

ghetto was the product of a cruel and immoral system. When blacks looted white-owned businesses and fought policemen, they were objecting not only to specific grievances such as job discrimination, police brutality, weak civic services, and underfunded schools, but also to the larger system that undergirded this exploitation.

McLaughlin laments liberals' dismissal of Black Power advocates such as Stokely Carmichael, who painted ghetto residents as colonial subjects, accused the government of perpetrating racist genocide through the Vietnam War, and argued for redistribution of power to the grassroots. He further decries the Johnson administration's fear of mass action to combat poverty, as reflected by its militaristic response to the 1968 Poor People's Campaign demonstration in Washington, D.C. While celebrating the flowering branches of Black Power in the aftermath of the 1960s, he warns that "to come to terms with the history of the long, hot summers is to confront the failings of the New Deal tradition of liberalism" (180–181). That analysis may obscure the scope and impact of the modern American Right, which exploited the 1967 riots to help inaugurate a new conservative era in American politics. Nevertheless, it is a sobering warning as we continue to confront the crisis of race, power, and the city.

ARAM GOUDSOUZIAN
University of Memphis

PAUL H. SANTA CRUZ. *Making JFK Matter: Popular Memory and the Thirty-Fifth President*. Denton: University of North Texas Press, 2015. Pp. xxii, 363. \$29.95.

The assassination of John F. Kennedy still resonates powerfully today; even many Americans born long after 1963 have invested emotions in the event. Paul H. Santa Cruz's study pursues the ambitious task of exploring how Kennedy and his administration have been remembered by parties who have attempted to define the president's life and achievements as they tried to come to terms with his death.

Despite the passions involved, Santa Cruz argues that "memorializing JFK has had an eminently functional, utilitarian purpose" (8). The author labels memorial efforts as "sites of memory," using a term coined by the French historian Pierre Nora. Kennedy's memory was invested with meanings that allowed each "site" to achieve a goal. This was especially true of the highly interested actors whose activities immediately after 1963 are described in the first three chapters: the city of Dallas, Texas; Lyndon B. Johnson, JFK's successor; and Robert F. Kennedy, his oldest surviving brother. Dallas civic leaders "chose to emphasize those parts of the popular memory that served its purpose: the president's moderation, tolerance, and civic-mindedness"; as the mayor put it succinctly, "I don't want anything to remind me that a president was killed in the streets of Dallas" (61). The result was Philip C. Johnson's brutalist memorial of 1970, erected a block from Dealey Plaza—a concrete cube that cloaked memories of the assassination in stark abstraction. This memorial found few admirers, but Americans

responded positively to President Johnson's transmutation of their mourning into major laws paying tribute to Kennedy, such as the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Voting Rights Act of 1965, and the War on Poverty. RFK posed as the dynastic heir, seeking to undermine his rival Johnson first by embodying his family's grief and then by succeeding his brother as the tribune of compassionate liberalism. By 1968, though, RFK was voicing ambivalence about JFK's significance, boasting on the campaign trail that "*he's not running for President this year, and I am*" (145). His own assassination helped to end these early memorializing efforts.

An archivist at the George W. Bush Presidential Library and Museum in Dallas, Santa Cruz has conducted impressive research in municipal sources and relates the three case studies efficiently. The Dallas story is new and fresh to readers, while those concerning Johnson and RFK are rather familiar. The two men's efforts are portrayed as narrowly functionalist: Johnson used JFK to solidify his own presidency, and RFK polished his brother's image and revived his political crusade. The writing here also becomes slack, featuring surface-skating observations such as "Johnson, although now president, could hardly have been thrilled with the way in which he had assumed office" (76). Nor does Santa Cruz ask probing questions. For example, what insecurities or lacunae in each man's makeup—or in the 1960s liberal political class—might have compelled them to grasp for Kennedy's mantle?

The book's introduction curiously represents these three case studies as its total argument. However, two concluding chapters, virtually unmentioned at the outset, follow, and they are superior. Jacqueline Kennedy's elaborate conception of her husband's funeral and subsequent evocation of Camelot in her interview with Theodore H. White for *Life* magazine, along with fond memories of Kennedy's challenge to land astronauts on the moon and the establishment of the Peace Corps, broaden the study's scope. While Santa Cruz does not explore the gendered nature of Jacqueline Kennedy's memorializing work, he explains how it combined with perceptions of achievement in space and in diplomacy (shorn of any flaws) to formulate the notion of an unfulfilled "Kennedy promise" of national excellence. Selective memory about policies toward Cuba and Vietnam (ably discussed in the RFK chapter) also fed this tendency.

The final chapter examines the design of the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum and returns, inevitably, to the assassination. In Santa Cruz's view, mushrooming post-Warren Commission conspiracy theories, leading to the establishment of the Sixth Floor Museum at Dealey Plaza (1989) and the motion picture *JFK* (1991), reasserted the primacy of Dallas in Americans' memories. To many, the killing had to have been the product of a vast effort to prevent Kennedy from realizing his great potential. Santa Cruz admires Oliver Stone's 1991 film as a well-crafted memorial that gave voice to inchoate notions of national decline. His conclusion circles back to JFK, critiquing the president's own obsessive management of his image: "[O]ur understand-

ing of presidential leadership is, due to our memory of Kennedy, at once compelling and shallow" (298).

