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Manning Marable, *Beyond Black and White: Transforming African-American Politics* (New York: Verso, 2009, \$24.95). Pp. 319. ISBN 978 1 84467 383 4.

Though his may not be a household name, those in the know recognize that when the history of this era is written Manning Marable will merit considerable attention. In the first place, he has assumed the mantle of intellectual leadership, bequeathed by the sainted W. E. B. Du Bois, as he has produced volume after stimulating volume on a whole range of topics.

Indeed, his biography of Du Bois – years after its publication – remains, perhaps, the most illuminating and stimulating analysis of the work of this scholar-activist. Like Du Bois, Marable has pioneered in the ostensibly disparate fields of scholarship and political activism, having founded the Black Radical Congress and the National Black Independent Political Party and having served meritoriously Democratic Socialists of America. His books, which could fill a small library, have been universally applauded, while his forthcoming biography of Malcolm X is awaited eagerly and, no doubt, will – like all of his work – shed light as it redefines terrain thought to be familiar.

The book at hand worthily upholds the enviable standards of the estimable Marable *oeuvre*. It was published originally in 1995 but comes to us now in an expanded and updated version that improves upon the original, as it expands the boundaries of political discourse. Within one volume Marable brings together a number of essays that have appeared in disparate journals over a lengthy period; thus, for the devotees of the author – and I include myself in this charmed circle – this book is a real treat.

The content consists of a series of interlinked essays on such provocative and illustrative topics as civil unrest in Los Angeles; Malcolm X (of course); Hurricane Katrina of 2005 and its disastrous aftermath; the impact of Marable's peers, including Cornel West and Henry Louis Gates Jr.; the influence of the Muslim minister Louis Farrakhan; the controversy surrounding the policy known as “affirmative action” designed to redress the toxic impact of – particularly – racial and gender bigotry; the evolution of the discipline of “black studies”; the fraught realm of reparations to the descendants of enslaved Africans; and much, much more.

All of these are exceedingly complicated topics, replete with nuance, yet Marable – with considerable verve – handles each and every one with adroit sensitivity and consummate intelligence. This is a book that merits wide attention: it is a worthwhile addition to the growing body of literature that Manning Marable – so graciously – has provided to us.

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Anthony Chen, *The Fifth Freedom: Jobs, Politics, and Civil Rights in the United States, 1941–1972* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009, £44.95 cloth, £16.95 paper). Pp. 395. ISBN 978 0 691 13457 4, 978 0 691 13953 1.

Contemporary monographs in American studies perhaps infrequently feature scatter-plot analyses, an “event-history analysis,” or an appendix elucidating the

author's statistical models. However, Anthony Chen's *The Fifth Freedom* successfully combines quantitative methodologies with sound archival research in an innovative and provocative model of interdisciplinary scholarship. This thoughtful history of postwar debates over fair employment practices (FEP) legislation and the development of affirmative action is a significant contribution to scholarship on postwar civil rights debates, political culture, and the rise of American conservatism.

Chen's analysis of affirmative action's development relies upon the theoretical model of "counterfactuals," arguing that understanding a particular outcome requires examining the reasons why other potential outcomes failed to materialize (25–26). Maintaining that legislation creating an agency capable of sanctioning employers who refused to end discriminatory practices offered an alternative to the court-based model that eventually emerged, Chen demonstrates that after World War II, southern democrats and conservative republicans repeatedly mobilized the legislative branch's peculiarities to defeat northern democratic and liberal republican supporters of such legislation.

Chen next examines state-level fair-employment debates, where in the late 1940s "success seemed easier to achieve" and which liberals hoped would encourage federal legislation (117). Chen's rich analysis of New York State's Ives-Quinn Act uncovers essentially the same pattern as that in the US Congress, yet his contention that after the act's passage "the racial character of the labor force ... began changing without great discord" compellingly shows that FEP legislation with enforceable provisions constituted a viable alternative to affirmative action as it eventually emerged (113). Analysis of similar debates elsewhere combines impressive research with innovative statistical modeling to illustrate that "no single factor was more consistently important than the opposition of the conservative bloc" (119).

Having shown the recurring obstacles to comprehensive FEP legislation, Chen returns to the national stage and "traces the limits of Congressional action ... in the 1960s and early 1970s to the same combination of political forces that obstructed FEP legislation in earlier decades" (172–73). Nuanced accounts of the legislative maneuvering that produced an impotent Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the evolving meanings of "affirmative action" with the executive branch, and the increasing emergence of the federal courts as a venue for resolving employment complaints effectively demonstrate that "racially attentive public policies ... found ample room to grow in the executive and judicial branches ... because Congress had proven unwilling to assert itself by establishing a federal agency with reasonable authority" (227).

Although shifts among historical moments and legislative debates can risk confusion, reiterations of the key claims can seem repetitious, and Chen's "special emphasis on ... *elite groups*" threatens to marginalize activism by the NAACP and other groups, *The Fifth Freedom* is a comprehensive, compelling account of affirmative action's development (23, original emphasis). Appropriate for graduate-level methods courses, where Chen's incisive use of quantitative models should prompt valuable discussion of scholarly approaches, this impressive contribution to scholarship on postwar US culture should be read by any student of twentieth-century America.

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