

Marshall W. Fishwick. *Cicero, Classicism, and Popular Culture.* New York: The Haworth Press, 2007. Pp. 228. Paper, \$24.95; ISBN 0-7890-2592-2.

Part memoir, part scholarly treatise, part travelogue, the late Marshall Fishwick's last work is above all a deeply personal labor of love. Fishwick, a professor emeritus at Virginia Tech, is credited with being a pioneer in the field of Popular Culture Studies. He was the co-founder of the Popular Culture Association and founder of *International Popular Culture*, a key journal in the field. Author of over twenty books and recipient of the Life Achievement Award in Popular Culture, in *Cicero, Classicism, and Popular Culture* Fishwick traces the roots of the field he helped found back to Cicero, who he credits with being the "Godfather of Popular Culture." Fishwick's deep admiration for Cicero began in a high school Latin class, and it seems fitting that his last work ties together the lives of the "Godfather of Popular Culture" with the Godfather of Popular Culture Studies.

The book weaves together an analysis of the life of Cicero, his importance in his own time, and his effects on modern culture with Fishwick's own journey to Italy to "find Cicero" and his encounters and discussions with various codenamed individuals who are experts in different areas from Machiavelli to the Catholic Church. This part of the book reads almost like a suspense novel, with Fishwick being sent on his academic tour of Italy by a mysterious Countess to meet-ups with revolutionaries and dignitaries known only as *Moda* or *Verbarossa*. The true meat of the book, however, lies in Fishwick's discussion of Cicero and his ever-present effects on our modern world. In a very easily readable style, Fishwick discusses Cicero's importance to Roman culture and, consequently, to our own. Fishwick credits Cicero with not only serving as a bridge between Greek culture and the Roman world, but also with laying the foundations of the popular culture that still surrounds us today. Fishwick argues that Cicero was more than just a famous orator and writer. He brought over philosophy and ideas from the Greeks, influencing our view of Greek culture more than any other person, and coined words and phrases in Latin that helped to establish Roman Culture, which in turn was exported throughout the Empire, filtering down to America's Founding Fathers, and infusing our modern culture today. Fishwick calls him both the "Founding" and the "Framing" Father of popular culture: "'Founding' in that he linked the Greek and Roman worlds, and thus set into play many of the ideas that now control us; 'framing' in that he set the framework (in words and documents) that defines much of our culture."

While Cicero might not be, as Fishwick claims, "with the possible exception of Jesus, the central figure of Western Civilization," Fishwick's obvious passion for the subject helps one to entertain certain connections that might or might not exist. While it is clear that Roman culture has had a great impact on modern society, Fishwick's emphasis on Cicero as the font from which all popular culture flows can at times be a bit tenuous. This book is not an entry-level window into Cicero and Roman Culture. Names, places, and events are often mentioned, and a background in Latin and Roman

history are handy tools to have while reading. While its personal bent makes it not the best selection for an assigned reading, a lecturer might find the scores of parallel—Cicero and Thomas Jefferson, Cicero and Machiavelli, Cicero's Rome and Bush's America—to be good fodder for lecture topics in a variety of disciplines.

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John P. Jackson, Jr. and Nadine M. Weidman. *Race, Racism, and Science: Social Impact and Interaction*. Science and Society Series. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2004, 2006. Pp. 403. Paper, \$29.95; ISBN 0-8135-3736-3.

In a lucid account, John P. Jackson and Nadine M. Weidman trace the origin, development, and decline of the concepts of race and racism within the context of the discourse among scientists about these concepts. The authors define science broadly to include the natural and social sciences. The concepts of race and racism, rooted in medieval Spain, predate the rise of experimental science. Several Enlightenment thinkers aimed to study race with what they regarded as scientific objectivity. Jackson and Weidman make clear that the pursuit of objectivity was illusory. Enlightenment thinkers were subjective in regarding Europeans, or some subgroup of Europeans, as superior to Asians, Amerindians, and Africans. The authors do well to emphasize the plasticity of race. Some writers and scientists regarded Europeans as a race. Others believed Europeans to be not one but rather several races. Some used race as a synonym for species whereas others regarded the races as subgroups of a species. In the nineteenth century speculation about race and evolution culminated in Charles Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* (1859). Darwin's circumspection on the relationship between race and evolution did not deter others from asserting that Europeans were the superior race because they were more highly evolved than other races. In some instances, post-Darwinian racists placed Africans as a link between the apes and Europeans. Particularly important is the authors' coupling of the pseudo-science eugenics with the atrocities of the Holocaust. The revulsion against Nazi race policies led scientists to distance themselves from racism. Ultimately geneticists undermined the concept of race, making clear that aside from small variations, all humans have roughly the same genotype. There is not enough genetic diversity among people to justify the concept of race.

Several features of *Race, Racism, and Science* recommend it to the reader. The authors divide each of the seven chapters into subsections. At the end of chapters one and two, Jackson and Weidman summarize their narrative in a conclusion. For reasons that are unclear, the authors drop the conclusion from subsequent chapters, though they end each chapter with a summation despite the absence of a formal conclusion. After each chapter the authors appended a bibliographic essay that focuses on secondary