Bacon, Simon, Ed. *The Transmedia Vampire: Essays on Technological Convergence and the Undead*. McFarland, 2021.

Simon Bacon's edited volume *The Transmedia Vampire* successfully showcases an array of interdisciplinary approaches interrogating the lasting impact the vampire has had on pop culture for almost two centuries, across every imaginable medium. These essays are accessibly written and well enough contextualized to appeal to a general readership but nuanced enough to simultaneously appeal to scholars. At the reasonable price-point of just under fifty dollars, the volume is only slightly more expensive than similar general interest nonfiction works and is significantly less expensive than the average academic book.

Collectively, the essays throughout *The Transmedia Vampire* innovatively explore methods of re-viewing the creature's ever-evolving public image. John Edgar Browning concludes his insightful forward by asserting that "We are, all of us, Renfields in our slavish devotion to the vampires of our age, and I'm not so sure we mind" (10). In the introduction that follows, editor Simon Bacon contextualizes the need for this collection. He explains that while "Transmedia and technological convergence are very much at the forefront of cultural analysis" and "while there are many studies covering the way fictional narratives and characters are of vital importance to transmedia," surprisingly "none have focused solely on" the figure of the vampire (12). In identifying this critical oversight, Bacon asserts the distinctly transmedia nature of the creature, whose representations are "continually transforming across all formats and mediums" and which continue "to fascinate contemporary culture" (12).

Providing a necessary entry-point for non-experts, Bacon's introduction then foregrounds the core tenets of transmedia theory, as well as of Henry Jenkins' theory of "convergence culture." In doing so, Bacon highlights Jenkins' concepts of "immersion" and "extraction." These lenses frame the essays that follow, which explore the vampire's contradictory power to pull us into the increasingly well-wrought secondary worlds in which it flourishes, while simultaneously emerging into the "real world" through its ever-increasing accrual of cultural capital in forms that include scholarship, merchandizing, and fandom activities. Regardless of mode, vampire fiction tends to be particularly self-referential, with subsequent entries responding to, repeating, and/or subverting the existing undead canon. Bacon posits this continuous re-telling and re-adaptation as the vampire's most

potent form of resurrection. He also briefly examines the natures of famous pop culture vampires from Varney and Carmilla to Edward Cullen, demonstrating the long history of genre-defining transmediation.

The collection is divided into four sections. The first focuses specifically on adaptations and re-creations of Dracula. Jeffrey Andrew Weinstock's "We Are Dracula: *Penny Dreadful* and the Dracula Megatext" explores the application of the series' "postmodern pastiche formula" when re-creating pop culture's most famous vampire (36). Weinstock explains that while the show's Dracula "gestures… toward Stoker's vampire ur-text," he is "just as much a product of subsequent representations" (37). In the essay that follows, Wayne Derek Pigeon-Coote explores the specific sub-strain of Stoker adaptations in which Count Dracula is portrayed as a redeemable tragic hero by explicitly connecting him to the historical Vlad the Impaler. The final essay in section one, by Cathleen Allyn Conway, provides a timely interrogation of the changes to Mina Murray Harker's character that are wrought by the continual process of transmedia *Dracula* adaptation.

Section two departs from the specific focus on Stoker to examine the vampire more broadly "Across Mediums, Platforms and Levels of Engagement." The essays in this section variously focus on transitions from stage to screen (Wisker); video game vampires as enemies, allies, and player-characters (Edrei); audience engagement in play with merchandized dolls from the *Vampirina* and *Monster High* franchises (Newman-Stille); and the *Carmilla* web series' product-placement driven engagement with modern period politics (Heller-Nicholas). The final two essays in this section are especially powerful, breaking new ground through their emphases on specifically feminine, real-world engagements with vampire transmediation.

The third section, on "Transnational Transmedia," prioritizes vampiric secondary worlds from traditions beyond dominant white, Anglophone culture, emphasizing their responses to Western franchises in the forms of resistance, incorporation, and/or re-writing. The most interesting articles in this section focus on appropriation and reimagining. Svetlana Seibel's "Thinking in Connections: A.A. Carr's *Eye Killers* and F.W. Murnau's *Nosferatu*" examines indigenous North American re-interpretations of the vampire. Katarzyna Ancuta's "From Revenants to Vampires: The Transmedia Evolution of the Jiangshi" explores how this independently developed Chinese undead creature has come to increasingly encounter and appropriate aspects of Western vampires.

