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Book Review of A Companion to James Madison and James Monroe

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American benevolence. Established in 1790 as “the first public orphanage in the United States,” the COH provided care and arranged apprenticeships for hundreds of children (p. xiv). Murray connects the efforts of Charleston’s upper class to fund and manage the facility with their desire for racial unity among the city’s white residents. In this urban setting, Murray contends, the treatment of distressed white residents took on increased importance because of the proximity of slaves and working-class whites. To support this notion, the book reviews the founding, operations, and management of the institution, which indicate that the provisions given to the children were very generous for the period.

Founded by jointly using city and private funds, the COH helped maintain the racial ideology of white unity by providing relatively well for its charges. Children went into training apprenticeships after receiving some education to make them literate. Parents who relied on the assistance of the COH retained some rights, and their inclusion in this work provides a welcome addition to research about poor, working-class, and urban southerners during the first half of the nineteenth century. Based on communications between the managers and parents, the home served as a lifeline to parents in distress. Murray also alludes to the fact that the slave-owning trustees brought unique skills to their volunteer jobs, including expertise at finding runaways, offering up negotiated terms for return and lenient punishments for white children. However, while making the case for racial unity, Murray misses an opportunity to fully explore the contrast between the seemingly conscientious treatment of dependent children and the apparently poor care provided to indigent white adults at the city’s other institutions.

Although the book claims to contain voices of the children themselves, almost all the material for the book comes from adults in charge of the children and the children’s own parents and relatives. Murray’s sources do offer a perspective on the experiences of the children, including the efforts to provide better schooling and negotiations about religious instruction. Children from the COH received continuing care from the trustees, even when it proved expensive and time-consuming; some COH residents received a stipend after their apprenticeship, a dowry allotment, or a scholarship to a university. Murray proves that Charlestonians took pride in this civic institution, and the type of care helped many former residents sustain themselves as adults. The circumstances of this institution and the unique source material from trustees, parents, and apprentices’ masters should prove interesting to those seeking specific examples of early American charitable efforts and to scholars who want to know more about social welfare efforts in the South.

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MEGAN BIRK

A Companion to James Madison and James Monroe. Edited by Stuart Leibiger. Blackwell Companions to American History. (Malden, Mass.: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013. Pp. [xx], 585. \$195.00, ISBN 978-0-470-65522-1.)

In this new anthology, editor Stuart Leibiger of La Salle University has compiled thirty-two essays that explore the lives and often overlapping careers of Virginians James Madison and James Monroe. Representing the

research of several noted historians, including Jack N. Rakove, Michael Zuckert, and J. C. A. Stagg, the essays vary in style and content, but all provide details and informed analyses of the contributions and limitations that shaped these Founders' political and personal choices. Even though the work endeavors to bring Monroe out of the shadows, more than half the essays look at Madison, which is understandable. While the two men often mirrored each other in terms of their accomplishments and political philosophies, Madison attended the Constitutional Convention in 1787, was instrumental in gaining ratification in Virginia, and played an important part in New York's acceptance of the Constitution through writing and publishing twenty-nine of the eighty-five *Federalist* essays. *A Companion to James Madison and James Monroe* also provides important information regarding both men's personal lives and their views on slavery, which were complex and are worthy of extensive coverage.

The book attempts an easy transition to Monroe, but because many of Monroe's most notable political accomplishments occurred while he and Madison worked together, the latter also plays an integral part in the remaining essays. As a result, six of the final thirteen essays contain scholarship dealing with interactions between Madison and Monroe, especially the period after Monroe's diplomatic appointment by Thomas Jefferson in 1803 and later as secretary of state and secretary of war during Madison's administration. The studies of Monroe's politics by Arthur Scherr, Daniel Preston, and Robert W. Smith and the research into his personal life provided by Meghan C. Budinger are among the seven essays devoted exclusively to James Monroe. These works provide rare looks into Monroe's military service during the American Revolution as well as his policies while president from 1817 to 1826. Each chapter offers an important consideration of the transition from the early republic to the antebellum years in U.S. politics, a period marked by manifest destiny and deepening sectional hostilities over slavery. The final essay is a historiographical survey of scholarship dealing with both men and is a fitting end to this impressive collection.

In their coverage of Madison, the contributors attempt to reconcile his support for a strong central government in the late 1780s with his states' rights position less than a decade later. For example, Rakove attributes this shift to nuanced aspects of Madison's political philosophy that appear convoluted and unconvincing. On the issue of slavery, Jeff Broadwater exposes Madison's contradictory language and actions. In state and national forums Madison attempted to avoid the slavery question, but he had no problem perpetuating the institution despite any misgivings. His lifelong dependence on slave laborers and his views on race created the same confused outpourings that issued from his friend and mentor Thomas Jefferson. However, when attempting to demonstrate Madison's support for those who attacked slavery, such as his onetime secretary Edward Coles, Broadwater glosses over important information when quoting Madison's suspicions that the "former slaves would be denied the social equality that gives to 'freedom more than half its value'" (p. 318). Madison began his discussion by insisting that the freed persons themselves "furnished arguments against" manumission before adding that freeing the slaves was useless unless Coles could also change

their skin color (Gaillard Hunt, ed., *The Writings of James Madison* [New York, 1900], vol. 8, p. 455).

According to Budinger, Monroe accepted slavery and could be called a benevolent master because he sought, at times, a slave's opinion and defended slaves from unfair treatment. Yet, she concludes, "it is not certain whether he believed in the biological inferiority of blacks" (p. 480). This is an interesting area for further debate since it would be difficult to argue that Monroe or anyone else held persons in slavery and considered them social and political equals at the same time. In fact, the interpretation that particular slaveholders were against slavery, yet held slaves all of their lives and failed to free them, rightly fosters criticism. For some time, historians attempted to excuse slaveholding Founders from the contradictions between their lives and actions, but recent scholarship has looked more honestly at the defenders of slavery and their part in perpetuating what was always a coerced and violent system of labor that continues to have repercussions in American society. If Monroe really believed that slavery posed a danger to the country, he could have sided with the House of Representatives and refused to sign a bill that allowed slavery into Missouri. However, he did not prevent the spread of slavery or the sectional hostilities that the Missouri Compromise exacerbated. Overall, when the authors touch on the topic of slavery, they are generally less critical of Madison and Monroe than they should be.

A Companion to James Madison and James Monroe is recommended for its sojourn into the political minds and contributions of these important members of the founding generation. The various interpretations of both subjects' professional and personal lives help readers see them from different perspectives. In the final essay, Peter Daniel Haworth concludes that the scholarly literature on Madison and Monroe constitutes "a tale of two Founders and consecutive presidents" (p. 537). Yet this book offers much more by making it easy for readers to extract information about the interesting lives, intellectual prowess, and actions of Monroe and Madison from a central source. In addition, using the book as a reference or a college textbook is made easier through the editor's consistent use of parenthetical citations, averting the frustration of flipping from the chapter to the back of the book to check endnotes. The volume also contains lists of further reading after each essay, an extensive bibliography, and an ample index that will facilitate further study. Students, professional historians, and general readers alike will find this synthesis of political, biographical, and philosophical histories informative and enlightening as Madison and Monroe come alive in the well-written, scholarly studies contained in a book that will prove valuable in years to come.

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Dolley Madison: The Problem of National Unity. By Catherine Allgor. *Lives of American Women*. (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 2013. Pp. [xvi], 175. Paper, \$20.00, ISBN 978-0-8133-4759-2.)

Dolley Madison is one of the most well known First Ladies, and perhaps even better known than her husband, James Madison. But what