

reproductive bodies” (102). The market for wet nurses fundamentally shaped the lives and families of black women. The economic action of these female enslavers to create a market for wet nurses follows the connections between slavery and American capitalism that have been tracked by other historians, but the book demands that we continue to ask in more detail how these economies were gendered.

As Jones-Rogers deftly shows, women enslavers were able to use their ownership of people to maintain economic independence. Indeed, the book makes a convincing case that in many instances “slavery was their freedom” (xvii). This freedom was dependent on the non-freedom of the enslaved. Despite patriarchal systems such as coverture, white women slaveholders used the law to protect their independent legal title to the enslaved through marriage contracts and sometimes by suing their husbands for misuse of the human property that these women brought into their marriages.

Jones-Rogers uses traditional source materials such as the *Born in Slavery: Slave Narratives from the Federal Writer’s Project* collection, Southern print culture, and legal documents to tell an untraditional history. The book offers a lesson on how what we look for, or choose to see, shapes our use of sources and understanding of history. This fast-paced and accessible narrative will shape how historians, students, and broader audiences alike understand the role that white women played in the economy of the slaveholding South. It offers a sharp historical analysis of broader conversations around white supremacy, gender, and slavery that is very much needed.

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Anders Walker, *The Burning House: Jim Crow and the Making of Modern America*, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2018. Pp. 304. \$30.00 hardcover (ISBN 9780300223989).  
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In *The Burning House: Jim Crow and the Making of Modern America*, Anders Walker, a law professor at Saint Louis University, makes a unique and controversial argument regarding the effects of Jim Crow on modern America. Although Walker does not downplay the violence and inequality that resulted from segregation and disenfranchisement, he also claims that Jim Crow

promoted diversity in the United States, particularly the South, by establishing a dual, or pluralistic, society in which African Americans and whites developed and maintained distinct institutions, culture, and traditions. Moreover, he argues that this view of pluralism (as offering the best way to promote diversity) has shaped the decisions of Supreme Court Justice Lewis F. Powell, Jr.

*Burning House* is largely an intellectual history. Much of the book revolves around Gunnar Myrdal's argument regarding the negative effects of segregation on black communities, particularly that African Americans "represented a 'distorted' or 'pathological' version of the 'general American culture'" (23). The only plausible solution, then, to the problems inherent in black culture was for "blacks in America 'to become assimilated into American culture' and to 'acquire the traits held in esteem by the dominant white Americans'" (24). Walker explores the writings of numerous voices, including Zora Neale Hurston, Robert Penn Warren, James Baldwin, Harper Lee, Martin Luther King, Jr., and many other prominent (as well as less-well-known) writers and thinkers of the twentieth century who disagreed with Myrdal. Surprisingly, this disparate group of writers and intellectuals came to similar conclusions regarding the effects of Jim Crow. According to these writers, mainstream white society lost its way in the post-World War II era as the effects of mass culture and consumerism created what James Baldwin and William Faulkner described as a "burning house" (1–2). Segregation in the Jim Crow South, on the other hand, promoted a distinct black culture that should be celebrated, admired, and preserved. In other words, segregation "proved fertile soil for artistic innovation and cultural production" and allowed African Americans to escape "the homogenizing effects of northern industrialism and mass culture" (2). The integration of African Americans into mainstream white society would do much to cripple black cultural achievements. Although black authors acknowledged and criticized, and white authors downplayed, the problems of violence and inequality inherent in the Jim Crow legal structure, all agreed that the "system of racial segregation had fostered cultural development" (2). For these critics of the argument underpinning the *Brown v. Board* decision, "ending segregation was less important than providing opportunities and jobs from within a framework that also respected racial traditions, racial identities, and loosely defined notions of racial culture" (2–3).

The aspect of the book that will be most interesting for legal scholars is Walker's suggestion that this view of pluralism undergirded the decisions made by Supreme Court Justice Lewis F. Powell, Jr. "In case after case," Walker argues, "Powell invoked pluralism as a rationale for tolerating lingering inequality—not equality—in the United States" (4). Walker argues that Powell's embrace of pluralism shaped his opinions in *San Antonio v. Rodriguez* (1972) and *Milliken v. Bradley* (1974), decisions that preserved local control over schools despite glaring wealth and racial inequalities.

Walker also discusses Powell's decision in *Regents v. Bakke* (1978) in which he challenged understanding affirmative action as compensation for past repression, embracing it instead as an effort to attract "diverse classes with students from different backgrounds...for reasons that had to do with their particular pedagogic mission" (189). In the end, Walker asks readers to consider the idea that the Supreme Court's current interpretation of diversity as a form of affirmative action diverges from the original interpretation as put forth by Powell. In Powell's view, diversity was best served by preserving separate spaces where black perspectives were acknowledged and promoted. This pluralist approach to race relations is a radical departure from the current emphasis on integrating disparate groups into one space. Thus, *Burning House* concludes with the idea that a divided nation "might stand after all, accommodating rooms for dissent, maybe even fires of unrest, a beacon on a hill, a burning bush" (234).

*Burning House* will undoubtedly raise questions, have detractors, and encourage fruitful debates. Walker's examination of black and white reactions to and criticisms of the *Brown* ruling flies in the face of popular understandings of the goals and achievements of the civil rights movement and current efforts to promote diversity. Walker could have explored the underlying motivations of several of the white authors who championed pluralism. Namely, did these white authors really care about pluralism and diversity or were they motivated by their desire to whitewash racial injustices from the past? Irrespectively, the effort to understand black criticisms of the *Brown* decision and efforts at integration more generally, is an important step in understanding the larger civil rights movement in America. Walker adeptly explores a nuanced and controversial argument that challenges readers to think more deeply about race relations in modern America.

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