The collection's final section, "Interventions, Fandom, Ownership," centers on the complicated negotiations of creative agency driving the worlds of vampire transmedia, which continue to be sustained by urtexts, self-references, adaptations, and fandom. The essays here alternately explore the adaptive lacunae created within Machado's palimpsestuous remediation of Le Fanu's *Carmilla* (Wilson); the narrative resonances and dissonances created when the world of *The Vampire Diaries* is spun-off into a new series, in which several of the original show's side-characters are re-positioned as central protagonists (Bernardi); the not-entirely-successful efforts of Anne Rice to maintain narrative authority over her characters as they transcend media (Davidel); and how Rice's related attempts at retaining control result from her own shift toward becoming an author of transmedia vampire fiction (Gledhill). Bernardi's essay is the most unique within this section, its tightened focus exploring vampiric spin-offs as microcosms of the broader, increasingly frequent, pop culture trend toward backward franchise expansion, which constructs pasts for existing characters. Bernardi draws especially effective connections to the expansive Star Wars I.P., her insights possessing useful applications for deconstructing more recent examples of this phenomena such as Amazon's ill-wrought *Lord of the Rings* prequel series, *The Rings of Power* (2022), and HBO's contemporaneously released *Game of Thrones* prequel series, *House of the Dragon* (2022).

The Transmedia Vampire represents an overall effective addition to the significant body of existing vampire scholarship, carving out space within this over-saturated area of academia through its focus on the less-well-discussed transmedia vampire. However, I have several critiques. The first is that Lorna Piatti-Farnell's "Vampire Tourism: Transmedia Narratives, Cultural Histories and Locating the Undead" would be better suited to section one due to its focus on Stoker. It appears thematically out of place in section two, particularly due to its attention to Stoker's reconstruction of the patently white Whitby. My second critique is the collection's over-attention to Rice at the expense of more modern, less well discussed transmedia vampire authors. Lastly, an essay on transmediation throughout the Twilight Saga would have been welcome here, especially given the franchise's rejection of traditional vampire lore; its transitions from novel, to screen, to graphic novel; Meyer's novelistic remediations of *Twilight* from Edward's perspective and later through gender-inversion; and the series' extensive fan-engagement with marketing, merchandizing, theorizing, and fan-ficing. Despite these shortcomings in organization and emphasis, this collection successfully contributes to the

extensive body of existing vampire criticism, effectively examining transmediation as a perpetual form of resurrection.

Sarah Stanley
Marquette University

Boxer Wachler, Brian. *Influenced: The Impact of Social Media on Our Perception.* Rowman & Littlefield, 2022.

Since the rise of Web 2.0 and social media platforms such as Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Instagram, and others in the early 2000s and 2010s, society has seen the emergence of a new kind of celebrity. Traditional media have long idolized actors, musicians, politicians, and athletes. While such individuals still have currency in digital spaces, audiences are increasingly gravitating toward the influencer, a person with a large social media following who often seems more authentic and relatable than traditional celebrities. *Influenced* is written by one such influencer, Brian Boxer Wachler, M.D., an eye surgeon whose videos debunking dubious medical claims on TikTok went viral during the COVID-19 pandemic. Boxer Wachler sets out to understand how audiences are influenced, both positively and negatively, by influencers like himself, and along the way offers tips on how the reader can become an influencer themselves.

