

BOOK REVIEWS

David L. Chappell. *Waking from the Dream: The Struggle for Civil Rights in the Shadow of Martin Luther King, Jr.* Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2016. Pp. 249. Cloth, \$23.95.

In *Waking from the Dream: The Struggle for Civil Rights in the Shadow of Martin Luther King, Jr.*, David L. Chappell gives college instructors an engaging means to discuss the civil rights movement in the two decades after King's death. Chappell argues that freedom did not come from the 1964 Civil Rights Act or the 1965 Voting Rights Act. Instead, it came when civil rights activists regrouped after King's murder to continue the fight. To Chappell, freedom is achieved by remaining alert to threats and protecting freedoms already won from atrophy. Activists after King, notably his widow, Coretta Scott King, worked to win the Fair Housing Act, full employment legislation, and a King national holiday. Challenges came from infighting, character assassinations on King, and King's marital infidelity and plagiarism. The chapters can stand alone, although they are woven together by King's memory.

The National Black Political Convention (NBPC) of 1972, the largest political gathering in African American history, attempted to institutionalize the civil rights movement. Ralph Abernathy, King's designated successor, sought to take control of the movement but lacked the energy and charisma to do so. Chappell's treatment of Abernathy throughout the book is unusually sharp but not unwarranted. The effort to build a unified national black political body collapsed because of disagreements about whether the movement needed a leader, who should lead, and what agenda should be pursued. A subsequent meeting in 1974 also collapsed. Coretta Scott King, present but not especially involved with the NBPC, is the main activist in Chappell's book. Always agitating, she preferred to develop leadership rather than project a single individual, perhaps because she thought drama weakened the civil rights movement's focus on economics.

Six years after her husband's death, Coretta Scott King joined with white labor activist Murray Finley to attack a high unemployment rate that threatened both blacks and whites. With a more radical goal than anything that came out of the Great Society, the Full Employment Action Council sought in 1974 to allow the unemployed to sue if the government failed to give them a job. King wanted a job and an income to become as constitutional as free speech. Backed by New Deal stalwart and Senator Hubert Humphrey, the legislation did little because of compromises that hollowed it.

The battle for a King holiday would likely engage any class and might pair well with a discussion of current politics. Beginning in 1979, proponents wanted a day named after King to keep the gains and challenges of the civil rights movement in the public view. Opponents of the legislation resorted to character assassination and guilt by association to argue that King did not deserve the honor of a day. Coretta Scott King and others encouraged them to rant, thereby making the holiday's opponents look

very ugly and the proponents quite reasonable. Vividly written with wonderful analysis, this chapter sits alongside the one on King's character as gems.

Jesse Jackson sought civil rights advancements and personal publicity in equal measures. Accused by rivals of hogging the limelight, he kept the cause of civil rights and the treatment of the poor in the public eye. By getting corporations to provide jobs to blacks, he might also have inadvertently contributed to the destruction of the inner cities. Chappell effectively explores this erratic leader. With photographs, he also explodes the myth that he lied about cradling King's head in Memphis. The chapter might work well in a discussion of sources and fake news.

The final chapter leaves the reader hoping for more of Chappell's writing. It is a brilliant discussion of King's failures to be faithful to his wife and his plagiarizing of a massive part of his doctoral dissertation. Chappell dismisses the arguments that these were minor character flaws of human behavior. It is a chapter that is worth anthologizing in a King collection.

Waking from the Dream is highly recommended for upper-division undergraduates and graduate students. The flaws are minor. Introducing Jackson as the first African American to make a serious run for the presidency dismisses Shirley Chisholm's 1972 bid. Chappell misses an opportunity to take a deeper look at Coretta Scott King. The material on the NBPC and a coalition for full employment might also only connect with students who have rich understanding of politics. Fortunately, the chapters on the Civil Rights Act of 1968, the King holiday, Jesse Jackson, and King's character have broader appeal, with the latter three being outstanding choices for classroom discussion.

Miami University of Ohio Regional Campuses

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Holger Hoock. *Scars of Independence: America's Violent Birth*. New York: Crown, 2017. Pp. 576. Cloth, \$30.00.

In an impressive new book, Holger Hoock has put the Revolutionary War back into the American Revolution. Americans, Hoock argues, have, for several reasons, long minimized the violence associated with their war for independence. Much of the violence was committed by, or against, Loyalists, a group largely forgotten in the nineteenth century and for much of the twentieth. Compared to later conflicts, casualty figures from the Revolutionary War seemed small in absolute terms, but Holger points out that as a percentage of the population, nearly five times more Americans died in the Revolution than died in World War II, and the death rate among American prisoners of war was the highest of all American wars. The Anglo-American rapprochement that began to take shape after the Civil War created a new motive to sanitize the Revolution, and when the United States entered World War I on the side of the British in 1917, any