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Review
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Review by: Terri Weissman
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book is already big, of course, but the author might have condensed the chapters that deal with housing.

Too big and probably too detailed for an undergraduate class, *They Saved the Crops* is also hard to skim because Mitchell eschews introductions and conclusions (the conclusion to the whole book is only three pages long). Nonetheless anyone interested in the bracero program, agricultural history in the United States, and the history of California will find this important and often fascinating book well worth the time.

CINDY HAHAMOVITCH
College of William and Mary

AARON BOBROW-STRAIN. *White Bread: A Social History of the Store-Bought Loaf.* Boston: Beacon Press. 2012. Pp. xi, 257. $27.95.

White Bread reflects the political science background of the author in its focus on local and global politics. It purports to tell a story—less social than political—of how bread and power have been intertwined. Highlighting the invention and growth of factory-made white bread, the book skips among the decades and briefly roams internationally in an attempt to answer the larger question: "What's behind our fraught relationship with industrial food and, by extension, how does our relation with industrial food reflect our messy relations with one another?" (p. 8).

White Bread's substantive chapters are mostly arranged around "eras" of twentieth-century American history: the Progressive period, with its emphasis on cleanliness, purity, nutritional abundance, and Americanization; the Cold War; and the civil rights movement, with its subsequent decades of social shuffling and redefinition. It picks up the story of white bread in the early twentieth century with an industrial history of the Ward Baking Company, already a half-century old in 1900. Starting as a small bakery, Ward added packaged crackers and biscuits to its bread offerings in the late nineteenth century. Its success enabled it to open " 'Pittsburgh's first modern sanitary bakery' in 1903" (p. 27) as well as to expand to other cities, buy up other bakeries, and, by 1925, reduce the competition to just two other corporations—the General Baking Company and Continental Baking Company. Bakeries, then, experienced the same kind of modernization using science and technology and corporate restructuring through take-overs and competitive elimination as other industries in the United States. In 1929, Ward changed its name to Wonder Bakeries and the name of its product to Wonder Bread, adding, like other corporations in other industries, another cultural icon to America's quickly growing pantheon.

To illustrate another theme of the Progressive period—the redefinition of "health" and "healthy" due in large part to the discovery of vitamins—*White Bread* backtracks to the 1840s and the nineteenth-century poster child of the history of American health and welfare, Sylvester Graham. Graham, along with John Harvey Kellogg and others, advocated the use of whole grains in the American diet. He invented the graham cracker, a whole wheat biscuit that today, like handmade bread, is a pale imitation of the original. While Graham published a good deal and had a following, his impact on American health and the American diet is not clear. *White Bread* uses Graham and his early twentieth-century counterpart, Bernarr MacFadden, to show the rift in American culture between white and whole wheat bread eaters who used the two breads to serve their own agendas, continuing an age-old saga of purity and contamination and good versus bad that inevitably involved social class. For centuries in Western European cultures only the well-to-do could afford to eat whiter, more refined, and more expensive bread. Wealth and white bread became firmly linked. Graham unsuccessfully attempted to invert that custom with his tireless campaign to convince people that the consumption of brown, coarse bread gave eaters all the physical and social benefits associated with white bread.

Nor did MacFadden break that link. But how could he when, in the early part of the twentieth century, the United States was all about modernizing, a movement from the handmade to the machine made? It is no wonder that Wonder Bread, with its hidden but powerful associations of purity and elevated social status, became the sought-after staple. It remained that way throughout the Cold War when its whiteness, pedigreed history, and affordable abundance perfectly foiled "the Communist world's scarce 'dark bread' " (p. 141). Only during the civil rights era and after did Americans seeking social change "trash" white bread and the people who ate it, replacing it with more expensive but "healthier" whole wheat loaves, preferably handmade.

Aaron Bobrow-Strain concludes that the history of white bread reveals five "seductive dreams" that "touch a deep chord in consumers' relation to food" (p. 190): purity, perfect health, scientific control, national security, and naturalness. In fact, the themes are eras in United States history in which not just white bread but many aspects of culture reflected these "dreams." Someone with an understanding of these general themes could predict the story it tells before reading the book. Had the author refined his research inquiry to look carefully at white bread as a material culture tool, created to facilitate social order, rather than as a reflector or a cultural actor with a relationship to humans, the conclusion would most likely have been more revealing of how Americans have used bread to express and shape power relations in the twentieth century.

TRUDY EDEN
University of Northern Iowa

ERIC SANDWEISS. *The Day in Its Color: Charles Cushman's Photographic Journey through a Vanishing America*. New York: Oxford University Press. 2012. Pp. 237. $39.95.

