Bounds of Their Habitation is engaging and easy to read. It succeeds in bringing together multiple lines of scholarship that are often operating in parallel universes. Scholars, students, and the general interested reader will find much to value in this book, and it deserves a wide audience.

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Damned Nation: Hell in America from the Revolution to Reconstruction. By **Kathryn Gin Lum**. New York: Oxford University Press, 2014. xiii + 310 pp. $31.95 cloth.

"Hell mattered" in nineteenth-century America (232), declares Kathryn Gin Lum in this expansive, carefully argued, deeply researched, and beautifully written monograph. In contrast to earlier studies suggesting that the democratization and feminization of American Christianity precipitated the decline of Calvinist concepts of salvation and divine judgment, *Damned Nation* forcefully argues that debates over the meaning of hell "remained vital" in a young nation "founded on the premise of republican virtue where different religious bodies competed for converts, interest groups vied for sociopolitical influence, and oppressed peoples called for ultimate justice" (232). From evangelical revivals to separate spheres, Mormonism to Transcendentalism, urban reform to global missions, southern slavery to the Oregon Trail—the volatile and hotly contested Christian doctrine of hell fueled an aggressively expanding American society during the first half of the nineteenth century.

Gin Lum organizes her story of "hell's survival and significance" (8) into three parts that move sequentially from the 1790s through the Civil War. More than an arcane theological squabble, controversies over "predestination, human nature, and the character of God" shaped political discourse in the early republic as ministers and intellectuals struggled to define whether the traditional threat of divine vengeance or an emerging belief in a benevolent deity provided the "best moral glue for the new nation" (14). Promulgated through a diverse array of media, from sermons and tracts to poetry, novels, hymns, maps and charts, folk art, and even board games, ideas about hell dominated the conversion experiences of early evangelicals, forged an "imagined community of the saved" (7), and lent a sense of urgency to missionary work at home and abroad. But they also generated opposition among sentimental novelists, native

American prophets, spiritualists, westering pioneers, and liberal freethinkers who showed little patience for the Calvinist notion of an "eternal 'in' crowd" (45), as Gin Lum argues in part 2. The concluding section of the book examines the deployment of hell discourses during an era of growing sectional strife over the question of slavery. Proslavery apologists and proponents of gradual emancipation drew upon the "perishing soul" (169) motif in exhortations to evangelize the enslaved. African American activists, such as the incendiary David Walker, and ultraists, from William Lloyd Garrison to Theodore Parker, condemned this paternalistic rhetoric, labeled slavery a hell on earth, and envisioned heaven as an "everlasting progression of the human race" toward freedom and moral perfection (188). Contentious theological debates over the meaning of hell persisted into the Civil War as chaplains vacillated between castigating the nation for its original sin of slavery and comforting the grieving families of dead soldiers.

Gin Lum occasionally minimizes differences that other scholars might wish to highlight with greater specificity, as in her use of the encompassing term "evangelical" to denote "denominational commonality" (57). Yet this is a book that resists easy linear arguments and simple binaries in favor of subtle shifts, unintended consequences, persistent conflict, and enormous creativity. Where historians once associated the Second Great Awakening with either social control or democratic release, Gin Lum carefully recovers the multivalent work of the revivals associated with Charles Grandison Finney. Where other scholars have traced the devolution of post-Revolutionary religious optimism to the dour outlook of an 1850s America plagued by economic volatility, urban unrest, sectional violence, and impending Civil War, Gin Lum reminds readers that Protestants of all stripes remained profoundly ambivalent about the moral character of the young nation—even during the heady days of the earliest global missionary societies. Where recent studies of religion and the Civil War accent the emergence of a hopeful theology of heaven as a place of bodily restoration and reunion with loved ones, Gin Lum reveals a more complex story in which ministers worried that the war endangered the salvation of gambling, swearing, and hard-drinking soldiers. "Hell permeated the cultural landscape," she concludes, "and there is no single timeline in its American evolution between the Revolution and Reconstruction" (8).

Gin Lum offers a fascinating conceptual alternative to an older historiographical tradition of grand narrative. Although she envisions the book as a "synthetic survey" (241n16), her most important contribution perhaps lies in its pioneering innovative interpretive method, which assembles a stunning array of seemingly unrelated religious texts, individuals, and movements and persuasively demonstrates how they contributed to the central social and political concerns of the period. For scholars concerned with the fragmentation of the field of

North American religious history in a postmodern, pluralistic, transnational, and global age, Gin Lum provides what might best be described as an *itinerary* for navigating the diverse, fractious, and rapidly-expanding religious world of the pre-Civil War United States.

Damned Nation is an extraordinary mashup of a book, a raucous ride through the rough religious country of the early American republic. Where else can readers encounter the Seneca Prophet Handsome Lake, transcendentalist Margaret Fuller, Mormon apostle Parley Pratt, and spiritual mystic Emanuel Swedenborg all in the same chapter? Written for a broad audience, Gin Lum's provocative book succeeds as a graceful work of synthesis and a compelling new reading of nineteenth-century American attitudes toward religion, race, and reform.

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Evangelical Gotham: Religion and the Making of New York City, 1783–1860. By **Kyle B. Roberts**. Historical Studies of Urban America. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016. 352 pp. $50.00 cloth.

New York City is not usually a place where God walks. It has, as Kyle Roberts acknowledges in his compelling study of urban evangelical religion in the early American republic, "a greater reputation for sin than piety" (251). In the twenty-first century, when New York is a hub of global finance, our histories are more attuned to the development of Commercial Gotham, but Roberts tells a different tale, one in which evangelical Protestants were at the center, not the margins, of the city's radical growth and transformation. Roberts does not claim that Evangelical Gotham is the only Gotham, nor even that evangelicals were ever more than a minority of the city (about 15 percent by 1850). But their churches abounded in its built environment, they set their moral causes at the center of its civic life, and they turned the city's commercial resources to godly ends. "Evangelicals did not just live in New York," he writes; "they lived through it" (7).

Evangelical Gotham challenges the notion that evangelical religion was a primarily rural phenomenon opposed to an emerging urban modernity. Through personal journals and autobiographical narratives, religious magazines and newspapers, and church records and published histories, Roberts finds that evangelicalism thrived in a modernizing world because of