

another state to the relatively small group that has already attempted to chronicle the history and achievements of the ethnic groups that have lived in it, and he hopes that other states will do likewise, since such material would appear to be the cornerstone of both specific and general historically oriented ethnic studies courses.

Although overstatistical, the similar volume on Minnesota's ethnic groups continues as the model for such studies.

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Cary D. Wintz, *Black Culture and the Harlem Renaissance.* (Houston TX: Rice University Press, 1988) 277 pp., \$27.50; \$10.95 paper.

In 1925 Professor Alain Locke argued in *The New Negro* that the Negro was “moving forward under the control largely of his own objectives...” which were “none other than the ideals of American institutions and democracy.” This allowed for blacks everywhere to be called “New Negroes” but nowhere were there as many New Negroes as in Harlem. The activities of these people in politics, arts, literature, music and the like between World War I and the Depression Era came to be called the Harlem Renaissance.

In recent years, several comprehensive books have been written on the Renaissance. The book under review, however, purports to be a specialized treatment of black *culture* during the Harlem Renaissance which Wintz defines as “primarily a literary and intellectual movement.” In an introduction and ten chapters, Wintz explores well known topics covered in previous works such as David Levering Lewis' *When Harlem Was in Vogue* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf: 1981), Jervis Anderson's *This Was Harlem* (New York: Farrar, Strauss and Giroux: 1981), and others. But Wintz, by defining the era so narrowly, deals almost only with poets and novelists of the period. And while “culture” is never defined, it appears that Wintz's constricted view of the elements that determined the period rendered his conception of culture meaningless, for there were other intellectual movements that contributed greatly to make the Harlem Renaissance culturally unique.

If one thinks of the revolution in music, the transformation from the Blues and Ragtime to Jazz, one has to admit that a musical movement of cultural importance was afoot. The political culture was changing swiftly also. It was in this period that black people began to desert the party of their liberator, Lincoln, for the party of F.D.R. after experimenting with a number of radical parties such as the Socialist and Communist parties. Nationalism reappeared strongly in the guise of Garvey's United Negro

Improvement Association. None of the foregoing is dealt with in this book. For Wintz, the Harlem Renaissance was essentially about the activities of a number of major black writers in the period beginning in the mid 1920s through the mid 1930s, "each approaching the problem of black literature from a personal perspective." Further, the Harlem Renaissance concerned "a loose coalition of writers, joined by patrons and supporters, who shared only a commitment to black literature and the feeling that they were all participating in a major literary event."

Strangely, the "major literary event" according to Wintz "did not produce any great works of literature," and again "no literary masterpieces were produced." In sum, then, the author characterizes the Harlem Renaissance as simply a "declaraton of independence to which every Renaissance writer could subscribe."

In viewing the Renaissance much too narrowly, Wintz asserts that the movement "did not survive the 1930s." How then can one account for the Texas white primary cases which began in 1924 and continued up to 1953 when Negroes finally regained the right to vote in Southern states by order of the U.S. Supreme Court? What of the dramatic political shift away from the Republican party to the Democrats in this era? Did not this development make eventually for a black mayor of New York City in 1989 and a black Chief of Tammany Hall in 1964? Certainly! And undoubtedly, the Harlem Renaissance writers laid the ground work for the expanded horizons of contemporary African American literature.

Wintz's book can be recommended for the student who wishes to know something of the major writers of the Harlem Renaissance. The student, however, should be warned that the title is misleading and that there are a number of older and finer works in the college library.

—John C. Walter
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Allen L. Woll and Randall M. Miller. *Ethnic and Racial Images in American Film and Television: Historical Essays and Bibliography*. (New York: Garland Publishing, 1987) xv, 408 pp., \$39.95.

Allen Woll and Randall Miller in *Ethnic and Racial Images in American Film and Television* have compiled in one volume the writings about the images of ethnic and racial groups in American television and film. Woll and Miller state in their Introduction that the purpose of their book was to "attempt to unite the work (the nature and importance of mass media stereotypes and their effects on society) from a wide variety of disciplines, languages and fields of study in order to expand the vistas of scholarly research in this area." *Ethnic and Racial Images* is divided into twelve chapters, with each considering specific ethnic or racial