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Professor Kristin Hoganson has demonstrated a determined and successful effort to broaden the horizons and methodology of diplomacy history. In her first study, *Fighting for American Manhood: How Gender Politics Provoked the Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars*, Hoganson applied a gender and cultural analysis to the much debated topic of American decision making on war and imperialism at the end of the 19th century. Where William A. Williams, Walter LaFeber, and the Wisconsin school had put down innovative and deep furrows that emphasized the quest for an economic Open Door in an informal empire versus David Healy and others who emphasized the impact of the international environment of scrambling imperial powers and U.S. strategic considerations, Hoganson swept through with a study as suggestive as Richard Hofstadter's classic essay, "The Psychic Crisis of the 1890s." Hofstadter emphasized a sense of crisis precipitated by the political, economic, and environmental transformations of the late 19th century. Hoganson, however, persuasively argued that gender assumptions influenced the public debate and the thinking of the male policy makers who made the decisions for war and empire. Manliness as a measure of worth and standard of conduct informs Hoganson's thesis that in the context of the 1890s discussed by Hofstadter, males could not act out manly virtues and turned to war and empire to fulfill their ambitions and restore a manly nation. In her study, Hoganson focused on the magazine articles, speeches, private papers, government documents of American leaders and imperial enthusiasts, the jingoes of the 1890s.

In *Consumers' Imperium: The Global Production of American Domesticity, 1865-1920*, Professor Hoganson has broadened the chronology and focus of her gender and cultural approach. As Chris Endy points out in his review, Hoganson has shifted to the ground covered by Walter LaFeber in *The New Empire: An Interpretation of American Expansion, 1860-1898*. LaFeber focused on commercial and political leaders and their increasing orientation towards overseas markets, most notably Latin America and Asia, for American goods and strategic outposts to assist and maintain access to these markets. Hoganson redirects attention to middle and upper class women and their engagement with the international environment through patterns of consumption. As the reviewers note, Hoganson looks at "quintessentially domestic places—middle-class American households—to find evidence of international connections." In focusing on "native-born, white, middle-class to wealthy women," Hoganson demonstrates the significant agency of these women. (8) Hoganson's *Consumers' Imperium* is the foreign imports that women brought into their homes—furnishings, fashions, foods, "fictive" travel clubs that simulated foreign travel, and the immigrant "gifts" movement in which native women celebrated the cultural contributions of immigrants.

The significance of the *Consumer's Imperium* is developed throughout Hoganson's study. Noting that consumption involved a type of interaction with the world and contributed to a specific kind of international political economy, Hoganson emphasizes that women made a significant contribution to empire: "Consumers participated in the formal empire of U.S.

political control, the informal empire of U.S. commercial power, and the secondhand empire of European imperialism through shopping for trifles and savories.” (11)

The reviewers are very impressed with Hoganson’s study, its application of gender and cultural categories of analysis to international relations, and the careful evaluations that she makes. They do raise some issues that merit further discussion:

- 1.) Chris Endy notes how Hoganson demonstrates the impact of women consumers on American views about empire, most specifically in their enthusiasm for Western colonial empires and the new American informal empire as both opened up new access to foreign products and “fictive” travel in travel clubs with literature on travel, visual components, world fairs, and museums, etc. Hoganson carefully emphasizes that consumers were very self-centered with respect to the products they wanted, with how travel to foreign countries would affect their experience, and with discrimination that reflected racial, ethnic and class considerations. She notes little evidence that American women developed any significant concern about the economic, political, or general conditions of imperial subjects who provided the labor for their purchased goods. Americans applied racial categories in their preference for European travel and products, although they did give some attention to Japanese and Middle Eastern products.
- 2.) What impact does the *Consumer’s Imperium* have on policy making? In a general sense, Hoganson suggests that it provided a crucial foundation for the American outward thrust in the late 19th century. “Without the material desires of the consumers’ imperium,” Hoganson emphasizes, “there would have been no cause for policies, interventions, and investments aimed at gratifying consumer demand.” (11) Hoganson’s response to the reviews focuses on this question and offers an interesting account of her pursuit of this issue with respect to Theodore Roosevelt as well as a discussion of her methodology and thesis: “Consumption didn’t just affect empire, it was, in itself, a manifestation of it.” (4)
- 3.) How does Hoganson demonstrate that women who participated in the consumers’ imperium also aligned themselves implicitly or by personal preference with Western imperialism? According to Hoganson, the women who imported foreign products and developed foreign styles in their homes engaged in more than a class expression. “These women strove to convey a cosmopolitan ethos—meaning a geographically expansive outlook that demonstrated a familiarity with the wider world,” Hoganson notes, but “it was a cosmopolitanism that contributed to particularistic racial, class, and national identities” that supported U.S. commercial and political expansion and “celebrated empire, on the part of both the United States and the European powers.” (14) Cosmopolitan decorators, for example, “positioned themselves as enthusiastic beneficiaries of Western imperialism and global trade.” (43) Fashion enthusiasts focused on Paris as the center of imperial fashion and identified themselves with the European aristocratic styles and the opportunity to exercise power in social circles. (76-77) Americans gave increased attention to foreign food and imports from cookbook writers who brought in new European

recipes as well as other foreign recipes and products with food writers giving credit to imperial connections for these products, such as tropical produce from the new American empire in the Caribbean or chutneys and other products from British India. (106-114) The tourist clubs also aligned themselves with European and American expansion as tourists welcomed the new areas opened up, rendered safe, and enhanced with improved accommodations for the white Western traveler. "In learning to view the world through the eyes of a tourist," Hoganson concludes, "club members had learned to appreciate the imperial order that enabled wealthy, white westerners to travel. They voted in favor of retention." (200-202)

- 4.) One of the many strengths in Hoganson's study is the recognition of dissent to the main components of the consumers' imperium. The influx of foreign products into American homes upset economic nationalists who backed high tariffs, and cultural nationalists who wanted homes filled with patriotic American products. They advocated maize art and a colonial revival, mission and arts and crafts styles. (38-40) Hoganson also discusses "The American Girl" as a symbol of U.S. designs and U.S. clothes products which stood far above even European aristocrats as a symbol of youth, vigor, and beauty, and American nationalism. (100) A home economics movement also emerged to combat the importation of foreign foods as well as the influence of immigrant diets and food traditions. "Prizing social control over self-expression, home economists struggled to remake immigrant and working class diets according to their own ethnocentric, nationalist, and class-based visions," Hoganson argues, and "use the language of science to try to distance the United States from the rest of the world." (122) The Progressive Americanization campaign contributed to the consumers' imperium through the emphasis on immigrant gifts movement with attention to folk songs, dance, pageants, handicrafts, but also produced pressure for melting pot homogenization against the foreign infusion. Chris Endy does argue that immigrants could blend Americanized homogeneity and ethnic traditions "in which case the immigrant gifts pageants might be less imperial than *Consumers' Imperium* suggests."
- 5.) Mari Yoshihara and Ian Tyrrell applaud Hoganson's "extensive research, analytical care, and fresh argument," but both would like Hoganson to push further on several issues. Yoshihara, for example, would have welcomed more analysis of the men and women who shaped consumers' choices, the "designers, manufacturers, merchants, advertisers, writers, and guides," and their role in the consumers' encounter. She also asks for more attention to the working-class and immigrant women and their relationship to the cosmopolitan consumerism. Tyrrell would prefer more discussion on the extent and meaning of cosmopolitanism with issues such as the study of languages and the place of geography in schools, the role of men and American missionaries in the *Consumers' Imperium* with "every foreign missionary support society in every protestant church ... a de facto fictive travel club." Tyrrell also looks beyond 1920 to the present and wonders about a decline in American engagement with the world through travel and the study of foreign histories and languages.

- 6.) Mary Renda suggests that Hoganson's "mix of approaches, which also includes cultural history, traces of psychoanalytic theory, African-American history, and concerns arising out of diplomatic history, makes for a richly textured portrait of U.S. middle-class women's increasingly imperial domesticity and their multifaceted engagement with the world." (4) What Renda would appreciate is more attention to change over time on the "emergence and career of the consumers' imperium." She suggests that this as well as more integration of "events in the political, military, and economic spheres, would strengthen some of the arguments presented here and would give us insight into some of the tensions and contradictions that were bundled into the consumers' imperium."

Reviewers:

Kristin Hoganson is an Associate Professor at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, and specializes in U.S. Women's and Gender history, U.S. Cultural history, and the United States in world context. Her publications include *Fighting for American Manhood: How Gender Politics Provoked the Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars* (Yale University Press, 1998); "As Badly off as the Filipinos': U.S. Women's Suffragists and the Imperial Issue at the Turn of the Twentieth Century, *Journal of Women's History* 13 (Summer 2001); "Cosmopolitan Domesticity: Importing the American Dream, 1865-1920," *American Historical Review* 107 (February 2002); "The World of Fashion: Imagined Communities of Dress," in *After the Imperial Turn: Critical Approaches to "National" Histories and Literatures*, Antoinette Burton, ed., (Duke University Press, 2003); "Food and Entertainment from Every Corner of the Globe: Bourgeois U.S. Households as Points of Encounter, 1870-1920," *Amerikastudien/American Studies* 48 (no. 1, 2003); and "What Does Gender Have to Do with It?" *Explaining the History of American Foreign Relations*, Michael J. Hogan and Thomas G. Paterson, eds., (Cambridge University Press, revised edition, 2003). She is a council member for the Society for Historians of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era (SHGAPE) and the 2006 recipient of the Bernath Lecture Prize awarded by the Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations. Professor Hoganson received her Ph.D. from Yale University in 1995.

