

with the bottom line. DeMille's popular radio broadcasts allowed him to mold mass culture and supported his newfound position as an industry insider.

Blanke also considers the filmmaker's tainted legacy in light of the industrial contexts within which he worked. DeMille both stood up and acquiesced to censorship over his career. As his late-career publicity and public persona evolved toward corporate celebrity and model spokesman, exposé articles in the early 1940s portrayed him as a lecherous hypocrite, to which DeMille's team responded by emphasizing his conservative politics. By that time, he had moved from being a champion of social protest and supporter of New Deal reforms to a Republican critic of Franklin Roosevelt. DeMille believed cooperation and consensus should be reached between big business and labor and supported the Taft-Hartley Act. He dramatically pushed for anti-Communist oath taking at a meeting of the Screen Directors Guild in 1950. Although DeMille's influence was sustained late into his career, for Blanke, his political activity links him to larger national trends and "models ... mass culture at mid-century" (246).

While popular and academic critics have often dismissed DeMille's late-career productions as vacuous and only for the unsophisticated masses, they were widely popular and profitable. According to Blanke, both *The Greatest Show on Earth* (1952) and the remake of *The Ten Commandments* (1956) spoke to Cold War audiences who privileged consensus values and ideals of freedom. DeMille's attention to realism, large crowds, and spectacular effects gave his last films wide appeal that continues to resonate today.

The tensions between DeMille the innovator and the metronome for mass culture are largely unresolved in Blanke's study. If the director helped mold popular sentiments later in his career, why did he only "reflect" them earlier? Blanke provides a great deal more biography than he suggests in the opening of the book, so this could have been addressed, perhaps in lieu of a lengthy, jargon-laden overview of film and cultural studies. Despite this, he provides an articulate and accessible cultural history of a film icon. Backed by thorough archival research, Blanke's work capably demonstrates the American relevance of DeMille as popular Hollywood showman of the first half of the twentieth century. His book suggests historical and cultural connections between DeMille and later blockbuster filmmakers that run deeper than some critics and scholars allow.

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Allyson P. Brantley. *Brewing a Boycott: How a Grassroots Coalition Fought Coors and Remade American Consumer Activism*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2021. 304 pp. ISBN 978-1-4696-6102-5 \$95.00 (cloth); 978-1-4696-6103-2 \$29.95 (paper).

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*Brewing a Boycott* offers a deeply researched, thoroughly readable account of the anti-Coors boycott movements as they unfolded across four decades, highlighting the sometimes

unexpected coalitions that sustained them. These movements left lingering imprints, from a colorful anti-Coors mural in San Diego's Chicano Park to buttons that float around secondhand markets. For Allyson Brantley, the boycotts left behind far more than these material traces. She claims their participants "reimagined the consumer boycott and its possibilities," developing a model of marketplace politics that continues to impact activists' methods today (187).

The book's first part establishes how the Coors family firm gained a reputation for busting unions, failing to hire people of color, and bankrolling right-wing organizations. When the United Brewery Workers (UBW) local at Coors's brewery in Golden, Colorado called a strike in 1957, they urged community members to support them by joining a boycott. Stakes were high. Colorado labor leaders feared that Coors's experimentation with hiring permanent replacements and threatening a decertification election might work, and that these practices might then become more widespread.

Not all of Coors's boycotters were unionists. The firm's refusal to amend its racist hiring practices and its continued use of a polygraph test to ferret out "sexual deviants," even after the 1964 Civil Rights Act, drove new groups of consumers to reject the brew. Inspired by Republican Barry Goldwater's bid for the presidency in 1964, the Coors brothers began to more openly practice a set of New Right politics and helped to establish right-wing organizations like The Heritage Foundation. Such sponsorships led a variety of leftists to lose their taste for Coors. Although Coors's corporate archives are closed to researchers, Brantley manages to get a glimpse of the firm's logic in the same ways boycott leaders did. She uses an array of the company's public-facing materials, reports from labor journals, and notes from bargaining meetings drawn from AFL-CIO archives.

