

was only briefly connected to her arguments about domestic abuse at the end.

Even with these limitations, this book helps us understand why “spectacular” domestic abuse cases like Saavedra’s receive news coverage, while more routine experiences of stalking and harassment are largely ignored. Therefore, to draw attention to the ongoing, systemic nature of abuse, Arnold, like others (e.g., see Rhonda Hammer, *Antifeminism and Family Terrorism*, 2002), suggests characterizing domestic abuse as *terrorism* and victims as *targets*. Yet these can be totalizing terms that raise questions of agency and strategy. Reading domestic abuse as terrorism can cast it as an individually perpetrated problem, and describing victims as targets portrays them as somewhat fixed and always under attack. All of this risks minimizing the structural reasons why women remain in abusive relationships and their possibilities for agency. Furthermore, how do we address domestic abuse as terrorism? Given the ongoing failure of the “War on Terror,” and the overwhelming tendency to adopt carceral solutions to social problems in the United States, is it realistic to imagine a war against domestic-abuse-as-terror that addresses the conditions of structural vulnerability? Arnold’s asylum cases indicate that this is possible, and even if we have our doubts, we must applaud her call for radical, preventative solutions to a problem that is clearly without end.

Beyond the issue of domestic abuse, *Why Don't You Just Talk to Him?* also challenges the assumption that scholars must be Enlightenment figures who are necessarily (objectively) detached from research. At the end of the book, Arnold writes that she was and continues to be a target of domestic abuse. To argue that this experience “biases” her arguments only reinforces the bind for so many targets of abuse: They are expected to communicate about their experience, but when they do, this is often dismissed for its particularity. Arnold challenges this bind, showing that domestic abuse is a public and political problem for both college professors (like her) and housekeepers (like Saavedra), and arguments to the contrary allow it to persist and undermine women’s full democratic citizenship. In developing this account, Arnold has performed an important service.

The Power of Memory in Democratic Politics. By P.J. Brendese. Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2014. 234p. \$85.00.
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— Georgia Warnke, *University of California, Riverside*

In the past year, the question of whether and how to remember American history has become an urgent one. The Confederate flag was removed from the state capital in Columbus, South Carolina. A commemoration of southern heritage for some, it remains a paean to slavery

and racism for others. Students at Yale University likewise advocated that the university rename Calhoun College, named after John C. Calhoun, a defender of slavery, and Princeton University students want Woodrow Wilson’s name removed from the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs because of his segregationist beliefs and actions. Meanwhile, the Equal Justice Initiative has begun the process of erecting markers at the sites where each of the 3,959 lynchings of African Americans took place between the end of Reconstruction in 1877 and 1950. Yet others worry that removing names from university buildings simply encourages amnesia about the conditions under which the enterprises were named, and that marking sites of lynching has the potential to incite resentment and more violence. How, then, should the United States deal with its unjust past? Can we remove the influence of a racist history by removing its symbols—its flags, statues, and memorials? Or does removing the symbols allow that history to influence us all the more surreptitiously? Will documentations of past lynchings and anti-black riots allow Americans to finally come to terms with their past, or will it, instead, provoke further violence? What does it mean to come to terms with the past? Does it mean replacing one official history with another that may be equally incomplete? Or does it mean fostering an inclusive sense of the past, open to revision?

P.J. Brendese’s valuable book, *The Power of Memory in Democratic Politics*, notes the fundamental tension between facing up to the past and letting it bind us, between the amnesia or amnesty that allows for a fresh slate and the duty to remember those we have wronged, between, as he puts it, remembering to forget and, citing Pablo de Grieff, remembering “what our fellow citizens cannot be expected to forget” (p. 65.) Brendese’s focus is democracy. On the one hand, he writes, “amnesty and amnesia appear to be a precondition of democratic engagement free of violent retribution and division.” On the other hand, an “inclusive public commemoration is integral to the very identity of the polis” (p. 7). How then are we to think of public memory in a democracy?

First, what do we mean by democracy? Brendese sets it between two poles of possibility and impossibility, where democracy as possible is democracy as a stable institutional form and democracy as impossible is utopian. Radical democracy, the democracy he favors, amounts to the possibility of the impossible. Here, he follows Sheldon Wolin for whom democracy is “inherently unstable, inclined toward anarchy, and identified with revolution . . . resistant to the rationalizing conceptions of power and its organization” (p. 21). The importance of public memory to democracy, on this account, lies in recalling moments when the impossible became possible or, in other words, in fostering “memories of radical resistance to oppressive power, collective responses to grievances, and participation that does not rely on proxies” (p. 23).