Christopher Endy is an associate professor of history at California State University, Los Angeles. He received his B.A. from Duke University and Ph.D. from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. His publications include *Cold War Holidays: American Tourism in France* (Chapel Hill, 2004). He is currently writing a book on American debates over the behavior of U.S. multinational corporations. His current research focuses on notions of corporate responsibility and the ethics of economic globalization from the late nineteenth century through the 1970s. He is particularly interested in how Americans (from missionaries and activists to policymakers and corporate leaders) participated in global debates about the meaning of "good" behavior in cross-cultural business exchanges. The project aims to explain the evolution of norms and ethics that find their expression today in debates over free trade, sweatshops, multinational corporate social responsibility, and anti-corruption measures.

Mary A. Renda is an associate professor of history and gender studies and chair of the Department of Gender Studies at Mount Holyoke College. She is the prize-winning author of *Taking Haiti: Military Occupation and the Culture of U.S. Imperialism, 1915-1940* (University of North Carolina Press, 2001). Her recent work includes an essay, "Practical Sovereignty: The Caribbean Region and the Rise of U.S. Empire," in *The Blackwell Companion to Latin American History* (2007), and an epilogue, "Doing Everything: Religion, Race, and Empire in U.S. Protestant Women's Missionary Enterprise, 1812-1960," for the volume *Competing Kingdoms: Women, Mission, Nation, and American Empire, 1812-1938*, edited by Barbara Reeves Ellington, Connie Shemo, and Kathryn Kish Sklar (Duke University Press, forthcoming). Her research continues to track the imprint of racism and gender in the history of U.S. imperialism and anti-imperialism in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Ian Tyrrell is Scientia Professor of History at the University of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia, where he has taught for more than thirty years. Born in Brisbane, Qld., he was educated at the University of Queensland and Duke University, where he was a Fulbright Scholar. His teaching interests include American history, environmental history, and historiography. He was a pioneer in the approach to transnational history as a research program for reconceptualizing the American past through his essay "American Exceptionalism in an Age of International History" in the *American Historical Review* in 1991; and in *Woman's World/Woman's Empire: The Woman's Christian Temperance Union in International Perspective* (University of North Carolina Press, 1991), which dealt with the issues of gender and empire in that leading nineteenth-century women's international organization. Among his other books are two dealing with aspects of transnational history: *True Gardens of the Gods: Californian-Australian Environmental Reform, 1860-1930* (University of California Press, 1999) and *Transnational Nation: United States History in Global Perspective since 1789* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2007). He was from 1991 to 1996 editor of the *Australasian Journal of American Studies*, and President of the Australian and New Zealand American Studies Association, 2002-06. A fellow of the Australian Academy of the Humanities, he was awarded a Commonwealth of Australia Centenary Medal in 2003, and has served as a visiting professor at the Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales in Paris. His current project concerns American empire.

Mari Yoshihara is an associate professor of American Studies at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa. She earned her Ph.D. in American Civilization from Brown University and specializes in U.S. cultural history, U.S.-Asian relations, literary and cultural studies, and women's/gender studies. She is the author of two books in English: *Embracing the East: White Women and American Orientalism* (Oxford University Press, 2003) and *Musicians from a Different Shore: Asians and Asian Americans in Classical Music* (Temple University Press, 2007). She also has several Japanese-language publications, including the co-edited collection, *Gendai Amerika no Kiiwaado* [Keywords of Contemporary America] (Chuo Koron Shinsha, 2006). She is starting a new project on the history of the relationship between Asians and Jews in the United States.

During the height of the Cold War, a group of Americans eager to support the United Nations produced a cookbook, *Favorite Recipes from the United Nations*. The 1956 edition featured dishes from each of the UN's seventy-six members and an endorsement from Eleanor Roosevelt. Its back cover claimed that housewives unable to travel abroad "can get an insight into other countries and stimulate their families' interest, too, by trying recipes from other lands."¹ So how did global awareness taste in 1956? The U.S. dishes included Old-Fashioned Beef Stew, attributed to no less a chef than Dwight D. Eisenhower. (His secret culinary weapon? A little monosodium glutamate!) From the other side of the Iron Curtain, the Soviet entry explained how to make sauerkraut soup and dried fruit bars. Stepping into the Third World, the cookbook authors seem to have minimized culinary differences so as not to stretch American cooks and palates too far. A recipe for Steamed Spiced Fish from Laos called for nothing spicier than one-eighth of a teaspoon of cayenne pepper divided between four servings.

It is easy, of course, to look back and laugh at an earlier generation's foodways. Who knows what future historians and food critics will say about the hummus tortilla "wraps" served in our own time? The challenge is to explain what these everyday efforts at international understanding reveal about the place of the United States in the world. The UN cookbook exemplifies modern Americans' frequent but generally clumsy attempts at creating global community. The hesitation to add spices was just one small shortcoming. More profoundly, the cookbook fell victim to a fallacy that Kristin L. Hoganson brilliantly identifies in an earlier era of American culinary adventures. Writing about American women who imported foreign foods and designs in the Gilded Age and Progressive Era, Hoganson describes "the illusion that the world could be known through an assortment of decontextualized things" (254). The fallacy came by believing that a discrete artifact such as a food dish was enough to understand a cultural tradition, as if a scattershot engagement with foreign cultures could enable Americans to see the world through other people's eyes.

I've begun this review with a Cold War-era example because I suspect that many readers of H-Diplo, accustomed to roundtables on Harry Truman and Henry Kissinger, are wondering what they can gain from a book that lavishes attention on macaroni recipes and Turkish-themed "cozy corners" in Gilded Age living rooms. What do imported foods or fabrics have to do with the big questions driving the field of U.S. international relations? Quite a lot, it turns out. In her splendid second book, Kristin Hoganson provides an original and persuasive account of how Americans came to imagine themselves as a great power with interests in the far corners of the world. What Walter LaFeber did for American men in the public sphere in his 1963 classic, *The New Empire*, Kristin Hoganson does for American women at home in *Consumers' Imperium*. LaFeber explored the producerist ideology, in which U.S. political and commercial leaders viewed the world in search of export markets

¹ *Favorite Recipes from the United Nations* (Washington: United States Committee for the United Nations, 1956).

for American producers.² Hoganson shifts the focus to wealthy women, including perhaps the mothers, wives, and daughters of LaFeber's men. These women, Hoganson shows, led the United States into a "consumerist global consciousness" (208). This consumer-oriented outlook accelerated the integration of the United States into global markets and contributed to the rise of American empire. Full of insight and entertaining prose, *Consumers' Imperium* is essential reading for historians of globalization and U.S. international relations.

In five thoroughly-researched chapters, Hoganson engages numerous historiographic fields. The first three chapters examine middle- and upper-class women's embrace of foreign home furnishings, imported fashions, and foreign foods. The final two chapters consider "fictive travel" clubs, in which women learned cultural geography through simulated tours of distant places, and the immigrant "gifts" movement, in which native-born Americans celebrated immigrant folk traditions as gifts to American society. With each chapter, Hoganson offers a sharp and successful rejoinder to scholars who have too long focused only on Americanization, to the exclusion of cultural influences affecting the United States from abroad.³ Hoganson also aptly frames her material as new evidence to challenge the assumption that wealthy Gilded Age and Progressive Era women were parochial shut-ins. Even if they stayed at home, they sought engagement with the wider world. This argument on women's agency in turn contributes to consumer history. Hoganson's female consumers were not passive victims of patriarchy, nor were they mindless dupes of advertisers. Instead, they deployed purchasing power to make their lives more stimulating. Hoganson does not overstate the liberating effects of consumerism for these women. Still, in the long-running academic debate over whether shopping can be empowering, she generally sides with those who see consuming as a source of agency.⁴

Historians of international relations will be especially interested in Hoganson's argument on the imperial nature of elite women's consumerism. American consumers, she emphasizes, displayed scant concern for oppressive labor conditions that often lurked behind their objects of desire. Instead, they tacitly accepted and benefited from unequal power relations in a process that Hoganson effectively labels "imperial buy-in" (11). Hoganson does not delve into primary-source research on foreign producers, but she

² Walter LaFeber, *The New Empire: An Interpretation of American Expansion, 1860-1898* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1963)

³ Hoganson thus joins a small but growing historiographic movement. See also Mari Yoshihara, *Embracing the East: White Women and American Orientalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003); Joseph Tobin, ed., *Pikachu's Global Adventure: The Rise and Fall of Pokémon* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2004); Gary Cross and Gregory Smits, "Japan, the U.S. and the Globalization of Children's Consumer Culture," *Journal of Social History* 38 (Summer 2005): 873-90; and Vanessa Schwartz, *It's So French!: Hollywood, Paris, and the Making of Cosmopolitan Film Culture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007). See also Kristin Hoganson, "Stuff It: Domestic Consumption and the Americanization of the World Paradigm," *Diplomatic History* 30 (September 2006): 571-94.

