

record them, rendering it attractive to politicians, bureaucrats, and business executives interested in shaping the beliefs and desires of citizen-consumers. With seeming inevitability, Alder tells how the polygraph slipped from its creators' control, trampling on civil liberties as it perpetually conjured up "suspect foreigners, suspect friends, suspect selves" (p. 228).

There was, however, one conspicuous public venue in which the lie detector was always treated with pronounced skepticism: the American courtroom. Although the polygraph was regularly used by law enforcement personnel to extract guilty pleas from suspects, criminal courts were fairly uniform in barring the admission of evidence obtained by such means, declaring that "the *jury* is the lie detector" (p. 257). The resistance shown by many academic psychologists as well as judges calls for fuller explanation, particularly given the author's larger claims about America's obsessive relationship with this "mechanical oracle" (p. 270). Such an examination might have enabled Alder to identify more persuasively what it was about the configuration of scientific, political, and legal authorities in twentieth-century America that rendered its inhabitants so peculiarly susceptible to the pretenses of the lie detector. There is nonetheless much to admire in Alder's timely and unabashedly cautionary tale. It reminds us that human opacity is not only a source of social mistrust, but also a means of securing human freedom—a sort of blessing in disguise.

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The Early Black History Movement, Carter G. Woodson, and Lorenzo Johnston Greene. By Pero Gaglo Dagbovie. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2007. xviii, 258 pp. Cloth, \$65.00, ISBN 978-0-252-03190-8. Paper, \$25.00, ISBN 978-0-252-07435-6.)

With *The Early Black History Movement*, Pero Gaglo Dagbovie contributes benchmark research to U.S. historiography in two ways: first, he reinstates Carter G. Woodson as an "iconoclast" figure in black thought; and second, he offers a seminal examination of

Lorenzo Johnston Greene, an understudied but exemplary scholar-activist-educator. The book is divided into two sections: one on Woodson, one on Greene—each containing four chapters. The conclusion outlines major similarities and differences of the two scholars' work. Throughout the book, Dagbovie foregrounds the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History (ASNLH) and Lincoln University in Missouri.

In his treatment of Woodson (1875–1950), Dagbovie critiques existing interpretations of Woodson's "intricate" personality, then constructs an original and definitive intellectual portrait from both intimate and public sources (p. xii). Dagbovie argues that scholars strategically reference *Mis-education of the Negro* (1933), but "sidestep" Woodson's legacy due to enduring derision by W. E. B. Du Bois and others (p. 43). Dagbovie's intellectual reclamation complements the current effort of the Association for the Study of African American Life and History to physically restore Woodson's home in Washington, D.C.

The author then skillfully portrays Greene (1899–1988), a scholar whose sustained intellectual production (five books, multiple journal articles, and over two hundred poems) has not earned due attention. Greene, like Woodson, had a working-class background and, like Du Bois, was raised in New England. Greene graduated from Howard University as a history major then, with exhausting effort, earned a master's and Ph.D. from Columbia University. At ASNLH, Greene sharpened under Woodson's rough-edged tutelage and, along with Charles Wesley and Rayford Logan, worked to gain Woodson's approval and support, which rarely, if ever, arrived.

Like Dagbovie's own depiction, Greene's account provides a fascinating inside look at the edgy, ruthless, and seemingly mean-spirited Woodson. For example, Woodson "lightly edited" and took credit for the *Negro Wage Earner* (1930), which Greene penned. Most cruelly, when (after sixteen years) Greene finished his dissertation, "The Negro in Colonial New England" (1942), Woodson responded with a flippant, "'What do we have here? Nothing.' Punctuating it with a contemptuous snap of his fingers, he threw it on the desk" (pp. 153, 179). Greene's diaries offer no sug-

ary tale of hero worship for the “father of Negro history.” Yet, Dagbovie demonstrates that between Woodson’s tireless intellectual work and Greene’s tireless intellectual life, the collective “Herculean” contribution of these two very different men *must* be appropriately recognized (p. 109).

Dagbovie also takes seriously black women’s intellectual history. In chapter 4, he argues that, for his time, Woodson provided more focus on black women’s scholarly participation than previous Woodson biographers have acknowledged. In addition, the author presents Mary McLeod Bethune as an intellectual in her own right. Commendably, Dagbovie himself cites a multitude of women scholars rather than appropriating their work without reference.

The Early Black History Movement, published in paperback at a reasonable price, is directed at both a scholarly and general audience. Dagbovie masterfully engages rigorous mainstream, traditional scholarship, but grounds his analysis in critical race and gender approaches. In short, Dagbovie provides an unprecedented analytical account of two central black history innovators. There are nuanced insights here, but because it is written plainly, this book should enjoy wide readership and will undoubtedly inspire further investigation, recovery, and interpretation.

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W. E. B. Du Bois: American Prophet. By Edward J. Blum. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007. viii, 273 pp. \$39.95, ISBN 978-0-8122-4010-8.)

Edward J. Blum’s *W. E. B. Du Bois: American Prophet* argues that many significant biographies of the groundbreaking African American historian, sociologist, novelist, public intellectual, and activist have eschewed any meaningful interrogation of Du Bois’s religious purview or its impact in his research. The absence of references to religion or faith in biographies of Du Bois has led many readers to believe that Du Bois had an avowed disregard for religion. However, according to Blum, noth-

ing could be further from the truth. In this profoundly moving text, the author examines the broad spectrum of Du Bois’s writings—including his often overlooked autobiographical and literary work—and reveals numerous ruminations on theology, Christology, church reform, the nature of the soul, racialized constructions of morality, and other dimensions of religiosity throughout his lengthy career. Moreover, in an era that witnessed the likes of Walter Rauschenbusch, Reinhold Niebuhr, and Martin Luther King Jr., Blum emphasizes that “Du Bois was not the only voice of his era speaking on religion, church reform, race, imperialism, war, materialism, and social uplift. But he was certainly the most articulate and the most comprehensive” (p. 131). Given the centrality of religion in Du Bois’s scholarship, Blum argues quite brilliantly that Du Bois should rightfully be recognized as a premier scholar of religion.

Of course, Du Bois’s venerated masterpiece, *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903), holds a central place both literally and figuratively in the author’s conceptualization of Du Bois as religious thinker. While the enduring potency and importance of Du Bois’s most famous text is undeniable, it is somewhat puzzling that, in a religious biography of Du Bois, the author does relatively little with Du Bois’s pioneering sociological analysis of African American Christianity, *The Negro Church* (1903). As a manifestation of the intertwined prophetic and pragmatic realities in Du Bois’s scholarship, *The Negro Church* deserves much greater scrutiny. While this certainly does not detract from Blum’s phenomenal work, it seems like a missed opportunity.

Ultimately, Blum makes Du Bois serviceable to a more pluralistic vision of American religious history in ways that are equally profound and poetic. Throughout this biography, he demonstrates that “Du Bois approached his scholarship as a moral intellectual, one whose research spoke to ethical and religious problems in the United States and the world” (p. 132). As a result, the author reveals how Du Bois’s life and career pose a paradox in academic circles, both then and now: Du Bois as too religious for secularists and too secular for religionists. Thus, the author depicts Du Bois as a *tertium quid* in both religious and racial terms.