Parallel anti-Coors campaigns began to cohere into a more unified movement in the 1970s and 1980s, the focus of the book's second part. Brantley excels at tracing these shifting alliances. From 1973 to 1975, the United Farm Workers, gay and women's rights pioneers, and the Black Panther Party joined forces to support a strike of Teamster-affiliated Coors delivery drivers in the Bay Area. When the Golden UBW went on strike again in 1977, they enjoyed the support of a wide coalition. By weaving together one hundred archival collections with dozens of oral history interviews, Brantley is able to show what the boycott meant to those most invested in it. Readers catch a glance of gay rights leader Harvey Milk's notebooks, which cast boycotters as "victims of the SAME oppression," and learn how the boycott helped Coors employees to contextualize their experiences of workplace discrimination within broader patterns of institutional racism, sexism, or homophobia (88).

As the aims of movement members grew more diverse, the boycott lost clarity. This was no longer just a labor boycott that sought to build industrial democracy or improve hiring practices. It had also become an expressive campaign that sought to strike at what boycotters called the "financial godfathers of the New Right" (134). The boycott's diversity could be a source of strength, sustaining the campaign long after Coors crushed Golden's UBW local with a decertification election. However, it also left boycotters susceptible to a series of targeted "corporate social responsibility" (CSR) campaigns. Starting in the mid-1980s, Coors offered investment in Black and Chicano businesses in return for negotiators' pledges to "take positive and visible action" to improve the brand's image and end their community's boycott (157). Although many found this "transactional system of justice" insulting, others took advantage of

the offer as one of few viable ways to secure funds after the Reagan administration depleted public-sector resources—a process in which Coors was complicit (157).

Brantley successfully locates the anti-Coors boycott as illustrative of new trends in consumer activism, though it is less clear that we can directly “see [its participants’] handiwork in many of the boycotts that have proliferated in the twenty-first century” (187). Consumer activism may be an American political tradition, as Lawrence Glickman shows in *Buying Power* (2009), but new generations of boycotters can sometimes forget their predecessors’ work even as they unknowingly replicate older tactics. Although today’s boycotters may not wittingly respond to the anti-Coors campaign, they do express themselves in analogous ways because they face similar opponents. For example, Chick-fil-A recently responded to its boycotters by investing in education, health, and Black-led businesses. Although a positive move, it failed to address activists’ concerns about its CEO’s support for anti-LGBT causes. Firms like Coca-Cola and BP put ethical consumers in a bind when they engage in highly publicized CSR efforts to manage health or environmental crises arguably deepened by their own actions. Brantley’s richly researched work invites further reflection on the possibilities of consumer organizing in the twenty-first century’s highly politicized marketplace.

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David M. Wight. *Oil Money: Middle East Petrodollars and the Transformation of US Empire, 1967–1988*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2020. 347 pp. ISBN: 978-1-5017-1572-3, \$49.95 (cloth).

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David M. Wight’s *Oil Money* argues that the high oil prices of the 1970s helped to alter the course of international history by reconfiguring the relationship between the United States and one of the world’s most important oil producing regions, the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). Wight frames the United States as constituting an empire insofar as it maintained “disproportionate power” (4) over many nations and regions, which it integrated into the networks of trade, investment, and security that drove US-led globalization. His main concern is to show how the “petrodollar boom of the long 1970s” (280)—meaning the precipitous rise in oil profits in MENA nations—ultimately reshaped and benefitted the US empire. The United States, in this account, proved remarkably adaptable to the disruptions and challenges wrought by high oil prices by creating and maintaining new imperial relationships, though it did not wean itself from oil and the interdependencies inherent in its use. The resulting international order was in large part built on relationships infused with petrodollars.

The book’s argument unfolds over ten chapters, an introduction, and a conclusion. Wight sets the stage for his drama by reviewing the history of Western oil interests in the MENA and the two key events of the early 1970s that threatened the US empire in the region: the Gulf