⁴ For a recent essay on this debate, see David Steigerwald, "All Hail the Republic of Choice: Consumer History as Contemporary Thought," *Journal of American History* 93 (September 2006): 385-403, as well as the responses to Steigerwald by T.H. Breen and Lizabeth Cohen in the same issue.

usefully refers readers to important works on transnational economic networks such as Richard Tucker's *Insatiable Appetite*.⁵

Although Hoganson calls attention to economic exploitation outside the United States, her treatment of imperialism centers on the question of American identity. American women's growing access to goods from around the world in the late nineteenth century generated a sense of power and entitlement. Woman consumers learned to think of the world as a source of pleasure and delight. This consumer's worldview in turn encouraged celebrations of western colonialism, because western rule expanded the number of places available for shopping and "fictive" armchair travel (201). With skillful analysis, Hoganson also explains how American consumers commonly adhered to a hierarchical sense of commodity production. Asians and Africans might excel in creating intricate decorative objects, but this skill represented a lower-level accomplishment compared to industrial inventions or "high-culture" creations. Imported handicrafts did not bring respect. They simply confirmed non-Westerners status among the lower rungs of world civilizations. Consumer imports also promoted an imperial identity by encouraging Americans to imagine themselves as equals to the Old World empires. When Americans mimicked European practices, from Parisian high fashion to British-inspired Orientalist decorating styles, they breathed in a pernicious "secondhand empire" (9, 11).

Hoganson's research on imperial identity resonates surprisingly well with Michael Adas's influential work on technology and empire. In *Machines as the Measure of Men*, Adas showed how arguments for Western superiority in the nineteenth century were more likely to emphasize Western mastery of technology than they were to rely on notions of biological racial inferiority.⁶ Hoganson does not cite Adas, but both authors show how a supposed mastery of material things justified imperial ideologies. To Hoganson, embracing cosmopolitan styles and Parisian fashions helped American women prove their superiority and "civilizational distance from the world's dispossessed" (104). If machines were a measure of men, then style was a measure of women.

Another indicator of Hoganson's originality can be seen in the numerous avenues for future research inspired by her ties between consumerism and empire.⁷ Her book highlights the value of further research on the transnational networks that linked American consumers to foreign producers. Some, but not all, consumer networks relied on labor exploitation or informal empire. Historians can help refine our understanding of the United States' global impact by exploring ties between domestic consumption and social and environmental conditions in other countries.⁸ *Consumers' Imperium* also points to the need for research

⁵ Richard P. Tucker, *Insatiable Appetite: The United States and the Ecological Degradation of the Tropical World* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000).

⁶ Michael Adas, *Machines as the Measure of Men: Science, Technology and Ideologies of Western Dominance* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989). Adas has more recently applied this argument to the United States in particular. See Adas, *Dominance By Design: Technological Imperatives and America's Civilizing Mission* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap, 2006).

⁷ Hoganson provides her own helpful summary of areas for further research on page 253.

⁸ A good example of this scholarship is John Soluri, *Banana Cultures: Agriculture, Consumption, and Environmental Change in Honduras and the United States* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2005). More

connecting consumer desires to actual U.S. policymaking. In her introduction, Hoganson writes of U.S. “policies, interventions, and investments aimed at gratifying consumer demand” (11). This statement has a high degree of plausibility, but future historians can do more to explore how exactly consumerism influenced U.S. government decision-making.

Hoganson’s sophistication as a historian means that she does not try to force the category of imperialism onto all aspects of globalizing consumer culture. She notes that some American critics of cosmopolitan home décor saw imported furnishings as a threat to racial and civilizational hierarchies, the same hierarchies embraced by most U.S. imperialists (42). Elsewhere, she remarks that women’s travel clubs “planted the seeds of cultural relativism” (206). The blurry line between cultural imperialism and relativism is most noticeable in the book’s last chapter on the immigrant gifts movement. Hoganson acknowledges here that celebrations of immigrant folk tradition contained elements of genuine pluralism. In the end, however, she emphasizes that these displays of immigrants’ cultural difference were ultimately “an enabling concession” that “made Americanization more palatable by suggesting that it did not demand choices between homogeneity and difference” (249). In this case, Hoganson might be reaching too far in search of imperial ties. Recent scholarship on immigration has argued that immigrants did not necessarily have to choose between Americanized homogeneity and roots-based difference. They could blend the two, in which case the immigrant gifts pageants might be less imperial than *Consumers’ Imperium* suggests.⁹

Aside from the question of empire, the main contribution of Hoganson’s discussion of cultural pluralism and relativism comes by helping build a broader narrative of global consciousness in American history. To Hoganson, the study of global consciousness means asking how Americans began “to situate themselves on a planetary scale of being” (155). In line with the emerging historiography of globalization, Hoganson describes the late nineteenth century as a key moment in the rise of global consciousness among Americans.¹⁰ Her most important insight here comes in showing how consumerism came to dominate popular American worldviews. As Hoganson reminds us, a consumer-oriented outlook was just one of many ways available for conceiving of an interconnected world. Americans also had the producers’ lens, viewing the world in search of export markets, and the missionary lens, searching for Christian converts. If we extrapolate beyond Hoganson’s time period, the producer and missionary worldviews appear to have suffered a relative decline from their commanding place a century ago. Meanwhile, the consumer outlook has

broadly, for a model of creative thinking on power dynamics and transnational consumer networks, see Jeremy Prestholdt, *Domesticating the World: African Consumerism and the Genealogies of Globalization* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008).

⁹ See most notably Lizabeth Cohen, *Making a New Deal: Industrial Workers in Chicago, 1919-1939* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990) and George Sanchez, *Becoming Mexican American: Ethnicity, Culture, and Identity in Chicano Los Angeles, 1900-1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993).

¹⁰ See for instance Susan Schulten, *The Geographical Imagination in America, 1880-1950* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001); and, for a similar focus on empire and globalization, Thomas W. Zeiler, *Ambassadors in Pinstripes: The Spalding World Baseball Tour and the Birth of American Empire* (Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield, 2006).

only increased through the twentieth century. By showing the role of women in creating this particular form of global consciousness, Hoganson offers a genealogy of our own time.

The influence of Hoganson's women also helps explain why the kind of global community that scholars like Akira Iriye hope for has been so slow to emerge. More than any other historian, Iriye has begun a new grand narrative describing the emergence of transnational solidarity and "cultural internationalism," which Iriye defines as efforts "to develop an alternative community of nations and peoples on the basis of their cultural interchanges."¹¹ Hoganson's women in essence offered a rival vision of global community. They embraced cultural exchange and global awareness, albeit without the same egalitarian spirit. Yet their definition of cosmopolitanism and cultural exchange proved more accessible and popular among Americans than the more overtly politicized visions studied by Iriye. The consumer-oriented style of cosmopolitanism did not require questioning one's privileged status in international affairs. It offered instead a quick and easy way to embrace the world without actually embracing the people working to sustain that world.

The limits of cosmopolitan consumerism also marked later eras. American internationalists like those behind the 1950s UN cookbook tried to transform the thrill of cosmopolitan consumption into support for an alternative international order. Yet even if every 1950s housewife "toured" the world through the UN recipes, they still would have understood very little about life outside the United States. Rather than bring Americans closer to the world, cosmopolitan consumerism more often reinforced notions of America's privileged position in the world. We have Kristin Hoganson to thank for helping explain how this came to be.

¹¹ Akira Iriye, *Cultural Internationalism and World Order* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), 2.

Between 1865 and 1920, middle-class U.S. women received the bounty of the world in their own kitchens and parlors, in the homes of neighbors, and at nearby immigrant street fairs and folks arts festivals. Trade goods flowed both in and out of U.S. port cities, Kristin Hoganson reminds us in *Consumers' Imperium: The Global Production of American Domesticity, 1865-1920*, and as luxury imports came to be stacked along the docks for shipment to Vantines, Bonwit Teller, Wanamaker's and Sears, a certain cosmopolitanism took root in the daily routines and domestic spaces over which middle-class women presided. Hoganson offers a compelling account of this "cosmopolitan domesticity" and helps us to understand both its presumption of imperial privilege and the possibilities for social change it harbored.