Dr. Brian, as he is known by his patients, began his influencer journey during the 2020 coronavirus pandemic. His claim to fame is posting videos of himself alongside other videos on TikTok of people making various medical claims. He then rates the claims as "cap" or not. "Cap" is Gen Z slang for falsehoods, which Dr. Brian emphasizes by wearing a blue baseball cap with the word "cap" printed across the top. His videos went viral, and he soon became an influencer. Boxer Wachler is not a media scholar by trade (most of his references come from the popular press, though there are a decent number of academic references in the text as well). For anybody who has studied media effects, many of the arguments about the positives and negatives of social media will be familiar territory. At the very least, Boxer Wachler's examples provide a freshness to the discussion, as he amply includes references to post-2020 social media controversies. These references likely will not remain current for long, given the speed at which social media moves, but such is the challenge of anybody writing about this topic. Boxer Wachler

liberally uses Gen Z slang (I, myself, got tired of hearing of "cap" every chapter) and includes a helpful glossary for anybody struggling to keep up with the younger generation. Most of his social media examples also involve TikTok, the latest fad, so if any reader is still wondering what all the fuss is about, this book will keep them updated.

The book begins by defining what an influencer is and how audiences are thus influenced by them. Boxer Wachler conducted interviews with 15 other influencers, all from the TikTok and Instagram world, and sprinkles their perspectives throughout. While the interviews are not the focus (again, Boxer Wachler is not a media scholar, so he does not approach interviews as a method of answering research questions), they add color to the discussion. Early on he incorporates his idea of Perceptual Intelligence (PI), which he defines as "a person's ability to distinguish reality from fantasy using critical thinking skills by the pursuit and analysis of available logical facts" (241), and which he had previously written about in a 2017 book by the same name. Anybody familiar with media literacy ideas will find substantial overlap with PI.

He then shares research into the effects of using social media on the brain, particularly the adolescent brain. The focus is on how social media provides the brain with dopamine hits, the "tiny yet powerful neurotransmitter that stimulates the pleasure centers" (38). These references to dopamine happen throughout the book and can get tiresome. Some of this material echoes concerns parents and educators have long had about the adverse effects of kids and teens using social media. From here, he discusses the dangers of misinformation and disinformation, cancel culture, depression, bullying, suicide, and deepfake technology.

By Chapter 7, he switches to the business side of social media influence, distinguishing between traditional celebrities who are popular on social media and internet-born influencers. He frequently shares his own experience as an influencer, differentiating between what he does (using social media to supplement his professional career) and other influencers whose social media platforms are their career. His insight as an influencer, paired with the occasional comment from his influencer friends, lends credibility and authenticity to the manuscript.

The final third of the book introduces new topics of concern, from sexual content on social media (Chapter 8), to distractions and unproductivity (Chapter 9), to the cult-like impact certain influencers have over their followers (Chapter 10). These concerns are not new, and the rushed discussion fails to do them justice.

Chapter 10 especially needs more attention to fully articulate the dangers of following an influencer uncritically.

By the end of the book, Boxer Wachler changes tracks once again. Chapter 11 offers a primer on how to become an influencer. He provides tips and suggestions based on his own experience, sharing how to get started, how to monetize one's content, how to secure a talent manager, and more. This chapter reads more like a tutorial from an online magazine, and much of the content is common knowledge for anybody who has considered starting a professional social media platform. Nonetheless, Boxer Wachler weaves in his own experience, as he does throughout the book, which provides a freshness to the discussion.

The final chapter attempts to end on a positive note, offering tips on how to live with social media and use it productively, rather than letting it consume one's life. Some of this material is directed at parents, offering once again suggestions that have been articulated elsewhere. Because much of the book is focused on the numerous (real) dangers of social media influence, this chapter does not quite fit the narrative. I agree with Boxer Wachler, though, when he writes, "social media influence is here to stay, which means we have no choice but to accept and deal with it as best we can" (197). Ultimately, each person needs to figure out for themselves where they draw the line with social media, and each user will come to different conclusions on these matters.

This book is best suited to readers who do not know much about social media influencers and want to get up to speed with the latest happenings on social media platforms, particularly TikTok. People who have long studied and followed social media trends, either academically or professionally, will not find much new in this book. Boxer Wachler's breezy, conversational style, interspersed with honest anecdotes about his own missteps and successes on social media, make this an overall easy and charming read.

Dennis Owen Frohlich
Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania

Gray, Jonathan. *Dislike-Minded: Media, Audiences, and the Dynamics of Taste*. NYU Press, 2021.

