

However, most research into psychoactive drugs has tended to neglect the role that context plays in shaping drug effects. Hartogsohn suggests that current drug research may be better off by investing less in developing new drugs ‘and more in research investigating the ways in which the social and cultural environment shapes the effects of existing drugs’ (p. 278). By paying greater attention to how context shapes drug effects, researchers can design trials that move beyond the ‘magic bullet approach’ which de-emphasizes the role of non-pharmacological factors. Perhaps the most important takeaway from Hartogsohn’s book is his insistence that drug policy should take into account the importance of set and setting. Since drug laws, social attitudes and media campaigns can dramatically impact the collective set and setting in ways that increase the likelihood of harmful drug experiences, governments should strive to create a better collective set and setting by working towards policies that destigmatize and decriminalize drug use.

Overall, *The American Trip* provides a great service for anyone wishing to understand the effects of and tensions surrounding psychedelic drugs. By showing how the American psychedelic experience was constructed and shaped by the larger cultural currents of the 1960s, Hartogsohn detaches psychedelic drugs from their stereotypical and stigmatized associations with controversial military experiments and the American counterculture. This book thus challenges readers to imagine new cultural attitudes towards drugs and drug users: ‘one can envision a future modern world with a healthier, saner relationship with mind-altering drugs and experiences’ (p. 287). As Hartogsohn points out, drug use, in some form or another, is a cultural constant, as evidenced by the failure of the War on Drugs. What can change, though, is the collective set and setting within which drug use takes place.

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## **Antony Adler, Neptune’s Laboratory: Fantasy, Fear, and Science at Sea**

**Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press, 2019.  
Pp. 256. ISBN: 978-0-6749-7201-8. £31.95 (hardback)**

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In this recent book, historian of science and of the environment Antony Adler considers how modern Western societies have imagined the oceans. While the main title might suggest a laboratory-focused history of science and the book follows the typical timeline of a history of marine science and hits some of the standard notes – nineteenth-century dredging, the 1870s *Challenger* expedition, marine stations in Naples and elsewhere, twentieth-century military patronage – Adler’s emphasis is generally not on how scientists have explored the oceans and what they found when they did so. Instead, as the subtitle well conveys, this is a social and cultural history of how Western societies have, over the last two hundred years, conceptualized the oceans as a place that can be scientifically understood.

Adler notes that he is in part responding to a thread in the early history of oceanography that focused on specific ships and expeditions – a kind of Great Ships version of old-fashioned Great Man history. Instead of this somewhat heroic, adventure science-at-sea origin story, he argues, ‘Marine science was birthed ... in landlocked marine stations and universities but also in museums, fairgrounds, and homes’ (5). In order for scientists to engage with and study the oceans, the public (or various publics) had to imagine the oceans as something that could be approached scientifically. What this meant varied, from nineteenth-century interest in the oceans as source of fish both for dining and display, to twentieth-century World’s Fair exhibit, to habitat of the future. These imagined oceans contributed both goals and support for scientific investigation. They also fostered – and were fostered by – political interest in the seas, where sites of imagined future competition and conquest drove scientific investigation.

Adler’s story is a Western one; he examines case studies from Great Britain, France, Monaco, Italy and the United States, though he acknowledges the need for histories of marine science from other points of view. Considering public and political understanding of the oceans allows him to pull together several threads that are clearly related but which for various reasons tend to attract the attention of different historians, such as fisheries history, the history of marine biology, and environmental history.

The book begins with nineteenth-century British interest in the oceans, which grew with increasing access to both the seaside and the sea itself thanks to the Industrial Revolution. This isn’t new ground, but he tells the story in new ways, focusing on fish as a commodity newly available to a public beyond the immediate shore and as denizens of a growing number of public – and even home – aquariums. The usual major figures in the history of oceanography are background for the main story here, which foregrounds the parallel interests of public consumers and government sponsors. Essentially, Adler argues, ‘the establishment of marine science cannot be appreciated without taking into consideration the wider context in which nineteenth-century society was turning its attention to the seas’ (45).

Adler then engages marine science’s attempts at internationalism in the first half of the twentieth century. As others have argued, many saw the oceans as an inherently international field for science, both because boundaries and borders at sea are literally less solid and because their scope requires very broad engagement. He examines in particular efforts in France, Monaco and Italy to establish shore-based marine-science stations in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and the ways those stations aligned varyingly with nationalist or internationalist sentiment. In the twentieth century, he argues, attention of both scientists and the public shifted to the Pacific as a new ground for internationalism, both scientific and popular, which he examines through two World’s Fairs held in San Francisco in 1914 and 1939. The timing of these fairs and their associated scientific meetings demonstrate new efforts at a Pacific internationalism, which waned as the oceans were increasingly recognized as militarily useful spaces during the world wars. The perceived need to turn both oceanic spaces and the secrets of ocean science to national purposes during the Cold War further undercut internationalism; during this period, he examines several efforts to establish habitats on the sea floor, whether because of futuristic dreams of undersea colonies or fearful concerns about controlling future battlescapes.

Finally, he looks at public visions of the sea in the twentieth century, a period during which the oceans were ‘reconceived from an environment that could be conquered and controlled to something fragile, broken, and dying’ (139). Adler here shifts more fully into the sensibilities of the environmental historian, and he considers in his conclusion the implications of modern public and political ocean imagining and the challenge of ‘making people care about something they cannot experience firsthand’ (170).

Altogether, this book is thoughtful and well conceived. It communicates a changing understanding and imagining of the oceans by various groups, only a relatively small portion of whom were scientists, but each of whom had their own ideas about the usefulness of ocean space and ocean science. It thus joins other recent work in the history of science in including not just laboratories and organisms, but also amateurs, patrons and publics, and setting their goals alongside and inclusive of those of scientific practitioners.

While of obvious interest to scholars of the ‘oceanic turn’, it should also find a much broader audience among those interested in how the public interacts with science and with the environment, and how these interests feed and are fed by political goals and fears. In the age of the Anthropocene, that audience could and should include graduate and undergraduate scholars in both the marine and other environmental humanities and STEM subjects, but also the general public, who might indeed be usefully challenged to consider how we imagine the oceans and why.

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## **Mark Solovey, *Social Science for What? Battles over Public Funding for the ‘Other Sciences’ at the National Science Foundation***

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*Social Science for What?* examines the relationship between the US National Science Foundation (NSF) and the social sciences from the end of the Second World War up to the late 1980s.

Building on Solovey’s previous work on the ‘politics–patronage–social science nexus in Cold War America’, the book demonstrates the value of detailed examination of the policies and practices of scientific funding bodies. He argues that the NSF was influential in establishing a scientific framework for understanding social science, one which considered the social sciences to be part of a unified scientific enterprise, and which thought that the comparatively immature social sciences could develop best by following the more advanced and objective methods of the natural sciences. This approach within the NSF made the agency an important site for scientific boundary work, shaping debates about the identity and direction of social science; it also meant that these fields remained marginal within the agency, representing just 5.9 per cent of funding in 1969, then just 3.3 per cent by 1989. By the 1980s, social scientists were joking that NSF stood for ‘Non-Sufficient Funds’.

Solovey traces the history of NSF support, moving from the early struggle to ensure that the social sciences were included in the agency’s remit in the face of hostility from both government and ‘hard’ science, to the relative high point of support in the late 1950s and the 1960s, through the increasing struggles against conservative opponents