Specifically, Hoganson draws our attention to the influx of housewares and decorating styles, clothing and fashions, foods and culinary trends that shaped middle-class domestic sensibilities in the half-century following the Civil War, and to the novel appeal of foreign travel and immigrant folk customs for native-born white women. Her chapter on household decoration emphasizes the contrast between nationalist visions of the home and the lessons of department store counters increasingly laden with "imperial accessories" (44). Turning to the world of fashion, Hoganson delineates the "imagined communities of dress" that linked American women to Paris, but not to those who toiled to produce their "crêpe de Chine" or "cashemire des Indes" (59). A chapter entitled "Entertaining Difference" leads us into kitchens where native-born women experimented with curries and studied popular geography through ethnographically inflected cookbooks, and into parlors and living rooms where they hosted international theme parties, at which they could play with the possibilities of transnational identification. In the "fictive travel movement," with its book clubs and imaginary tours of foreign lands, Hoganson traces the emergence of "the tourist mentality," and in her final chapter, she turns to festivals and other events designed to showcase the "gifts" immigrants had to offer their new country, especially song and dance, a trend that fed both imperialist nostalgia and pluralism. Newspapers, women's magazines, and organizational records are prominent among the sources that enable Hoganson to track the reception of goods, ideas, and images either derived from or associated with the world beyond the nation's borders, and to follow middle-class women's production and embrace of "the foreign" through their role as consumers.

What Hoganson offers is, in a sense, a corrected ledger. She acknowledges the dissemination of U.S. manufactures and other exports, which, along with the outward flow of military force and diplomatic maneuvering, contributed to the nation's influence and power abroad. But by filling in the record of material and cultural imports, she seeks to bury the idea that the sending nation remained somehow immune to the influence of what came back on return voyages. She marks the provenance of incoming goods; identifies those who promoted their use, notes their widespread destinations, and calculates their value in cultural and ideological coin. While it remains for others to tally the numbers and determine the precise volume of material objects imported, here we have a richly detailed record of the privilege and leverage for change women derived from those objects.

How then does Hoganson measure and weigh the significance of the cultural patterns whose traces she finds in “a board game here, a trade card there,” a Turkish curtain in Peoria, a “round-the-world dinner” in Oregon, and a silk dress in Texas? (165, 144) How does she account for the heft of the consumer’s imperium? Was it a function of middle-class American women’s imagination, a conceit of power that shaped their behaviors and outlooks, and tied them to their nation’s emerging imperial status, without enabling them to materially affect international relations? Hoganson’s biggest claim, on the contrary, is that it amounted to a necessary motive force behind U.S. empire. “Without the material desires of the consumers’ imperium,” she writes, “there would have been no cause for policies, interventions, and investments aimed at gratifying consumer demand” (11). But if the cumulative force of consumption, carried on significantly by women, served to enlarge the nation’s power and further entrench hierarchies of race and class, other patterns are also weighed here. It mattered, too, that white women formulated imperial feminisms and, alternatively, followed their newfound desire for difference to pluralist and at times even anti-racist perspectives, and that African American, Native American, European immigrant, and working-class women turned the consumer’s imperium to their own ends. Indeed, while its terms may have been predominantly self-centered, appropriative, superior, apolitical, touristic, pleasure-seeking, and focused on novelty, imperial consumption could lead, ironically, to new ways of imagining and acting upon lines of connection that crossed national borders and flouted particular hierarchical social arrangements.

A variety of methodological approaches and theoretical inflections guide Hoganson’s multilayered analysis. First and most obviously, as a women’s historian, she is attentive to the significance of women’s daily activities and, more broadly, the operation of gendered systems of meaning. This double impulse inaugurates her study by leading her to question the relative lack of attention to consumption and the reception of imports in existing scholarship on the history of U.S. international relations. Hoganson helps us understand why many middle-class white women welcomed the foreign into their communities, homes, minds, and even bodies. They turned to the wider world, she points out (with Sinclair Lewis), to escape the confines of “Main Street and a kitchen” (7). And while, “[c]osmopolitan domesticity was more a posture than a movement to effect change” (55), posture was, quite literally, part of what could change by virtue of imaginary transnational crossings, as when the *Ladies Home Journal*, offering in 1891 a new way to embody femininity, conveyed one traveler’s experience in Constantinople, learning to inhabit a daring pose: sitting on her foot on a divan (31).

Change on the personal level in turn fueled broader historical change, Hoganson suggests. As white middle-class women’s “search for individual expression” and emancipation led them to embrace imports, they could become invested in ethnic differences and hierarchies that offered them valuable cultural resources (31). Hoganson concludes, “However distressing their second-class citizenship, they could take comfort in being world-class consumers. They softened their subordination by luxuriating in the trappings of power” (255). But how shall we understand the agency of privileged women who accepted such bounty? Hoganson is surely right that “domestic pleasures” as well as attempts at liberation “had concrete consequences for international relations” (255), but what exactly

were those consequences? Further study of these marketplace interactions, viewed from other angles, will enrich our understanding of the relationship between U.S. women's consumption and other forces that fueled imperial ventures.

The imprint of social history is evident in Hoganson's focus on distinct middle-class experiences within the consumer's imperium. The eager, middle-class culture of the costume party, for example, one major artery of cosmopolitan domesticity, may be critical for our understanding of hegemonic class formation in the United States. In the late nineteenth century, "the expansion of ethnographic consciousness... promoted pretense," writes Hoganson (137). A more thorough examination of class in the consumer's imperium might expand on a point Hoganson acknowledges: working-class men and women had their own distinctive forms of engagement with it. Imported bananas made easy, portable, and relatively calorie-rich meals for factory workers and French heels had a particular significance for working-class immigrant women, as we learn from John Soluri and Nan Enstad, respectively.¹ Yet, Hoganson's exploration of a class-specific experience of privilege is crucial, as it illuminates the force of middle-class investment in the emerging global order.

Hoganson is sensitive to the theoretical dimensions of her source material and builds on the observations of contemporary observers of the consumer's imperium. She cites Langston Hughes' assertion, for example, that "mahogany grand pianos and chests of drawers were made of 'wood and life, energy and death, out of Africa'" (55). Hughes thus called attention to the colonial violence of resource extraction, an aspect of production that was erased in the common sense of commodity fetishism. Hoganson rightly acknowledges that violence, but the strikingly original contribution here is that she attends to the particular process by which such commodities were fetishized, that is, the ways that women consumers, hand-in-hand with importers, retailers, decorators, and others invested them with meaning and affect, new cultural connotations, and patterns of desire. She emphasizes the ways that "an assortment of decontextualized things" (254) came to be re-contextualized, as they were shorn of significance as the product of someone else's labor—or as that labor was itself recast and highlighted to reflect the mastery and privilege of the consumers or tourists it benefited (44). In this sense, *Consumer's Imperium* focuses on the productive work of consumption, including the sometimes purposive framing of commodities in relation to the structures of power that produced them.

The mix of approaches, which also includes cultural history, traces of psychoanalytic theory, African American history, and concerns arising out of diplomatic history, makes for a richly textured portrait of U.S. middle-class women's increasingly imperial domesticity and their multifaceted engagement with the world. What Hoganson has not tried to do, however, and what remains for other scholars who can build on her work, is to construct a

¹ John Soluri, "Banana Cultures: Linking the Production and Consumption of Export Bananas, 1800-1980," in Steve Striffler and Mark Moberg, eds., *Banana Wars: Power, Production and History in the Americas* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003); Nan Enstad, *Ladies of Labor, Girls of Adventure: Working Women, Popular Culture, and Labor Politics at the Turn of the Twentieth Century* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999). Hoganson makes this point with reference to Enstad's study.

more precise narrative of the emergence and career of the consumers' imperium over the course of the half-century between the Civil War and the aftermath of World War I. Sustained attention to change over time, as well as to the significance of events in the political, military, and economic spheres, would strengthen some of the arguments presented here and would give us insight into some of the tensions and contradictions that were bundled into the consumers' imperium.

Hoganson touches on change over time and on the significance of wider political contexts in her discussion of the ways that the "culinary cosmopolitanism" of the late nineteenth century reinforced social hierarchies. An 1869 Thomas Nast drawing of an inclusive Thanksgiving table, a drawing inscribed with the words "come one come all" and "free and equal," provides a point of contrast that helps to establish her argument. Hoganson points out that the drawing, which showcases a range of racially marked "ethnic types" sharing in the holiday repast, spoke to "Reconstruction-era debates over national belonging" (150-151). Yet the heated debates over imperialism that took place in the years immediately surrounding the turn of the twentieth century, which were so central to Hoganson's earlier work, play little or no part in her discussion of the "fin-de-siècle consumer's imperium" (252).² Attention to the political contexts and racial particulars of both representational moments could guide us toward a more precise account of the close entwining of racism (and opposition to racism) within imperial consumption. Perhaps the most visually prominent grouping at Nast's Thanksgiving table includes a Chinese American family, with the father engaged in respectful interracial conversation, and the mother turned toward her small child, a model of maternal attentiveness and virtue. Given the content of anti-Chinese racism that was then emerging and would within a decade and a half lead to the Chinese Exclusion Act, the image is all the more striking. How did later images of food and furniture, sociability and style, relate to the political events and specific racial tensions of their day?