Pushing back on notions of dislike as a purely negative perspective, Jonathan Gray's *Dislike-Minded* gives a voice to "dislikers" and offers pathways toward a more complex and constructive discussion of dislike. For Gray, dislike is not only "complex," but also "a deeply relational act"; when audiences express dislike, they may also "perform identity," create community, and reveal "absences" that may otherwise remain silent (4). Gray makes it clear that the book focuses on "engaged" dislikes, not passive or "mundane" disinterestedness (5), and he also makes distinctions between dislike, hate, and trolling (193).

The book makes a compelling argument for expanding and understanding "the vocabulary of dislike" (95) and how it might help to expand the field of pop culture studies. Gray's driving thesis is that dislikes should be studied as much as likes, as both provide useful insights into audience behavior and attitudes. While much of fandom studies has focused on what fans and audiences like, Gray worries that "some discussions about wants and desires for the media will only take place when talking about dislikes" (91). Structurally, Gray introduces various categories and expressions of dislike (e.g., "worst violators," "unmet expectations," "dealbreakers," "hatewatchers," etc.) amid filling in gaps within existing theories and approaches in audience studies. The writing, meanwhile, feels exploratory and conversational, imbued with a sense of curiosity and invitation for further research.

Gray claims his book as "qualitative, cultural studies work" (25), and relies primarily on 216 face-to-face interviews from five different studies (four of these five were conducted by different research assistants). Aside from his work in Malawi, Gray did not conduct the bulk of the interviews himself, but the study does not seem to suffer for it. In fact, the project gains additional perspectives with varied identities (rather than a single, while male perspective) and opportunities for early career academics to collaborate. Gray acknowledges these benefits as well as where the methods could be improved and hopes further research in this field will continue "with work that is better methodologically designed to analyze the affects of dislike" (25). The interviews are supplemented by additional data from survey responses (115) as well as "reviews, blog posts, think-pieces, and fan-forum discussions" (122). Gray also applies a "*refractive audience analysis* technique" in which "asking about responses to the adaptation tells us about responses to the original" (118 emphasis in original).

Dislike-Minded seems to answer Nick Couldry's call toward "demythification" and exploring gaps that have been ignored or left incomplete (19). Using textual theory rooted in Roland Barthes's distinction between "work" and "text" (32) and

Gérard Genette's coining of "paratexts" (33), Gray instead argues for a focus on "the audience" as both likers and dislikers and "the text," which includes the work itself as well as surrounding cultural impacts and paratexts (56). Moving beyond active-as-positive "participatory culture" theorized by John Fiske and Henry Jenkins, Gray argues that dislike should be included in audience meaning-making as well. In other words, audiences need not be positive, pleased, or enthusiastic to be considered active. Lastly, Gray revisits Pierre Bourdieu's well-known work on taste as class performance, seeking the opportunity to expand on Bourdieu's incomplete framework (without dismissing it entirely). Rather than restricting taste and dislike to class, Gray examines other aspects of identity such as gender, sexuality, race, age, and nationality. Gray also critiques the Bourdieuian suspicion that dislike should be associated with "hegemony and power" (13), arguing instead that audiences are also capable of pushing back against hegemonic power structures through expressions of dislike.

The first chapter gives a voice to audiences who feel "forced" to consume or enjoy "ubiquitous and inescapable" texts (39), often causing them to feel fatigued, isolated, trapped, and alienated. Leaning on Sara Ahmed's "feminist killjoy" (41), Gray hypothesizes that "engaged dislike" might be "heightened" within "marginalized individuals and communities" (45), as these groups often perform more labor in the act of watching texts that are not always "for" them. Gray also includes important clarifications about dislike in this chapter, namely that specific dislikes may be understood as a dislike of an entire genre, and dislikers do not have to engage deeply or comprehensively for their dislike to be considered legitimate. Chapter 2 begins to discern specific types of dislikes: "worst violator" dislikes that reveal general critiques of the media landscape through specific distastes, and "unmet expectations" that reveal what happens when audiences feel let down by beloved texts. It also highlights interviewee discussions of their own (white) privilege and how it overlaps with certain expressions (or avoidance) of dislike.

