

Drescher's vast range is most evident when discerning the broad trends underlining the destruction of thriving slave systems. Recurrently, the creation of "free soil" zones proved an important building block in different places and at different times in destabilizing the moral and legal foundations of slavery. Accordingly, from Britain to the United States to Brazil, Drescher points to slave resistance and the mobilization of civil society as fundamental to the successful assaults on flourishing slave systems.

Two of the book's 14 chapters cover the Latin American cases. The first appears within a unit on the Age of Revolution and analyzes how emergent nations dealt with the problem of slavery. If most instituted some form of gradual abolition, in absolute terms the largest slave systems in the Americas expanded in the nineteenth century. By the 1820s, "there were more slaves in Latin America than there had been half a century before" (p. 204). The second chapter concentrates on the late emancipation cases of Puerto Rico (1873), Cuba (1886), and Brazil (1888). *Abolition* suggests links between the U.S. Civil War and the collapse of slavery in all three places, a relationship that historians in Cuba and Brazil have indeed very recently pursued in great detail.

Non-specialists in the study of slavery should note that some of the most vibrant scholarship in Spanish and Portuguese is not fully incorporated into the historiographical discussions. Due perhaps to limited circulation and/or language constraints, issues that are invariably manifest in a work of this scope, two vibrant areas of inquiry deserve greater mention. First, there has been an ample reconsideration of the meanings of state power and social mobility in the form of microhistorical studies on nineteenth-century slavery, race, and citizenship. Second, and particularly pertinent to Brazilian historiography, since the 1990s a burgeoning interest has developed around the conceptualization of a "Southern Atlantic" space, a framework that accentuates the decisive role of those in Brazil and Angola in shaping the slave trade—largely independent of Portuguese colonial imperatives.

A work of unparalleled breadth, *Abolition* deserves the careful attention of scholars of Latin America and the Caribbean who are concerned with both the comparative histories of forced labor and economic modernization and issues of political mobilization and state formation.

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*Different Drummers: Rhythm and Race in the Americas.* By Martin Munro. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010. Pp. ix, 280. Notes. Bibliography. Index.

Europeans and Africans made quite an impression on one other upon initial contact. An enlightened European worldview prized vision as the most rational sense for evaluating the world. Martin Munro suggests that the rational detachment associated with vision allowed Europeans to regard Africans, with their striking dark skin, less as fellow

men and more as objects to be conquered. As modern European culture collided with primitive African culture, Europeans defined aspects of their identities through the process of identifying difference in the black other. Rhythm almost immediately became an important signifier of difference. For rhythm, an experience that was at once aural, tactile, and visual, paid no heed to calls for rationality. Munro asserts that both Europeans and Africans have historically understood rhythm to be the defining feature of black culture and identity.

Munro demonstrates that rhythm is, and has been, a fundamental aspect of diasporic culture. Echoing historian William H. McNeill, Munro stresses the importance of rhythm and music, experienced collectively, for creating communities and strengthening connections within them. Munro argues that rhythm, drums, and music had important functions in West African societies, and that they retained relevance in the new world. Rhythm was injected into a range of creative pursuits, and was used in the Americas to forge relationships, build kinship networks, strengthen solidarity among rebels, and reclaim African and black identity. He examines uses of rhythm in black cultures across time and space in order to demonstrate that rhythm is indeed the defining element of black identity in the “circum-Caribbean world,” which he defines as the United States and the Caribbean. In particular, Munro examines the role of rhythm in Haiti, Martinique, Trinidad, and the United States at key moments in African diasporic history.

Munro finds rhythm in dance, martial arts, music, song, literature, and poetry. In revolutionary Saint-Domingue, rhythm was an essential part of vodou rituals that created a sense of community among ethnically diverse insurgent slaves. In twentieth-century French Martinique, poets associated with the Negritude movement embraced rhythm for different ends. Léopold Senghor used rhythm to identify with his African roots, while Aimé Césaire chose to engage rhythm’s palliative forces. Munro is particularly strong in his analysis of poetry, demonstrating that changes in form and style reflect shifting perceptions of black identity. In the United States, James Brown’s rhythm-driven soul music initiated a rhythm revolution that was bound up in the social revolution brought on by the civil rights movement.

Munro is keen to establish the connectedness of this circum-Caribbean world and the importance of rhythm throughout. Indeed, James Brown’s music helped push the limits of liberty in places other than the United States. The music of black America resonated with blacks in the French Caribbean and in Africa. The Negritude movement and the Black Power movement drew from one another’s philosophies. Refugees from Saint-Domingue transformed the New Orleans music scene at Congo Square in the nineteenth century, likely contributing to the development of jazz music.

Munro claims that “across the New World, rhythm has been at the heart of conceptions of race, culture and identity” (p. 183), but he has in fact engaged only with developments in the French Caribbean and the United States. Perhaps due to his focus on former French colonies, Munro presumes that all slaves experienced conditions akin to

those on French sugar plantations. He neglects the nuances that existed among different slave societies in the Americas, and indeed, in the circum-Caribbean area that he defines. Nonetheless, Munro successfully establishes the centrality of rhythm in black culture in the French Caribbean and the United States, as well as the importance of recognizing connections between the United States and the Caribbean. The history of rhythm and its connection to slavery undoubtedly deserve attention in the broader Atlantic World.

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*The Reaper's Garden: Death and Power in the World of Atlantic Slavery.* By Vincent Brown. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008. pp. viii, 340. Bibliography. Index.

Vincent Brown's book explores the attitudes, behavior, and rituals about death among blacks and whites during the height of Jamaica's sugarcane economy. He believes that an examination of "mortuary politics" (p. 5) between the 1720s and the 1840s is required because death was part of the Jamaican experience not only for thousands of African slaves, but also for Europeans. To discover what death meant to the African slaves, freed blacks, and British planters and colonists, Brown explores how mortuary beliefs, rituals, and practices were influenced by demographic, socioeconomic, political, and religious transformations on the island. Positing his study within the broad literature on the Atlantic World—particularly that historiography concerned with the slave trade, African cultural identity, and retention, and sugar planters' attitudes and beliefs about color, ethnicity, power and privilege—Brown uses social history and epidemiology to approach the topic of mortuary politics. In doing so, he argues that Jamaica's economy, history of slave resistance and the cultural exchanges that took place between blacks and whites were part of the "human consequences of the Caribbean political economy—high death rates, rapid demographic turnover, and social relations characterized by flux and instability which resulted in an unsettled slave society whereby social authority had to be continually rearticulated through the most imposing of idioms." The most salient idiom became "the activities that joined the living with the dead—themes, beliefs and attitudes which all survivors in Jamaican slave society valued and understood."(p. 10)

Brown's narrative begins by underlining much of the historiography dedicated to the processes and motivations that led to the British colonization of Jamaica and the construction of its slave system. Examining how the complexities of the African slave trade affected both Jamaica and Africa, Brown argues that the role death played among Africans during the Middle Passage as well as during the "seasoning" process after their arrival was influenced by the site of their embarkation. For example, the slaves from the Bight of Biafra had lower survival rates than any other groups seized along the west and west-central coasts, according to Brown. He follows this topic with an interpretation