And how did the unfolding of the nation's military, political, and economic power shape representations and experiences of consumption? When a 1914 writer in *House Beautiful* marveled that "From the four corners of the earth come marching long processions of tableware," her image drew on a militarist discourse that may have spoken to that particular moment in distinct ways. Yet in this instance as in many others, dates are buried in footnotes, obscuring potential connections with one or another phase in the United States' military and diplomatic history (43). Looking instead to the broad sweep of cultural developments within the realm of domesticity, Hoganson concludes that Americans' receptivity to the foreign grew as their nation's imperial status came to be more assured:

Rather than arguing that its ascendant power enabled the United States to stand aloof, this book argues that the richer and more powerful the United States became, the more it could afford to import. Along with obtaining the wherewithal to purchase foreign treasures, a growing number of Americans developed imperial sensibilities. They came to see themselves as having needs that could no longer be satisfied and

² Kristin Hoganson, [Fighting for American Manhood: How Gender Politics Provoked the Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars](#) (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998).

stature that could no longer be sustained merely by home production.... Imports are often associated with weakness and exports with strength. But just as exports on unfavorable terms may reveal relations of dependency, imports on favorable terms can reveal the exercise of power. That's the case for the fin-de-siècle consumer's imperium (251-252).

Hoganson points here to a steady correlation between rising national power and acceptance of cultural as well as material imports. But the richness of Hoganson's account points to further intricacies of historical change, which also deserve to be pursued. How might it have mattered, for example, that "the wherewithal to purchase foreign treasures" did not rise uniformly? As economic downturns hit American pocketbooks (and some more than others), did the embrace of cosmopolitanism flag or shift in nature? As middle-class women turned to social reform and learned from their interactions with immigrant working-class activists, did their perspectives on privilege, entitlement, and the primacy of the self remain undisturbed?

Moreover, how might the distinct projects carried out in the various sites of consumption Hoganson examines have functioned at cross-purposes? This is, after all, an account not only of the "countless women," but also of the decorators, publishers, clothing manufacturers, advertisers, cookbook authors, ministers, travel lecturers, and social reformers who produced the consumers' imperium (if not of the policymakers, diplomats, and marines who also made it possible). The cumulative effect was to entrench privilege and power, Hoganson shows, but this was power crosscut by myriad trajectories, each with its own distinct logic. The contradictions of the immigrant gifts movement, especially, point to divergent directions that may have emerged out of U.S. engagement with the world: the reinforcing of whiteness and the special investment in European folk heritages, on one hand, and a social impulse toward justice and humanitarian connection on the other. If imports yielded more privilege than possibility for egalitarian change, as Hoganson persuasively argues, it may have been equally significant that the impulse to establish one's unique individuality led some women, at least, to question the presumption of their own privilege and the superiority of their own cultural perspective.

When the United States government announced in 2005 new security regulations requiring Americans travelling to Canada and Mexico to have passports, the proposal caused consternation. The debate that followed also fuelled a persistent belief among non-Americans that many citizens of the United States have little interest in or knowledge of other countries. A reputed 20 percent of Americans owned a passport at the time, and 27 percent in 2007, whereas close by in similar continental circumstances, 40 percent of Canadians had them.¹ Whatever the reasons for this state of affairs, the resulting impression further underlined stereotypes informed by President George W. Bush's little travelled pre-presidential personal history. Whether or not Americans are, as some claim, a relatively parochial people, superficial popular assumptions that the United States has always been insular abound, and need to be explored historically. Kristin Hoganson's *Consumers' Imperium* is a timely if perhaps not intentional contribution to this popular debate abroad. But she does tackle squarely the academic debates over the engagement of the United States with the wider world, particularly how knowledge of that world is produced and consumed; the book is of contemporary interest because it shows another America, one in which a more cosmopolitan outlook prevailed, at least in the homes of well-to-do and middle-class women. The book is not a conventional study of diplomatic history or of U.S. imperialism, but explores around the edges of these topics by using the perspectives of the new transnational approaches to history in which goods, services, ideas, and institutions flow across the boundaries of nations.

Consumers' Imperium is also innovative because it cuts across a common narrative of American empire in the late 19th century. That narrative focuses on overseas expansion. The forces that impelled the United States to seek markets and, in 1898, colonies are often seen to be endogenous to the United States, and the direction of influence is often interpreted as outward from the dynamic changes going on in post-bellum America. The (superficial) healing of the wounds of the Civil War, the charge of industrialisation, the wealth and power accumulating, the social ferment in American cities, all pushed the United States towards foreign markets, whether they be for souls, manufactured goods or territorial possessions sought for humanitarian uplift or to cement international hegemony. Foreigners and Americans tend to think alike on this point. Just as rust never sleeps, the United States has been a restlessly expansionist power. Historians have in recent decades charted many aspects of this story. What historians have failed to do is to investigate the reciprocal if uneven effects of the American pattern, despite occasional historiographical models and examples to the contrary. Because she examines transnational cultural flows, which are inherently multilateral, Hoganson addresses this failure. She directs attention towards the incorporation of American domesticity in empire and empire in domesticity through the importation of ideas, customs, styles, and fashions. Hoganson is able to show a much broader American interest in the rest of the world and

¹ *US News and World Report*, 6 April 2005, 2A; "Canadians Fear Fallout Of U.S. Passport Rules," *Washington Post*, 13 January 2007, A16. For more recent data see http://travel.state.gov/passport/services/stats/stats_890.html. (accessed 20 December 2007).

connection to that world than previously revealed. American middle-class women are revealed as in some way “cosmopolitan” rather than “parochial” (6-11).

Travel is one obvious theme. While Hoganson sketches American journeys abroad, she is also well aware of the elitist nature of tourism in the 19th century and therefore covers more fully the little known topic of travel clubs, to get at the phenomenon of fictive travel and the ways travel has been influential in American culture. Travel experiences filtered through to a larger number in a “culture of international travel” (166), a point she also shows through interesting episodes such as the use of the stereopticon device for bringing the colour, the detail, and exoticism of foreign places into local communities (173-74). European dress fashions were also important for the consumers’ imperium. Hoganson show how Americans incorporated Asian motifs into dress when given the imprimatur of Parisian fashion, and how foreign food ways were worked into American culinary culture. She argues that an international component of American cooking became “more pronounced in the late nineteenth century” (106). Through the introduction of foreign recipes and cooking ingredients, the American kitchen moved to the centre of the process of globalisation. American homes became key sites for the incorporation of foreign cultures through exotic imports. When Americans took rice and lychees from China, peppers from Africa, spices from Central America and other new items from the Caribbean after the Spanish American War, they did more than buy products; they engaged with the world as consumers.

Hoganson documents the myriad ways in which American women established these and other transnational consumer connections. She makes innovative use of little appreciated sources such as cook books, folk art exhibits, and travel club records. But her documentation still leaves open the questions: How “real” was the cosmopolitanism, and how extensive was its influence? mIndeed, exactly what does Hoganson mean by “cosmopolitanism” and how can that quality be gauged? Hoganson is aware of such problems. She explores the complicated structures whereby foreign cultural practices become disseminated in the home. The imprint of the foreign could be entirely superficial, but Hoganson does not think so. Thus for cooking, she argues that the effects are deeper than the superficiality of middle-class Americans trying foreign recipes while maintaining a basically traditional diet. The experience of eating “foreign” was part of a larger pattern. It was not just the recipes; American middle-class women held parties performing roles as foreigners. Yet she agrees that there were limits to cosmopolitanism. The consumers of foreign foods showed they were not ethnics; the latter were not invited to the colourful parties in which ethnic cuisine was exhibited, and crossing the racial line to enact roles was still strictly limited in scope and intent. On a more abstract level, fashionable American consumers in effect benefited from the underdeveloped and colonial world in unequal terms of trade. This was the hard heart of the consumers’ imperium.

Hoganson does not champion a simplistic American acceptance of foreign cultures. Though concerned to attack the evidence of parochialism in American life, she does not seek its polar opposite. Rather, she looks at the relationship between the “*seemingly* cosmopolitan” (my emphasis) and “more limited outlooks” (9). “Globalization” of American households occurred in a “Self-centered kind of engagement” that privileged “pleasure and novelty”

(12). The consumer relationship of self-gratification deflected attention from “the real world, with its real conflicts, real inequities, and real commercial, social, political and military interconnections.” (254) There is a sense in which the cosmopolitanism of these women is compromised so that they do not conform to a dictionary definition by showing “a breadth of knowledge and refinement from having travelled widely.” Nor are they “free from national prejudices”. Though they do show some familiarity “with many different countries and cultures,”² they get only a passing grade for cosmopolitanism, not a high distinction.

This question of the extent and meaning of cosmopolitanism could be carried much further, if others emulated Hoganson’s work. Two key areas in need of study are languages and the place of geography and history in schools. Women were better educated with better school completion rates by 1900, and had growing access (for the upper middle class that she targets) to the realm of higher education. What did these women know of foreign languages, geography, and histories? Did they study these topics and courses in schools and universities? Did they study these fields more than men did? Foreign language study is a particularly important topic that needs discussion in future forays into this field.³

Nevertheless, for her period, the evidence is there for historians to explore. Newspaper accounts and periodicals reveal a fascination with the foreign and some considerable, if ambiguous, pattern of engagement with the wide world. What Hoganson argues is also backed by the wider picture emerging in historiography of an open economy in the 19th century in which globalisation advanced through the flow of immigrants and capital.⁴ The evidence in this book of American interest in Asian cultures is backed by what we know of the intellectual and cultural history of Western Europe in the period. In this sense, American women were not so special.

