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Heartthrobs: a history a of women and desire, Carol Dyhouse (book review)

Kathleen McCallister
William & Mary, krmccallister@wm.edu

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primer for professionals wishing to dig deeper into clinical research on anxiety disorders. **VERDICT** This work is essential for all university collections supporting psychology curriculum and should be required reading for anyone working with those who have the disorder.—**Dale Farris, Groves, TX**

SOCIAL SCIENCE

Dyhouse, Carol. *Heartthrobs: A History of Women and Desire*. Oxford Univ.

May 2017. 272p. illus. notes. bibliog. index. ISBN 9780198765837. \$27.95; ebk. ISBN 9780191078392. soc sci

Already known for her scholarly writings on women's and gender history, Dyhouse (*Girl Trouble*) takes on a tone of broader appeal with this cultural history of male figures of female desire. What can we learn, she asks, from examining the variety of men whom women have swooned for over the years? Fairy-tale princes Rudolph Valentino and Marlon Brando, the Beatles and their modern-day boy band counterparts, and the myriad heroes of romance novels all come under the lens for examination. Thankfully, the text provides more than enough analysis to lift it above being a laundry list of daydream icons. Dyhouse sets these figures alongside a sharp examination of female desire and fantasy. She then explores how such fantasies are shaped by the impact of larger factors and pressures in women's lives, and how shifts in societal trends throughout history have caused the idealized masculine figure to change—or, in some cases, to remain the same. **VERDICT** A smart and sensitive look at its topic, this book provides thoughtful commentary on the driving forces behind women's imaginations and an intriguing if selective look at classic romantic figures.—**Kathleen McCallister, Tulane Univ., New Orleans**

★**Ervin, Andrew. *Bit by Bit: How Video Games Transformed Our World*.**

Basic. May 2017. 304p. notes. index. ISBN 9780465039708. \$27; ebk. ISBN 9780465096589. soc sci

Ervin (*Burning Down George Orwell's House*) traces the lineage of video games with engaging reportage that includes interviews, personal experience, and critical analysis. This work covers similar ground to Simon Parkin's *Death by Video Game* yet offers a unique range of examples and a fresh voice. From the charming position of a newly minted old fuddy duddy, Ervin describes his encounters with the most significant video game creators and their games, explaining their contribution to the genre. He also tells personal stories with contagious enthusiasm: restoring a *Donkey Kong* arcade cabinet, getting to play *Adventure* again on the original Atari 2600, on being slaughtered by *Minecraft*

zombies (hidden from the prying eyes of his nephews) to name just a few. Not every pixelated encounter is sweet, however. His distaste for first-person shooters is strong, which makes sense as his analysis takes shape. He believes artful games aim to build empathy in their players and “offer a new means of thinking about more timeless existential problems.” **VERDICT** A thoughtful, personal, and enlightening look at the past, present, and future of video games.—**Paul Stenis, Pepperdine Univ. Lib., Malibu, CA**

★**Hunter, Tera W. *Bound in Wedlock: Slave and Free Black Marriage in the Nineteenth Century*. Harvard Univ. Apr. 2017. 416p.**

illus. notes. index. ISBN 9780674045712. \$29.95. soc sci

Hunter (history, African American studies, Princeton Univ.; *To Joy My Freedom*) presents an in-depth look at black marriages under slavery, when marriage and slavery were truly at odds with each other. Couples and their children were entirely subject to a master's will, causing marriages under slavery to be subject to separation and suffering. The author considers the life of freed slaves as well. She is extremely thorough in her approach, examining legal documents, letters, and government records. The result is a unique approach to the African American experience during the 19th and 20th century. While there are well-known researchers of black family life (e.g., Herbert Gutman, Eugene Genovese), Hunter differentiates herself by focusing her work on the difficulties slaves faced as their married life was, ultimately, under someone else's control. The aftermath of the Civil War and the importance of the Freedmen's Bureau are well documented, adeptly relaying the adversity of black family life. **VERDICT** An important and comprehensive work that is worth reading by all, especially those interested in the affects of slavery on society today.—**Amy Lewontin, Northeastern Univ. Lib., Boston**

★**Parker, Willie. *Life's Work: A Moral Argument for Choice*. Atria. Apr. 2017.**

224p. ISBN 9781501151125. \$25; ebk. ISBN 9781501151149. soc sci

Parker, a Christian reproductive rights advocate and abortion service provider, provides an insightful view of the relationship between faith and medical services. Early in the book, he notes, “Experience is what you do with what happens to you,” and builds his narrative around his life as a “materially challenged” African American growing up in the South in the 1970s. By weaving his own story with theory and practice, he helps dismantle the stereotypes that surround individuals in need of abortions and the practitioners who risk their lives to of-

fer these women services. The text begins with moments from Parker's life, and he ultimately uses his autobiography to open up larger philosophical and political questions, all inflected with the Christian perspective. Two of the final chapters—“Preaching Truth” and “Black Genocide and the White Majority”—build strong theoretical arguments that deconstruct myths about abortion. **VERDICT** Parker writes from a place without judgment, and his voice resonates with compassion that is far too often lacking in discussions of abortion. A thought-provoking read of many sides of the issue.—**Emily Bowles, Appleton, WI**

Soderstrom, Mary. *Road Through Time: The Story of Humanity on the Move*.

Univ. of Regina. Apr. 2017. 256p. illus. maps. notes. bibliog. index. ISBN 9780889774773. pap. \$22.95. soc sci

Soderstrom (*The Walkable City*) writes a moving (quite literally) account of how humans have been affected by the environment, traversing from place to place. The author was compelled to write this book owing to a fond memory of a family bus trip through California in the 1950s, which remained with her throughout her life. This trip formed how she thinks of the world, and this work focuses on how roads, starting with the earliest pathways in the Middle East and China, have made us who we are. Soderstrom suggests that our ancient ancestors' migration from Africa to pastures elsewhere was a leap of faith done out of necessity, and highlights our species unending need to move. Throughout, she successfully interjects historical and literary references to roads as they introduced wonders from distant lands: materials, foods, clothing, and world-altering ideas. Conversely, they often charged a high toll as evidenced by the Black Death, which was carried along trade routes, as were diseases later brought to indigenous inhabitants of the Americas. **VERDICT** This accessible work about an integral aspect of human life is a must-read for all interested in society, past and present.—**Brian Renvall, Mesalands Community Coll., Tucumcari, NM**

TRAVEL & GEOGRAPHY

FitzGerald, Holly. *Ruthless River: Love and Survival by Raft on the Amazon's Relentless Madre de Dios*. Vintage. May 2017. 336p.

photos. ISBN 9780525432777. pap. \$16. TRAV

This debut is a travelog of two thrill seekers, the author and her husband, “Fitz,” whose dream was to travel the world on a shoestring budget. After a surviving a plane crash and being stranded in a penal colony in Peru for several days without a ferry to take them out, the couple decide to build their own log raft, the Pink Palace, and tackle the

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