Gabriel closes his study with a chapter on the evolution of Montgomery's place in the early Republic's collective memory, which has become quite common in recent studies of such notable Civil War generals as Robert E. Lee and Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson. Though Montgomery tends to be thought of as a "secondary figure," Gabriel asserts that throughout the Revolution, and beyond, he rivaled in importance some of the more notable Founding Fathers. Americans cited Montgomery's service to the cause to rally support during difficult times and praised his willingness to give up "rural retirement" and his life for his country. After the war, he continued to represent the ideals of public virtue and self-sacrifice, which were crucial to the success of a young republican society.

Michael P. Gabriel has made a significant contribution to military history as well as the history of the American Revolution. On both counts this book helps to restore an important military leader to his rightful place alongside such notable commanders as Nathaniel Greene, Horatio Gates, John Paul Jones, and Francis Marion.

KEVIN M. LEVIN
Charlottesville, Virginia


A Wilderness so Immense joins a growing number of works written at the bicentennial of the Louisiana Purchase. Jon Kukla takes his readers on a whirlwind tour exploring the diplomatic intrigues, duplicity, and blunders which prompted Napoleon to sell Louisiana to the United States for a paltry $15 million in 1803. From the American Revolution to the secessionist schemes of American settlers in the Mississippi Valley, from the French Revolution to the successful slave revolt in Haiti, Kukla follows the international events that led the United States into possession of a "wilderness so immense."

It was not foreordained that the United States would erect an empire on the North American continent. A seemingly endless configuration of empires and protectorates could have emerged west of the Appalachian mountains. France had designs on a super colony stretching from Canada through the Ohio and Mississippi Valleys to New Orleans; the British remained
interested in New Orleans through 1815; and finally, it was only with the reversals of war in Europe in the 1790s that Spain abandoned its plans for a buffer state in the lower Mississippi Valley protecting the gold and silver mines of Mexico from American expansion. From the 1780s through 1815, American statesmen from George Washington to James Madison believed that the continuation of the American Union hinged upon American control of the lower Mississippi Valley. The Mississippi River and the port of New Orleans were vital to western commerce, and American officials knew that the imperial power which controlled the lower Mississippi Valley could exercise ultimate influence over settlers through the entire trans-Appalachian West.

From 1785 through 1794 American diplomats made scant progress in convincing their Spanish counterparts to sign a treaty which would recognize American rights to navigation of the Mississippi River and the right of deposit at New Orleans. Without American rights to both, federal officials feared that American settlers in Ohio, Kentucky, and Tennessee might just remove themselves from the American Union. Finally, in 1795, with war in Europe intensifying, Spain agreed to the Treaty of San Lorenzo, conceding to American demands for rights on the Mississippi. Yet even with the Treaty, all was not well in the lower Mississippi Valley. Imperial officials, diplomats, and the motley assortment of settlers in the trans-Appalachian West all recognized that Spain was a decaying power whose hold on its colonial possessions was slipping. In 1800 Spain, now effectively a puppet-state of France, secretly ceded Louisiana to Napoleon. As rumors of the retrocession grew, American officials and statesmen became increasingly concerned that the erratic and unpredictable Napoleon controlled such a strategically vital place on the North American continent.

While American diplomats cut through the swirl of diplomatic rumors concerning the retrocession, Napoleon laid plans to re-enslave Haitians who had successfully rebelled against their French masters. A new French colony joining both sides of the Mississippi River would supply food and lumber to France’s empire and its Caribbean jewel, Haiti. In late 1801 France sent a fleet with a combined 40,000 men to crush the slave rebellion. They failed miserably, despite unimaginable ruthlessness employed by the French in their efforts to destroy resistance. Making matters worse for Napoleon, troops that he had earmarked for securing Louisiana had to be diverted to Haiti, while troops in Haiti destined for Louisiana instead died in Haiti. Napoleon’s plans for a new North American empire died at the hands of former Haitian slaves who refused to give up their freedom.
Napoleon recognized that without Haiti, Louisiana was worthless. Fearing that he would lose Louisiana to the British or the Americans, or that in the event of war Britain would blockade if not seize Louisiana, Bonaparte decided to use Louisiana to finance his next round of wars. In March 1803, James Monroe, minister extraordinary and plenipotentiary, set sail for Paris to meet with diplomat Robert Livingston and negotiate for American access to the Mississippi and New Orleans. As Napoleon knew, if Monroe failed in Paris, he had authority to go to London and begin negotiations for an Anglo-American alliance against France. When American negotiators bid for the Mississippi River and New Orleans, Napoleon offered to sell all of Louisiana instead.

Readers may tire from the repetitiveness and diversions that sometimes mar an otherwise well-written and interesting narrative. Kukla's five page description of the New Orleans fire in 1788 adds little to his story, while his account of Spanish emissary Diego Gardoqui's 1786 mission to the United States needlessly quotes the bulk of letters sent home by members of the Continental Congress containing an account of the negotiations with Gardoqui and the precarious state of the American Union. Nonetheless, non-specialists sorting through the pile of works marking the Louisiana Purchase anniversary will be well-served by Kukla's patient narrative.

JOHN CRAIG HAMMOND
University of Kentucky


This fine book uses literature and political tracts to analyze white responses to interracial sex from the early days of the Republic through the end of the nineteenth century (with a brief concluding discussion on current views). Rooting her discussion of racial attitudes, beliefs, and theories in the history of European thought and European and American experience, Lemire focuses on moments in which grotesque depictions of black/white sex proliferated.

Lemire posits that these occurred particularly when black status was most fluid and ambiguous, and that these depictions worked to undermine black aspirations of equality, thereby limiting black mobility. Furthermore, she suggests that these images helped to create and reinforce the racial categories so