In the *Consumers’ Imperium*, it seems that women imported style and fashion. But this raises the question: What was the role of men? The latter as well as women travelled, and men wrote travel books too. Men as well as women were missionaries. Is there a gender dimension to the appreciation of the foreign? Were men not so empathetic? The tendency in this study is to equate “male” with politics and the export of American power, economy and culture while women equal domesticity and consumer culture. But men were also consumers of culture; what role did they play as patrons of the arts in assimilating foreign styles within American homes? In the case of the missionaries, the category of woman as exporter of culture overlaps considerably with the importer of culture, since missionary women were involved in both processes.

In *Consumers’ Imperium*, there is little attention paid to the role of American missionaries as key conduits for experience of foreign cultures – this group is briefly mentioned several times but missionaries were far more important by number than is apparent from this

² Encarta® World English Dictionary © 1999 Microsoft Corporation.

³ Ian Tyrrell, *Transnational Nation: United States History in Global Perspective since 1789* (Basingstoke, Eng.: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 190-91.

⁴ I have summarised these views in chapter 2 of *Transnational Nation*.

treatment, particularly in the lower middle classes. Though the temperance movement is noted as an example of transnational activism, the latter as a generic is said to be “upper crust” (9), a statement that underestimates the wider range of people who, through the Woman’s Christian Temperance Union, the Student Volunteers for Foreign Missions, Christian Endeavor, the YMCA and the YWCA engaged (albeit unequally) with foreign cultures. Were their views part of the acceptance of diversity in consumerism that she discusses? Or were these groups more interested in imposing uniformity from above? Though the latter is usually thought to be the case, there is actually much more diversity here, and the story for missions and their boards might be more similar to that for the kitchens of middle-class American women who never travelled than is commonly imagined. Certainly every foreign missionary support society in every protestant church constituted a de facto fictive travel club, and the numbers were in the many thousands. Greater study of the missionary influence is needed, because the missionaries and the churches that backed them at home were vital in the dissemination of foreign cultural elements in the United States, and in their interpretation. New studies of this topic are underway, with missionaries coming back into academic favour.⁵ These studies are likely to add to the impression Hoganson gives of an intercultural exchange, rather than undermine it. But the insoluble connections between the export of culture and the import of culture will be more crucially important in further work.

Hoganson’s book raises other fascinating questions that should be followed up by historians. Most important, what happens after 1920? Hoganson’s work ends rather abruptly in that year. Accept, for a moment, that Americans were not as parochial as hitherto imagined; assume, for another moment, that Americans today are indeed relatively parochial, and less well travelled than people in some other countries. If so, then a gigantic question is raised. How does the United States become less interested in foreign places? Or does it? What is the trajectory of cosmopolitanism? Is cosmopolitanism ironically dependent upon the global circulation systems of late nineteenth century imperialism? Was the age of empire more cosmopolitan than subsequent periods? The fate of the study of foreign histories and languages in the United States since the 1920s suggests a decline of interest in and knowledge of the wider world, but Hoganson does not concern herself with these domains. She does deal with travel, as I have pointed out. That raises speculation about the role of travel in the making of modern American national consciousness and identity, as much as for the making of transnational connections. Far more Americans travelled after World War I than in the late nineteenth century, for example, and travel has in the age of mass air transport become, especially since the 1970s, more democratic. If travel really does broaden the mind, one would think that the opportunities for foreign travel more recently would lead to a less provincial outlook among Americans. Did they? The answer to this question may lie in the nature of networks of economic and social relationships within the United States, and the changing nature of

⁵ An interesting example is Ryan Dunch, “Beyond Cultural Imperialism: Cultural Theory, Christian Missions, and Global Modernity,” *History and Theory*, 41 (October 2002), 301-25. See especially the papers given at “Competing Kingdoms: Women, Mission, Nation, and American Empire, 1812-1938, An International Conference at the Rothermere American Institute, University of Oxford, April 27-29, 2006” at <http://womenandmission.binghamton.edu/> (accessed 27 December 2007).

travel. Instead of a relatively small elite (100,000 in the 1880s) going on overseas trips for longish periods, we now have many millions going abroad on shorter, perhaps more superficial trips. Another question would concern what changes have occurred in domestic travel that might account for the patterns of passport holding, and for the preference for “Seeing America First.” These changes might include the improvement of national highways; the marketing of American places by railroads and then airlines; the “nationalisation” of nature through national parks; the acquisition of foreign places as part of the United States, especially Hawaii, where the “foreign” place can have its exoticism tempered by Americanisation; and the gradual Americanisation of travel globally. One may today travel far but never leave American *space*. Shopping malls, McDonald’s, Starbucks, American chain motels and hotels all allow American *space* to extend far beyond American territory. This changing spatial history of American travel needs to be charted and analysed as an aspect of transnational history.⁶

Hoganson’s evidence also raises the question: When American women showed an interest in the Orient, was this part of the aesthetic of European discovery of Asia, or different from it? Recall that a vogue for Japanese art swept the Western European countries in the late nineteenth century too. Was the American interest imported from there, or did it have an independent inflection? It does seem that this process was in some way a transnational one in the growing encounter of European culture with Asia. American appreciation of Oriental styles in dress and decoration is said to be “where the Parisian-based fashion system validated it” (90). In this connection concerning what is distinctively American, the driving forces assimilating a pot-pourri of foreign influences and consumption patterns remain somewhat obscure. How did American nationalism and exceptionalism as ideological patterns of belief fit with the practice of these women? Though one would have liked these forces at work and their relationships to be teased out a little more, Hoganson wisely adopts the view that cosmopolitanism was a contested field, and one in which different allegiances could exist side by side. While some nationalists criticised American women for slavishly following foreign styles, defenders of the consumers’ imperium argued that a more assured and sophisticated nationalist could do credit to her country by incorporating more cosmopolitan styles (101). Thus American nationalism and cosmopolitanism were by no means mutually exclusive.

All in all, this is a stimulating, theoretically informed, and learned book. It adds a new dimension to the study of American imperialism, building in that respect upon works such as Richard Tucker’s *Insatiable Appetite: The United States and the Ecological Degradation of the Tropical World*.⁷ *Consumers’ Imperium* raises more questions than are settled, which is highly desirable. It will make us think about the topic of imperialism in a more complex and subtle way. It should provide a platform for more intensive studies of knowledge and reception of the foreign in American culture on the one hand, and for further speculation

⁶ Marguerite S. Shaffer, *See America First: Tourism and National Identity, 1880–1940* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2001).

⁷ Richard P. Tucker, *Insatiable Appetite: The United States and the Ecological Degradation of the Tropical World* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2000).

on the trajectory of American relations with the wider world after World War I on the other.

Through a multi-faceted analysis of the newly emerging patterns of consumption in the United States during the period between the Civil War and WWI, Kristin L. Hoganson portrays white, middle-class American households as important “contact zones” of international encounter. She demonstrates that during the period characterized by growing nativism at home and expansionism abroad, there were equally important yet heretofore ignored flows of goods and ideas that have had lasting legacies for American history: the importation of foreign goods and cultures into American domestic life. She shows that the popularity of imported goods, styles, and practices among white, middle-class women was an index of the new cosmopolitan lifestyle and worldview. In contrast to provincial nationalism that preferred to keep the foreign at arm’s length, this cosmopolitan mentality actively engaged the outside world, appreciated what foreign cultures had to offer, and valued difference and pluralism that comprised American life. Through this process of importation and adoption of the foreign, American “home”—both the households and the nation—increasingly became the product of foreign goods and labor, as smartly captured by the book’s subtitle.

Hoganson portrays this process through densely researched analyses of several areas of white, middle-class and wealthy women’s lifestyle and activities: interior decoration, fashion, cooking and entertaining, travel clubs, and the celebration of immigrant folklife. She raises several important themes that inform both her analysis of individual areas and the connections she draws among them. “Secondhand empire” conveys how middle-class Americans’ eager adoption of the foreign was often a mimicry of European styles—especially French—and imperial, aristocratic culture. Extending Benedict Anderson’s notion of “imagined communities” beyond the nation, she reveals how women constructed a fantasy world united by taste rather than nationality and organized by a racialized class hierarchy. “Popular geography” drawn through both physical and fictive travel around the world produced a new global consciousness and tourist mentality. Hoganson applies Renato Resaldo’s concept of “imperialist nostalgia” to immigrant gifts movement, in which native-born, white, middle-class women cherished and appropriated immigrant folk culture that they perceived to be endangered by the pressures for Americanization. These mutually enforcing impulses of the “consumers’ imperium” produced and sustained the material and epistemological relations between American women and the globe.