Chapter 3 applies refractive audience analysis to explore the categories of "feminist dealbreakers" and "dislike edging into hate" (16). This opens up a discussion of how audiences might "transition from love or like to dislike and/or hate" (135). In Chapter 4, Gray "ask[s] deeper questions of dislike" (145) with a desire to explore "performances of identity" that expand beyond Bourdieu's "identity-based superiority" (17). And finally, Chapter 5 layers various intersections of dislike, begging for future studies about "hatewatching" (the joy, spectacle, and comradery of dislike) (177), the complexity of "intersectional"

dislikes (194), and "the possibility of deception or self deception" within dislike (198).

   Dislike-Minded concludes with the suggestion that understanding dislike could help us understand political dislike, disappointment, and ire. While Gray considers this to be a loose "hypothesis to be tested by others" (215), the notion that "audiences are representative and reflective of citizens" (213) is one that should consider what audiences (and citizens) dislike as well as what they like. While the primary textual focus of the book is on film and television (with some inclusion of music, sports, and video games), the book could have included a clearer distinction of what "texts" were included in this work and what kinds of texts could use more attention in future research (e.g., novels, TikTok videos, visual art, etc.). Gray has a deep understanding of audience studies, fandom studies, and cultural studies, and his invitation for further research (rather than providing an umbrella theory) is compelling and relevant.

Heidi Ippolito
University of Denver & Iliff School of Theology

Herbert, Brian (w), Kevin J. Anderson (w), Raúl Allén (a), and Patricia Martín (a). *Frank Herbert's Dune: The Graphic Novel, Part 1* and *Part 2*. Harry N. Abrams, 2020 and 2022.

In their preface to *Frank Herbert's Dune: The Graphic Novel, Part 1,* writers Brian Herbert and Kevin J. Anderson state their goal with this adaption: "a truly faithful" version of the original novel. This emphasis seems important; as with any well-loved work of fiction, especially fiction that creates as immersive a world as Frank Herbert managed to build in 1965 with the original release of *Dune*, any attempt at adaption is fraught with difficulty and comes with a dedicated fanbase that is, almost by definition, difficult to please. Some previous adaptions, such as David Lynch's famous 1984 film version (which had its own, concurrent comic book release titled *Dune: The Official Comic Book*, penned by Ralph Macchio and drawn by Bill Sienkiewicz), took liberties with the source material that strayed perhaps too far while also trying to incorporate elements that did not translate well to film (such as the characters' thoughts, realized via whispered narration). The 2000 Sci-

Fi Channel version, a three-part miniseries, stayed closer to the text and suffered for it, bogged down by exposition and the attempt to fit in as much as possible. Since the publication of the first book of the graphic novel, Denis Villeneuve's film version has come and gone and is perhaps the most successful of the novel's film versions because the director, in this case, focused on staying "very close to the spirit of the book" rather than emphasizing accuracy (Watercutter).

The issues with these adaptions, according to many critics, is the translation from one media form to another. "The major stumbling block for everyone who has tried hasn't been a matter of how to bring it to the screen," writes *Time*'s Sarah Kurchak, "but how much of its almost 500 pages (not including the appendixes) they can and should include." Indeed, how does one show the dense interior landscapes of the characters the novel spends so much time on in any other form? How can another medium do justice to the weight of history and the structures of imperialism that both play such an important role in the plot of the novel? How can the story be told in any other way than several hundred pages? Herbert and Anderson make clear in their preface that they believe the graphic novel is the ideal form to "bring Frank Herbert's original novel to life in exactly the way he envisioned it." In my opinion, they were not wrong.

This adaptation's first strength lies in the beauty of the art; Raúl Allén and Patricia Martín, both of whom have worked as illustrators for major comic companies, do a wonderful job in translating the prose of the novel into images of sequential art. Theirs is a less dark version of the *Dune* universe than the film adaptions gave us; the *Dune* of the graphic novel is full of color that, while muted, imbues both the world at large and each scene individually with an emotional depth that goes beyond melodrama. The graphic novel genre allows the reader to dwell on the details Allén and Martín lovingly include – the incredible desert landscapes of Arrakis, the feudal stylings of the Houses, the technology that permeates this universe almost like magic, the costumes and uniforms, the architecture of the buildings, etc. Perhaps most impressive is their ability to convey emotion and movement through the bodies of their characters. Long scenes of dialogue, necessary for any faithful adaption of the novel, are rendered dynamic through the characters' facial expressions. When the action does come, for *Dune* is an adventure novel as much as anything else, Allen and Martin deliver a sense of intensity and movement that leaps from the page.