If democracy is the possibility of the impossible, however, what is memory? Brendese notes three dimensions that it involves: active memory, referring to the memory of those parts of the past that can be consciously recalled and written into official histories; what William E. Connolly refers to as virtual memory, comprising inherited assumptions, orientations, and what Pierre Bourdieu calls “habitus,” or the muscle memory in which the past is written into our bodies and perceptions; and haunting memory, or the irruption of flashbacks and traumas that occur unbidden and irrepressibly. How these different facets of memory interact and play out is the focus of Brendese’s multilayered reflections. He begins with Sophocles’ play, *Antigone* and moves on to consider the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), the essays of James Baldwin, Toni Morrison’s novel *Beloved*, Mexico’s dirty war, and ongoing mass incarceration in the United States.

While Thebes is no democracy, Brendese’s interest in *Antigone* centers, on the one hand, on Antigone’s love of the impossible as manifested in her commitment to burying her brother and, on the other hand, on the tragedy of Creon’s attempt to control active memory by condemning her to death. Creon’s actions lead, of course, to the death of his son and wife, but Brendese is just as interested in their ineffectuality, for Antigone cannot be forgotten: “Even before her physical death, her memory comes back as a past that ‘rebites’ the demos when the city mourns her” (p. 31). Brendese finds the same ambiguity in the South African TRC. He argues that in allowing for a public disclosure of atrocities during apartheid, the TRC undid apartheid’s master narrative and achieved a goal widely deemed impossible: a peaceful transition to democracy without vengeance. Nevertheless, although the TRC may have been at least partially successful in remembering to forget, it imposed its own master narrative of reconciliation and left behind the wounds of what was irreconcilable.

The author is most interested in the nonactive dimensions of memory as they haunt the American attempt to disavow its past by downplaying slavery and its legacy. He looks to James Baldwin to note the “stigma” of blackness that affects the actions of both whites and blacks above and beyond their willing, and he looks to Toni Morrison’s *Beloved* to explore Sethe’s being haunted by the child she killed to avoid a life of slavery. As Brendese reads *Beloved*, it is “a tragedy that resists triumphalism to ask how to remember when ‘remembering seemed unwise,’ how to bury the dead who resist interment, and how to live amidst the mnemonic traces signaling debts to one’s ancestors’ unredeemed, and perhaps unredeemable suffering” (p. 88). In his chapter on Mexico’s dirty war, Brendese extends such questions to a discussion of the haunting memories of the disappeared, while in his last chapter, he reemphasizes the connection

between the way in which the United States can simply disown a past consisting of slavery and segregation and the way it is able to condone and enforce mass African American incarceration.

When it comes to the United States, the author agrees with Thomas McCarthy that “until legal, institutional, normal, everyday racism is publicly and widely understood to have been integral to our history and identity as a nation, we will . . . continue to encounter major obstacles to developing the degree of transracial injustice that are its continuing legacy” (p. 98). Yet while Brendese invokes the idea of more democratic relation to time and asks that we look to memory to recall the possibility of the impossible, his book dwells most forcibly on the ghosts and specters of history’s victims. He thus raises the question of whether the attempts of active memory at a better history and better national self-understanding will be enough, or whether the best we can do is hope with Stephen Dedalus to wake up from the nightmare that our history has turned out to be.

Governed Through Choice: Autonomy, Technology, and the Politics of Reproduction. By Jennifer Denbow. New York: New York University Press, 2015. 231p. \$28.00
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— Jemima Repo, *Newcastle University*

U.S. anti-abortion campaigners have recently succeeded in introducing new reproductive laws that compel pregnant women to see the results of compulsory ultrasounds prior to making the final decision to terminate a pregnancy. The focus of Jennifer Denbow’s book—the impact of reproductive politics on autonomy—is especially timely since, as Denbow argues, these laws are defended as practices that will enhance women’s autonomy as “proper self-governance” (p. 2). Anti-abortion campaigners frame women wanting an abortion as lacking the autonomy to make a real choice. Because they are therefore devised as incapable of proper self-governance, some U.S. states have redesigned their reproductive laws to require that pregnant women see a picture of their foetus, so they can make an allegedly informed choice regarding termination. The laws therefore claim “to promote autonomy by encouraging or mandating a certain decision” (p. 3). By extending the critique of the paradoxical deployment of liberal discourses of freedom and choice as modalities of government to the debates on abortion and mandatory ultrasounds, Denbow’s work makes a significant intervention into current U.S. abortion discourse.

This political intervention is a part of the larger theoretical project of the book, which is to refashion the notion of autonomy as a critical concept. The first chapter is dedicated to rejecting the traditional notion of autonomy as understood by Kant and Rousseau as proper self-governance and constructing a critical stance based on Michel Foucault, Judith Butler, and John Stuart Mill.