

were prepared to go. Yao Gang, a senior Foreign Ministry official who later became ambassador to Canada, recounted the Chinese perspective of the discussions, exploring the political context in Canada, the US influence over Canada, and Canada's position on Taiwan (301–304). The section offers a terrific commentary on the Canadian government's development of its policy China policy and the PRC's response to Canadian political affairs.

While *Trudeau's World* does a tremendous job showcasing interviews on personnel, politicians, the major powers, and China, the book lacks any context of Trudeau's focus on social justice and its impact on international affairs. Trudeau told the *Globe and Mail* that a "Just Society" was a "a society in which each individual Canadian was put in a position where he can develop himself to the utmost" (cited in Paul Litt, *Trudeamania*, 2016). The interviews in this collection do not bear a connection between the "Just Society" and international relations. Nonetheless, *Trudeau's World* hearkens back to a time during the 1980s when historians regularly published primary materials. This monograph will be well-received by scholars and graduate students alike in history and political science. It will also be a useful source for undergraduate students in Canadian foreign policy courses. The interviews fuse together large themes in the history of Canadian international affairs while they also remind us that their work stands the test of time.

Thirstan Falconer
St. Jerome's University

Sarah D. Wald, *The Nature of California: Race, Citizenship, and Farming since the Dust Bowl* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2016). 297 pp. Paperback \$30.00, Hardcover \$90.00.

Eight decades after John Steinbeck published his Pulitzer Prize-winning novel, *The Grapes of Wrath* remains the best-known portrait of California farm workers in US literature. This tale of the Joad family, who escape the Oklahoma dust bowl only to become exploited farm workers in California, remains influential in part because of the Joad family's most salient characteristic: their whiteness. In *The Nature of California*, literary and environmental studies scholar Sarah D. Wald argues that *The Grapes of Wrath* is one of numerous works of US art and literature that have white-washed labour and environmental history. Bringing a fresh eye to well-known classics—including *The Grapes of Wrath* and Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*—and examining a number of lesser-known works, Wald appropriately places non-white actors at the center of California's farm labour history. In the process, she also provides timely insights into issues of citizenship, environmental responsibility, and

agricultural sustainability.

Wald opens her study in the 1930s when—for the first and only time in California history—whites made up a majority of the state's farm labour force. Most were refugees from the Great Plains dust bowl, and their presence captured the attention of authors who championed these workers as well as those who vilified the migrants as a threat to the state's social order. Most prominent among the latter group of writers was Ruth Comfort Mitchell, who intended her 1940 novel *Of Human Kindness* as a rebuttal to two 1939 bestsellers—*The Grapes of Wrath* and journalist Carey McWilliams's *Factories in the Field*. While McWilliams's expose of California agribusiness, like Steinbeck's novel, criticizes landowners and sympathizes with farm workers, Mitchell's novel valorizes farm owners as a bulwark against communism. Regardless of their position on the political spectrum, however, most authors of the period seemingly agreed that white workers made inappropriate field hands. They portrayed white dust bowl refugees—in contrast to workers of Asian or Mexican ancestry—as people who inherently chafed under landowner control and thus inevitably agitated for social justice. Conservative and left-leaning authors alike viewed the prospect of land ownership for poor whites as a solution to workers' discontent, a strategy that the New Deal's Farm Security Administration ultimately embraced. Most literature of the 1930s thus reinforced the notion that whites should own farmland and persons of colour should labour on it.

Wald persuasively argues, in fact, that *The Grapes of Wrath* created widespread sympathy for the plight of California farm workers specifically because Steinbeck emphasized the Joad family's whiteness. From the outset, when Tom Joad attempts to recite a truck driver's racist poem, the novel's characters and narrator draw attention to the Joads' racial identity. Wald notes that readers of the novel more readily recognized and condemned an unjust system when it seemingly denied a white family its birthright. As white sharecroppers who believe their longtime labour on an Oklahoma farm makes it their own, the Joads deserve citizenship in Thomas Jefferson's nation of farmers. Instead, as dust bowl refugees in California, the Joads become outsiders who receive the type of prejudice and abuse usually reserved for persons of colour.

While Wald criticizes Steinbeck for reifying existing hierarchies, she praises author Sanora Babb for challenging them in her novel *Whose Names are Unknown*. Unlike Steinbeck's Oklahoma farmers, those in Babb's novel seek to cooperate with the land rather than dominate it and ultimately follow the leadership of black and Filipino organizers to join a multiracial California farm workers movement. Unfortunately, in the wake of the success of *The Grapes of Wrath*, Random House cancelled its scheduled 1939 publication of Babb's novel, arguing that the book-buying public did not want two novels about dust bowl migrants in the same year. Readers in fact had to wait another 65 years for a publisher to release Babb's novel of racial cooperation.

In the meantime, numerous other writers published works that portrayed

the diversity of California's farm labour force while noting that large-scale land ownership—and thus full citizenship rights—typically eluded non-white agriculturalists. Hiroshi Nakamura's novel *Treadmill*—written in the 1940s but not published until 1996—portrays a Japanese-American family whose success as small-time truck farmers cannot save them from wartime internment. Similarly, Hisaye Yamamoto's short-story fiction of the late 1940s and early 1950s presents rural Japanese Americans who live in harmony with the natural world but on the margins of society. In Carlos Bulosan's fictionalized memoir, *America is in the Heart* (1946), and Ernesto Galarza's expose of the bracero program, *Strangers in Our Fields* (1956), the authors hold US imperialism responsible for the large numbers of displaced Filipino and Mexican men who labour in the fields of California's big landowners. Wald notes that, like Babb, both Bulosan and Galarza viewed an interracial labour movement as vital to improving workers' lives.

In her closing chapters, Wald emphasizes the importance of keeping agricultural labour at the heart of analyses of agriculture and the environment. She contrasts Rachel Carson's discussion of pesticides' effect on the generic "average citizen" (172) in *Silent Spring* (1962) with the more specific and powerful focus of Cesar Chavez and the United Farm Workers on pesticides' harm to California farm workers and the grapes they harvested. Wald frets that when alternative food movement authors—such as Michael Pollan in *The Omnivore's Dilemma* (2006)—concentrate on small-scale sustainable farming, they deflect attention from the farm workers who still produce the majority of America's food. In contrast, Wald cites Helena Maria Viramontes's novel *Under the Feet of Jesus* (1995) as an appropriately worker-centered examination of California agriculture. In Viramontes's Chicana protagonist, 13-year-old Estrella, Wald sees a character much more representative of California's real-life farm workers than Steinbeck's Tom Joad.

Wald's sensitive and sophisticated reading of her sources provides an analysis of California agriculture that is complex and challenging. Even readers who disagree with Wald's interpretations will appreciate her original approach to familiar texts and value the insights she brings to lesser-known works. Most significantly, Wald reminds readers that any serious consideration of Golden State agriculture must position issues of race at its centre.

Katherine Jellison
Ohio University