This chapter, along with the others, would have benefited from the application of subtle studies of JFK's image, such as David M. Lubin's *Shooting Kennedy: JFK and the Culture of Images* (2003). Nevertheless, Santa Cruz has effectively surveyed a rich and significant cultural phenomenon. As he notes, Kennedy's memorialization illustrates excellently what the historian Alison Landsberg has termed "prosthetic memory": the appending of manufactured meaning, in this case, to a complex and contradictory life which was brutally cut short.

BURTON W. PERETTI

Northern Virginia Community College

MOLLY GEIDEL. *Peace Corps Fantasies: How Development Shaped the Global Sixties*. (Critical American Studies Series.) Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2015. Pp. xxii, 319. Cloth \$105.00, paper \$30.00.

Molly Geidel explores how the Peace Corps reflected gendered discourses about modernization and development, and suggests that the program allowed for the fulfillment of masculine fantasies about brotherhood and sexual domination. Geidel also proposes a larger argument, embodied in her subtitle, that the ideas and implementation of the Peace Corps gave the politics of the counterculture (most notably the Black Power and anti-war movements) their particular form. In the most creative and well-argued sections, she explains that women and blacks, who were both subject to white male dominance and excluded from white masculine brotherhood, struggled to contextualize their Peace Corps experiences and often suffered emotionally as a result.

Geidel aggressively challenges the perspective most closely associated with Elizabeth Cobbs Hoffman's 1998 study, *All You Need Is Love: The Peace Corps and the Spirit of the 1960s*, which asserts that the Peace Corps reflected the heroic and altruistic idealism of the era. Instead, in Geidel's telling, the Peace Corps becomes a relentless destructive fantasy, often pornographic and homoerotic, that promoted a condescending worldview and failed to actually connect with local communities and create lasting and effective societal improvement. In this analysis, she builds both on larger trends in the scholarship that question the positive economic impacts of development programs worldwide from the 1940s to the present, and on the way that scholars have used Michel Foucault's concepts to deconstruct modernization theory as a model based on subjective ideas about what constitutes a "good" culture. Geidel makes the assumption that the Peace Corps' fundamental problem was in envisioning poverty not as the result of systemic market factors, but rather as a failure of certain societies to embrace Western values about capital accumulation. Thus, Peace Corps discourses about improving the world by fixing specific people were inherently neocolonial.

In the early sections of the book, Geidel connects visions of masculinity, the Peace Corps, and the broader liberalism expressed in modernization theory. The in-

tense focus on these relationships, to the exclusion of other interpretations, raises questions about alternative discourses. For example, the Peace Corps, as a program designed to work with local communities, could certainly be understood to reflect gendered notions about nurturing and care; it was designed to be a softer foreign policy tool than military power or even traditional foreign aid. In addition, while the Peace Corps was certainly about "fixing" individual people, the U.S. government also emphasized systemic macroeconomic reform as part of its other development initiatives. Moving beyond the opening sections of the book, Geidel tells a number of disturbing stories about volunteer experiences. Previous scholarship has suggested that, while some returning volunteers saw the program and their work as problematic, many, if not most, thought about their work in positive terms. The lack of meaningful engagement with alternative discourses, which likely would have resulted in a more nuanced picture, represents a lost opportunity to explain the full complexity of the Peace Corps in its intellectual and historic context.

As importantly, an effort to explain the political narrative of the Peace Corps and other contemporaneous social movements in greater detail might have made the text easier to follow. Geidel spins rapidly from one argument to the next, and a number of long sections (especially as she discusses the Black Power movement) are only tangentially related to the Peace Corps experiences that she describes. Some of the evidence, and many of the rambling subsections, are not well connected to the larger point of the book. This is especially true in the last chapter on population control programs in Bolivia. This section is enlightening about the logic and failures of programs in Bolivia as it suggests that Peace Corps officials thought of birth control as a kind of sexualized containment that was consciously manipulative. While Marxist Bolivians critiqued the policy as an effort to keep an underpopulated country poor, peasant women understood that birth control programs, especially when introduced with a measure of coercion, represented external and unacceptable control of their bodies. The chapter is a fine piece of scholarship on its own, yet Geidel struggles to tie this section to the rest of the text in an analytically meaningful way.

In a book that argues that gendered discourses were at the heart of the Peace Corps, it is not entirely surprising that the sections on female roles are the clearest and most engaging. Geidel demonstrates that Peace Corps officials appreciated the idea of gender equality among volunteers; they advertised that women, like men, would work hard and be judged solely on results and commitment. This progressive vision attracted women hoping to escape the confines of 1960s middle-class expectations. In practice though, women worked mostly in traditional domestic roles, and bourgeois obsessions about marriage continued to haunt them during volunteer training and beyond. While these arguments are convincing, they are not startling. Geidel, using the Peace Corps narrative, is essentially recasting the built-in contradictions and inherent problems in 1960s middle-class sexuality and gender roles.