In Hoganson’s assessment, the legacies of this particular form of cosmopolitanism were mixed. On the one hand, this cosmopolitanism made an important break from the attitudes and practices that often characterized many Americans of the earlier era. The proponents of cosmopolitanism strove to transcend the local, expressed active interest in the outside world, engaged foreign cultures, and celebrated cultural difference. While Progressive reformers were pushing immigrants to Americanize and to emulate middle-class lifestyle, these cosmopolitan consumers developed an awareness that the cultural transformation should go in both directions, i.e. that native-born Americans needed lessons in appreciating difference and that it was indeed cultural pluralism that made America uniquely American. In proudly adopting this outlook, white, middle-class women discarded narrowly construed

nationalism in favor of a more global sense of citizenship. This shift had a profound impact for both the lives of women themselves and the nature of American life in general. For women, such attitudes and practices liberated them from constraints of traditional notions of domesticity and thrust them out into the world, both physically and psychologically. Consumption of foreign goods granted them the social capital that marked them with class distinction and the participation in the culture of empire even as they were excluded from the male world of commerce and politics. Through these women's consumption, American lifestyle became more open to foreign influences, and the standard of middle-class living came to be defined precisely through its global composition.

On the other hand, this cosmopolitanism had its severe limitations as well. The white, middle-class women's adoption of the foreign was fundamentally consumptive, appropriative, and selective. The world outside the United States mattered to the women only to the extent that it offered goods to adorn their bodies and homes. These consumers were interested in the goods but not the people who produced them, and their view of the world was sanitized of any conflict that might disturb their pleasure. The imported items and styles were de-contextualized from their historical origins, cultural settings, and political circumstances and were brought together into an imperial bazaar. Cultural difference was fetishized as the symbol of the disappearing past. Far from seeing the world's cultures as equally valuable, this form of cosmopolitanism reinforced the race- and class-based notions of civilizational hierarchy. In all these ways, the women became active participants in the imperial political economy underpinning the relationship between the cosmopolitan consumers and the producers who served their needs at home and abroad.

As in her last book, *Fighting for American Manhood: How Gender Politics Provoked the Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars*, Hoganson deftly brings together her expertise in cultural history, women's/gender history, and the history of U.S. foreign relations to weave an unusual narrative of America's relations with the world. This approach enables her to analyze the significance of the United States' engagement with the world not through diplomatic, military, or commercial records but through cookbooks, fashion magazines, and records of women's travel clubs. By doing so, this study engages several important and growing areas of scholarship. From my standpoint as a scholar of American studies and cultural studies, Hoganson's work is most significant in that it provides historical grounding to much of the recent analyses and arguments made by scholars of the cultural politics of international encounter.

First, *Consumers' Imperium* builds upon the study of the cultures of United States empire which has become central to American studies in the last decade. In locating international encounter in the consumption and lifestyle at home, Hoganson demonstrates that the boundaries between the "foreign" and the "domestic" were not only permeable but also mutually constitutive.¹ While scholars such as Amy Kaplan, Christina Klein, Melani McAlister, Ann Stoler, and Laura Wexler have produced excellent works along these lines of

¹ Amy Kaplan, "Left Alone with America: The Absence of Empire in the Study of American Culture," in Amy Kaplan and Donald E. Pease, eds., *Cultures of United States Imperialism* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1991), 3-21.

inquiry, many of these studies focus more on the analysis of cultural texts and practices than on history.² Hoganson's extensive archival research provides dense documentary support for these scholars' cultural analysis.

Second, *Consumers' Imperium* engages the scholarship on the gender and sexual politics of international relations pioneered by Cynthia Enloe and developed by feminist political scientists, sociologists, as well as historians.³ Focusing on white, middle-class, female consumers of cosmopolitanism, Hoganson treats women as important agents of international encounter complicit in the imperialist worldview and ways of life. Beyond the roles of women, Hoganson also sees the middle-class household—a space distinctly gendered feminine by both proponents and opponents of cosmopolitanism—not as a retreat from the male world of expansionist politics and economy but as the vanguard practitioner of the imperialist ethos. Here again, Hoganson's thick historical description of the women's lifestyle gives credence to the theoretical arguments on the intersections of gender and imperialism.

Finally, Hoganson's study contributes to historicizing globalization. Much has been written about globalization, yet there has been no agreement about exactly what the word means or how to demarcate its chronology. Particularly when dealing with the cultural dimensions of inter/transnational flows, the historicity of the phenomenon seems more difficult to pinpoint than when discussing the movements of capital or labor which can be tied to concrete financial, legal, political institutions and arrangements.⁴ By tracing the flows of specific goods into American households during the Gilded Age and Progressive Era, Hoganson offers a concrete historical narrative of globalization, one characterized not only by American expansion that many scholars have written about but also by the massive foreign imports that flooded American homes.

The study is remarkable in its extensive research, analytical care, and fresh argument; yet there are a couple of points that I would have liked Hoganson to develop further. First is the question of agency. While I certainly agree that the women's tastes in decoration, fashion, and food, choices they made in shopping for goods, and their active participation in leisure and reform activities constituted important forms of agency, I would have liked to see further discussion of the men and women who shaped and circumscribed these

² Amy Kaplan, *The Anarchy of Empire in the Making of U.S. Culture* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002); Christina Klein, *Cold War Orientalism: Asia in the Middlebrow Imagination, 1945-1961* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003); Melani McAlister, *Epic Encounters: Culture, Media, and U.S. Interests in the Middle East, 1945-2000* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001); Ann Laura Stoler, *Race and the Education of Desire: Foucault's History of Sexuality and the Colonial Order of Things* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1995); Laura Wexler, *Tender Violence: Domestic Visions in an Age of U.S. Imperialism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000)

³ Cynthia Enloe, *Bananas, Beaches and Bases: Making Feminist Sense of International Politics* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990); Cynthia Enloe, *The Morning After: Sexual Politics at the End of the Cold War* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993); Cynthia Enloe, *Maneuvers: The International Politics of Militarizing Women's Lives* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000).

⁴ For instance, Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996); Ulf Hannerz, *Transnational Connections: Culture, People, and Places* (London and New York: Routledge, 1996).

consumers' agency. Trends in fashion or home décor and popular travel destinations do not emerge entirely out of the consumers' whims but are produced by the designers, manufacturers, merchants, advertisers, writers, and guides, both at home and abroad. While Hoganson shows us a wide array of representations these figures disseminated, she does not tell us too much about these figures themselves and their relationship to the global factory and the domestic market. Their roles in the international encounter would further illustrate the complex ways in which middle-class consumers' choices—and thus forms of agency—were both expanded and limited.

Second is the issue of class. Hoganson explicitly points out that she is discussing a predominantly middle-class phenomenon and that the principal characters in her account are native-born, white, middle-class to wealthy women who symbolized American domesticity, exercised considerable power in the marketplace, and raised many leaders of the American century (8). Occasionally she also points out the working-class, immigrant women practicing their own versions of cosmopolitan fashion, thus demonstrating the popularity of such styles and outlook across class lines (61). Yet a closer examination of exactly how women from lower class backgrounds came to identify with, and perhaps sometimes resist, these middle-class outlook on the world and how the consumerist cosmopolitanism consciously and unconsciously glossed over the fissures brought by the presence of immigrants in and around middle-class households (as servants, cooks, vendors, and so forth) would further strengthen Hoganson's argument about the socioeconomic privilege upon which these women's cosmopolitanism rested.

Both of the above points are, however, minor and really outside the scope of Hoganson's project which is executed beautifully. Although Hoganson is careful not to be presentist in her historical discussion, one can easily identify many extant instances of cosmopolitanism in middle-class American fashion, dining, travel, and entertainment that display the same disturbing signs that this book addresses. Incidentally, as I was reading Hoganson's book, my bedtime reading was Elizabeth Gilbert's *Eat, Pray, Love: One Woman's Search for Everything across Italy, India, and Indonesia* and the catalog for Anthropologie and Banana Republic.⁵

⁵ Elizabeth Gilbert, *Eat, Pray, Love: One Woman's Search for Everything across Italy, India, and Indonesia* (New York: Penguin Books, 2006)

Author's Response by Kristin Hoganson, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign

Consumers' *Imperium* is not an obvious choice for an H-Diplo roundtable. It does not cover the post 1945 period that interests so many H-Diplo readers, it does not emphasize policymaking, and it talks a lot about curtains, kimonos, and curry. So I was both surprised and gratified to learn that it had been selected for discussion. I was even more grateful for the generous, expansive, and critically astute comments offered by Christopher Endy, Mary A. Renda, Ian Tyrrell, and Mari Yoshihara. Above all, I appreciate their assertions that this book should, indeed, interest the readers of this list because of the insights it provides into empire and globalization. I wrote the book for multiple audiences, but the main one I hoped to reach was foreign relations historians (broadly conceived), so it means a lot to have these reviewers engage so enthusiastically with it and to see its relevance to issues such as Cold War campaigns to foster global community and more recent debates over U.S. insularity. The book may be, as Yoshihara puts it, an "unusual narrative of America's relations with the world," but it is emphatically about those relations.