In addition to the wonder of seeing the *Dune* world well rendered in art, the comic format is particularly well-suited for certain aspects of the narrative. The use

of narrative boxes is especially effective, as it allows the comic to include the inner dialogues of the characters simultaneously with their actions and speech-acts. The narrative boxes are color-coded by character, which makes keeping track of them simple and visually appealing. This allows Herbert and Anderson to stay closer to the text in a way the films could not. Paneling and layout are other comic elements that lend well to this story; Allen and Martin are able to use their layouts in various ways that help convey the original sense of the novel effectively. This is especially clear in *Book 2* when Paul begins to have his visions and when Jessica goes through the overdose that makes her a Reverend Mother; the comic medium allows Allen and Martin to visually reflect the important themes of the novel that start to become cogent in this part of the plot – ideas of fate and prophecy and choice – through alternatingly symmetrical and open layouts. The former speaks to the questions of destiny and its tension with free will Herbert explored in the original text to great effect, and the latter allows the reader to experience another of the novel's themes, that being how, even amid something inevitable, the flow of time itself is loose, fearful, unknown. At heart here is the simultaneity that the comic form allows, for the reader of a comic is always in two places at once: distant, taking in each page as a whole, and close, taking in each frame one at a time. Between these two poles is the flow of the narrative from one frame to the next, from one page to another, and Allen and Martin use these possibilities to enhance the story and bring it closer to the original reading experience while also adding something new.

The editions are not, however, perfect. Herbert and Anderson make some interesting creative decisions, choosing to leave Paul out of some important scenes early in the narrative. This allows them to focus the first book more on Leto and Jessica – this is a significant divergence from the novel as Paul is our main point-of-view through most of the text. While this does not, in my opinion, necessarily hurt the story (I am not sure it enhances it either), die-hard *Dune* fans will surely notice and might wonder at the choice. It should also be said that the writing is not always as good as it could be. Again, this is not a criticism of the overall quality of the graphic novel but perhaps is more just a symptom of the fact that Herbert and Anderson are prose writers first. The comic format is a very different medium, and they do not quite have the mastery of the form, in terms of the writing, that their artists clearly have and that other veteran comic writers exhibit so effortlessly.

Overall, while the adaption perhaps falls ever-so-slightly short of being "pure *Dune,*" as Herbert and Anderson say in their preface to the first installment – for, if we are honest, the novel is a masterpiece and is as "pure *Dune*" as anything needs

to be – the graphic novel is a wonderful, beautifully made, and enjoyable addition to the *Dune* landscape and is therefore worth picking up. As both a *Dune* fan and a fan of comic books, it was a pleasure to see the original story in a medium I love, and I am eagerly awaiting the third book.

<div align="right">Carlos Tkacz
University of Nevada, Las Vegas</div>

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Shor, Francis. *Soupy Sales and the Detroit Experience: Manufacturing a Television Personality*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2021.

There is a gravity to academic prose that becomes tiresome. Fran Shor's *Soupy Sales and the Detroit Experience* is a serious book that takes comedy, and urban history, seriously, but without the choking solemnity that usually accompanies histories of twentieth century mass culture and urban space. Early on, Shor relates a Soupy Sales chestnut that, in itself, makes the entire book worthwhile:

> Two goats are busy eating garbage. While they're eating, one of them finds a roll of old film and proceeds to eat it up. After he finishes chewing up the film, the other goat asks him, "Did you enjoy the film?" And the other goat says, "Actually, I preferred the book!" (7)

Shor peppers his tale of the rise of Soupy Sales with such jokes, even as he tells the story of Detroit's apartheid past, a broken and desperate working class, and the social forces that emerged in the twentieth century but continue to determine the city's present and future.

