moody and Aimee Semple McPherson as an organization that was tremendously successful at commodifying itself and selling religion within the rapidly changing urban marketplace. The lens of consumer culture is both a strength and a handicap in that the cultural elements of the Army are commodified by society and historian alike. Winston is ultimately concerned with maintaining that the Salvation Army is actively in control of its own transformation from evangelical revivalism to a modern philanthropic organization. However, to suggest that mediums of culture are themselves transformative is not to reduce the Army’s experience to one of secularising accommodation. Widening the field of cultural production and meaning to include the lower ranks of the Army and the working class does not unseat the role of the hierarchy in projecting its own image to society at large. Popular culture is a site for multiple discursive negotiations, but, like the hole

of a donut, these structures often go unrecognised. *Red-Hot and Righteous* is a tasty treat, but it leaves the reader hungry for more sustenance in its analysis.

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Christopher Waldrep, *Roots of Disorder: Race and Criminal Justice in the American South, 1817-1880* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1998).

Christopher Waldrep delivers an intriguing study of southern whites' tense dance with multiple partners of race, class, and the law in Vicksburg, Mississippi. By the end of the Reconstruction era, race trampled all over the law and managed to push class nearly off the floor.

During the antebellum era, Warren County whites typically controlled slaves either outside the legal system or in the lower courts, where justice was informal and determined more by public opinion than formal legal process. This fit within southern white legal culture that tolerated dueling and occasional mob action to uphold community standards. When Warren County officials began interpreting the law as a tool for promoting and protecting the public good — a nationwide trend by the 1830s — some unsupervised slaves who seemed to threaten public order did begin appearing in the higher courts. But because jurists and lawyers were beholden to an ideology of the law as impartial, autonomous, and immutable, the formal procedure of the higher courts sometimes benefited slave defendants. Not only did this imperil slaveowners' previously autonomous control of their slaves on the plantation, it also reinforced whites' perception of the law as an inefficient tool for managing the black population.

After the severe disruptions caused by the Civil War, Vicksburg whites, spurred in part by white women's calls for protection from menacing black men, began to unify across class and ethnic lines. In the midst of a crime wave after the war, whites, who exaggerated black men's criminality and minimized white banditry, became more convinced of the law's inability to manage blacks. Even the Governor called for extralegal "patrols" to maintain order. Whites also believed that the law abetted misrule: it enabled black men to serve on grand juries and step into other positions of power. The specter of black men wielding power became a catalyst for white solidarity, and in 1873 white dissatisfaction targeted the newly elected black sheriff. Warren County whites — rich and poor, Republican and Democrat, Irish and native-born, southerners and northerners — came together in the face of black rule to harass, brutalize, and murder dozens of freedpeople, forcing the sheriff's resignation. Southern whites had concluded that their vision of order required lethal disorder.