In the June 1917 issue of *Camera Work*, the well-known documentary photographer Paul Strand wrote, "Color and photography have nothing in common." Formed in

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reaction to the practice once popular among art photographers to hand-color or otherwise manipulate their images such that they resembled the surface and feel of a painting more than that of a photograph, Strand's assessment of photography's relationship to color was both blunt and definitive. By the early 1920s, his position was also generally accepted by self-identified modernist and high art photographers: retouching the photographic negative or hand-coloring the print represented a retrograde denial of the medium's true realist capabilities. Photographers as diverse as Strand, Alfred Stieglitz, Walker Evans, Edward Weston, Berenice Abbott, Dorothea Lange, and Ansel Adams all came to believe that photography's potential lay in the medium's straight objectivity, or as Adams once wrote, in the "photographic" effect of the photograph.

Of course, in the first quarter of the twentieth century there was no such thing as color photography, and so any evaluation of the medium's inherent qualities—any discussion of the photograph's photographic-ness—necessarily omitted color. Yet even after Kodak introduced Kodachrome color in 1935, the prejudice against color among so-called serious photographers remained. This, combined with the fact that most historians of photography write about art (rather than popular or amateur) photography, has led to a lopsided, largely monochromatic history of the medium (a history of Stieglitzes and Strands, Abbotts and Margaret Bourke-Whites). Not until the 1960s or 1970s, when "art" photographers, such as Stephen Shore, began to utilize color film, did color typically receive attention in the history of photography. As historian Sally Stein has noted, so strong has been the suppression of color in the told histories of photography that at times it seems as if there was no color in the 1930s or 1940s—that it only entered the everyday world in which we live in the latter half of the twentieth century.

Eric Sandweiss's book challenges the contours of this basic monochromatic history by examining the color slide archive of businessman and amateur photographer Charles Cushman. In 1938, Cushman began traveling with his wife, Jean—who was John Steinbeck's cousin—and his Contax camera, snapping slides from Chicago to New York to San Francisco. By 1969, when Cushman stopped taking pictures, he had amassed a collection of 14,500 images. Cushman never printed any of these images, but Sandweiss does, and the 150 reproduced in the book provide a fascinating, colorful look at the United States' built environment and economic landscape over a thirty-year period in the mid-twentieth century.

Sandweiss constructs his narrative around Cushman's life—his birth in small-town in Indiana, his move to Chicago, his marriage to Jean, his relationship with his well-connected in-laws, his attraction to emerging technologies of information and reproduction. The focus on development and growth in Cushman's personal life is meant to mirror the United States' maturing status on the global stage. And though the text contains a few too many biographical bits for my taste (do we really need to know so many details about Jean's emotional breakdown?), one of the book's real strength's emerges from Sandweiss's ability to intertwine biography—personal stories, relationships, job history—with larger cultural shifts, particularly the role played by the design industry in the United States' transformation from a production economy to a consumption-based one. This is great, and it begins to address an important gap in most histories of photography that tend—in their focus on art—to suppress, or at least downplay, the connection between the commercial marketplace and developments in photographic technologies. This is, in fact, a point I wish Sandweiss had pushed further. For instance, left unaddressed is the manner in which advertising fueled the development of commercial color photography as advertising executives searched for ways to showcase the new colors entering the marketplace in the 1930s on a whole range of commodities.

Some of Sandweiss's refusal to develop or complicate the connection between color and commercial photography results from his emphasis on Cushman the man, as a kind of anti-Farm Security Administration (FSA) photographer. Where Cushman photographed in color, the FSA photographers worked in black and white; where Cushman captured economic growth and urban life, the FSA focused on the unemployed and rural life; where Cushman was financially independent, the FSA photographers were commissioned by and therefore inextricably bound to the federal government. While all of this is more or less true, my complaint is that the construction of Cushman as a sort of lone outlier to the FSA's photographic legacy means that Sandweiss sacrificed a more involved discussion of the causes and cultural logic that led to a very definite bifurcation in systems of photographic representation (color versus black and white) in the mid-twentieth century. This bifurcation has, to again paraphrase Stein, essentially naturalized the absence of color in photographs; and so lost too was the opportunity to confront the contradiction between photography's supposed realism and its traditional suppression of color.

TERRI WEISSMAN
University of Illinois,
Urbana-Champaign *[All reviewers of books by Indiana University History Department faculty are selected with the advice of the Board of Editors]*

DAWN SPRING. *Advertising in the Age of Persuasion: Building Brand America, 1941–1961.* New York: Palgrave Macmillan. 2011. Pp. x, 235. $85.00.

In this slim volume, Dawn Spring explores how American advertisers worked with business groups and federal agencies in the 1940s and 1950s to promote their version of "free enterprise" and to make "persuasive information" central to both U.S. politics and diplomacy. She argues that advertising executives in firms like J. Walter Thompson and corporations like Procter & Gamble "envisioned an American-led global consumer order" where "advertising, propaganda, and

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