I must admit that I have memories of Soupy Sales, and they are not as affectionate as those of the author. While Shor knew Soupy from his syndicated kid's show, my experience of the comedian came a couple of decades later, when

Sales made his living on the gameshow circuit. Sitting in front of my grandmother's TV in the early 1970s, I saw Soupy Sales on shows like *The Hollywood Squares*, years after his heyday, and, even as a child, found his humor corny, perhaps, in part, because my grandmother found him so funny.

Yet through Shor's text, I have discovered a very different Soupy Sales. He was an improvisational comic, in love with jazz, kind to children, and a gift to the golden age of live television. His Borscht Belt sensibility, and his reimagining of the tradition of Yiddish humor, put Sales in the company of legendary figures like Sid Caesar, Ernie Kovacs, Woody Allen, and Lenny Bruce. True, he never directly challenged political authority (as did Bruce), or charted human sexuality (as did Allen), but his anarchic humor influenced the generation of youth that would attempt to change the world through politics and revolution. Shor does not overstate his claims for Sales's influence on the 1960s youth movement, but he does assign the comic a place beside *Mad Magazine* as one of the precursors of that movement (118).

Shor does an admirable job reconstructing Sales's career and situating his work in the context of Detroit, Los Angeles, and New York. Along the way, the author explores the new importance of television for families and youth in the 1950s (Chapter 2) and the anxieties facing Detroit's working-class viewers during that same period. Because of Shor's long engagement with Detroit history, his chapter on "The Detroit Experience in the 1950s" (41-57) provides an excellent summary of some of the most important social and labor histories of the city, relying, especially, upon the work of Thomas Sugrue (2005), as well as on Daniel Clark's (2018) powerful and heretical account of the economic uncertainties facing the city's autoworkers in the 1950s. Shor's explorations of the racial inequalities that shaped its urban landscape demonstrate that Detroit was, indeed, two cities: one for the white population and a quite different one for Black workers and citizens. In fact, the author does such an accomplished job exploring racial apartheid that this reader is left with a series of questions about Soupy Sales's audience. Did Black and white children equally adore Sales's afternoon show? Or were the divisions that marked the city's social geography also present in the television audience's preference? Unfortunately, Shor never really broaches that question. In part, I understand that his silence on that issue is the result of a lack of data. Nonetheless, because his concerns raise that question in the reader's mind, I wish he had explicitly acknowledged his inability to provide an answer.

Yet, when reconstructing Sales's evening program, Shor provides invaluable information that is otherwise inaccessible to the cultural historian. Sales had several programs on Detroit's WXYZ-TV station. During the day, he was a children's host, eating lunch with the kids, showing silent shorts, and doing puppet shows and comic bits. In the evening, he changed out of his oversized bow tie and hosted a sophisticated show built around jazz performances. And it is an impressive list of performers that Shor reconstructs, including Earl Hines, Johnny Hodges, Charlie Parker, Chet Baker, Miles Davis, Clifford Brown, Erroll Garner, Coleman Hawkins, Lester Young, Milt Jackson, and Thelonious Monk. Indeed, one of Shor's respondents, Joe Messina (of Motown fame), remembers "the exceptional and idiosyncratic pianist and his quartet [playing] his famous composition, 'Round Midnight,' for a lengthy seventeen or eighteen minutes rather than the seven minutes allotted to them. The intensity and length of this mini-Monk concert led Soupy to sign off by referring to tomorrow's program as the Thelonious Monk show" (83).

The book ends with Sales's departure from the Motor City. It was a complicated break that had to do with his personal life, his opportunities, and his sense that "to get anywhere in TV, a performer has to leave Detroit" (105). It is a necessary ending, but not necessarily a sad one. Unlike so many comics from that period, Sales does not descend into melancholy, drug addiction, or poverty. He continues to work through the years, always conscious of his roots in Detroit, and returning on periodic occasions. *Soupy Sales and the Detroit Experience* would be a useful addition to any class in popular culture, television, urban, or labor history. True, the author sometimes raises more questions than he answers, but that is a scholar's task. Shor does this work with a sense of mission and a commitment to empirical evidence and theoretical clarity. On several pages, I found myself laughing out loud. That alone makes the text a valuable addition to our post-pandemic libraries.

<div align="right">Graham Cassano
Oakland University</div>

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