After placing the book in some fine company and warmly reviewing its main topics and themes (including imperial buy-in, secondhand empire, transnational imagined communities, and popular geographies), the discussants liven things up by turning to some of the book's shortcomings. Much of the criticism they offer takes the form of calls for more research. Some of these suggestions are things I considered pursuing but found it hard to carry through on after the initial framing of my project. Like every author, I wish I could have done it all. But instead, I can only thank the reviewers for an excellent list of research possibilities.

I'm assuming that many H-Diplo readers are particularly interested in the readers' calls to pursue the links between consumerism and governmental decision making. I too would like to know more about this. The question is how? In my period, as in others, consumers did not lobby on trade policy as concertedly as producers. I found scattered references to consumer activism on international issues – such as calls to boycott slave grown coffee and a pro-banana campaign organized by importers – but grass roots consumer activism in the period appears to have had a preeminently domestic orientation.¹ In sum, I did not find a smoking gun linking specific consumer groups to particular foreign relations decisions. That may, in part, be a result of my approach: I focused more on sources that I thought would tell me something about consumption practices than those that emphasized politics and policy. But even if missed some smoking guns, I doubt I missed an entire arsenal.

A second way to link consumption to foreign policy would be to investigate the consumer practices of influential individuals and then to see how (and whether) these practices correlated with their policy positions. Thinking I'd give this a try, I attempted to visit Theodore Roosevelt's home in Oyster Bay on a family vacation. After missing a ferry and

¹ Christopher Endy provides further backing for this in his 2008 SHAFR paper, "Commerce, Christianity, and Globalization: Popular Anxieties over American Business Expansion, 1890s to 1930s," p. 3.

then getting stuck in a sweaty Long Island traffic jam, I reached Sagamore Hill after closing time. Frustrated but still curious, I ordered the published guide and inventory through interlibrary loan.

What did I find? First, TR had a lot of stuff. Second, it came from around the world: his library, for example, had Chinese porcelain, a Japanese statue, German plaques, a Brazilian table, an English clock, a Norwegian beaker, and Persian and South American trays, among other things. In addition to the items identified as imported, there were items made from materials not available in the United States, including several pieces of mahogany furniture and a rhinoceros foot inkstand. In sum, when TR was in residence as governor, vice president, and president, he had only to look up from his writing to see material markers of global connections.²

But does that tell us anything about causality? Did his cosmopolitan tastes affect his policy preferences or vice versa? When he glanced at his porcelain vases, did he think about their Chinese origin or that they had been a gift from an admirer in New York, Quan Yick Nam? Did they lead his thoughts to the Boxer Rebellion or to aesthetic matters of color and form? Indeed, did he pay them much heed at all? Perhaps it was Edith who arranged them in the first place.

In her excellent biography of Roosevelt, Kathleen Dalton notes that he sympathized with the straight lines and American tenor of the arts and crafts movement. He publicly praised the virtues of the “simple life,” as opposed to excessive materialism.³ Yet despite his dedication to a bare-bones, nationalist aesthetic, his library reveals that he did not escape the acquisitive tendencies of his time, that he surrounded himself with objects that brought to mind distant parts of the world. His library shows that Roosevelt was not exclusively devoted to home production. Nor was he absolutely committed to the nationally-inflected arts and crafts, mission, and colonial revival styles (much less the super-nationalist maize art craze). Instead, he had eclectic tastes. In opposition to those who insisted that citizens of a rising power should demonstrate their patriotism by displaying thoroughly American interiors, TR cast his lot with those who claimed that power could be shown through consumption as well as production, that the ability to appropriate the best the world offered testified to the nation’s standing among the greatest powers of the day.

Roosevelt’s possessions remind viewers that he had traveled (many of the objects in the inventory had been purchased – or, in the case of his hunting trophies, shot -- while abroad). They bring to mind the far-flung web of friends, admirers, and political contacts who presented him with household items and art objects. They evoke trade networks, which in turn hint at imperial relations (the English clock, for instance, was made from tropical mahogany; his African hunting expeditions took place in European-controlled

² David H. Wallace, *Historic Furnishings Report: Sagamore Hill, Sagamore Hill National Historic Site, Oyster Bay, New York*, vol. 2, *Furnishing Plan* (Harpers Ferry Center: National Park Service, 1989), 23-31. On Roosevelt’s use of the room, see David H. Wallace, *Historic Furnishings Report: Sagamore Hill, Sagamore Hill National Historic Site, Oyster Bay, New York*, vol. 1, *Historical Data* (Harpers Ferry Center: National Park Service, 1989), 47.

³ Kathleen Dalton, *Theodore Roosevelt: A Strenuous Life* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2002), 316.

territories). In sum, Roosevelt's library tells us, as it told his contemporaries, that TR was as much a world-class cosmopolitan as an assertive nationalist. Insofar as he aimed to convey a particular stance through his library, it was more commandeering than isolationist. Beyond that, the objects themselves are mute. They cannot reveal much about mentalité.

To get at that, we would have to see if TR recorded any thoughts on the things that surrounded him or whether he made reference to imperial consumption in his policy pronouncements. I must confess, I didn't take the time to do that, assuming that the payoff would be rather small per hour of research. Based on my earlier research forays, I did not expect to find foreign policy speeches by TR that dwelt on décor. In the absence of such statements (admittedly, I may have missed them in my TR phase, because I wasn't particularly interested in bric-a-brac then), we would have to step back and try to put a finger on the range of ideas about imported goods and ostensibly foreign styles that circulated in the period. These could reveal widespread assumptions pertaining to an American standard of living, the valences of cosmopolitan tastes, and consumerist views of global commerce – that is, assumptions that would have informed discussions of markets, investments, and trade, if not great power politics and empire. Rather than pinpointing specific causal links, we would, instead, consider general patterns of relevance to many individuals and events. That is the approach I followed in *Consumers' Imperium*. This choice was not simply a matter of methodological ease; it stemmed from a conviction that cultural contexts matter.

But how do they matter? One of the books that inspired me while I was working on this project was Melani McAlister's *Epic Encounters*. In her chapter on King Tut, commodity nationalism, and the politics of oil, she argues that the official Tut narrative constructed the ancient Egyptian treasures as “‘universal’ art, something too ennobling and too precious (too ‘human’) to belong to any one people (Arabs) or any one nation (Egypt). Instead, Tut was presented as part of the ‘common heritage of mankind’ – a heritage that would be owned and operated by the United States.” McAlister then goes beyond artistic production to turn her gaze to the 1973-1974 OPEC oil embargo. And here, she finds a similar logic at play: U.S. foreign policy commentators insisted that oil, too “must be conceived in terms of a ‘common heritage of mankind.’” Rather than fully belonging to producing countries, it was a “universal” resource that “rightly belonged in American hands,” and on favorable terms to boot. McAlister does not argue that the King Tut exhibit determined U.S. policy toward OPEC nations. Rather she shows how the consumerist ideas that circulated around the exhibit contributed to a wider mindset about U.S. entitlement to global production.⁴ This is the kind of causality that *Consumers' Imperium* gets at.

To be sure, I didn't start this project with causality in mind. The issue as I saw it was twofold: uncovering trade linkages (I did some of this by looking at Commerce Department records) and figuring out the meanings attached to these linkages. The causal links that caught my eye early in the project were linear: imperial expansion (both on the part of the

⁴ Melani McAlister, *Epic Encounters: Culture, Media, & U.S. Interests in the Middle East since 1945*, 2001 (Berkeley: University of California Press, updated edition, 2005), 129, 138-39.

European powers and the United States) clearly enabled new forms of consumption. But as I continued to work on the project, I came to see causality in more circular terms. The availability of a widening range of imports fostered imperial buy-in, meaning support (whether tacit or explicit) for further imperial policies. Consumerist accounts not only celebrated imperial power relations, they also cast them as essential for maintaining the enviable standard of living that well-to-do Americans should expect by virtue of their class, racial, national, and civilizational affiliations. These expanding desires and feelings of entitlement have great casual significance for a range of policy choices. They can help us understand how those who valued unsurpassed access to consumer goods positioned the United States globally and why this positioning took hold.

Even as I insist that my book can shed light on the assumptions brought to policymaking, I fear that focusing too much attention on this issue may mean missing the point that economic and cultural practices matter in their own right. In his review, Tyrrell remarks that my book explores “around the edges” of U.S. diplomatic and imperial history. I will readily concede that diplomatic history is not the focus of the book. But the reference to imperial history implies that there is an accepted center to the topic of empire and that consumer practices are peripheral. My fundamental point is that domestic consumption is just as central to imperial history as anything else, indeed, that there is no one center to imperial history. To the contrary, I remain steadfastly convinced that imperial history can be mapped in multiple ways, and that one of these mappings centers on U.S. domestic spaces. Consumption didn’t just affect empire, it was, in itself, a manifestation of it. This conviction lies at the heart of the book. If, on the one hand, it places the book on the edge of H-Diplo concerns, it also makes me think it has something important to say to H-Diplo readers, including those who may not initially be as receptive to the argument as the participants in this roundtable.

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