acting out, observation and construction of ‘new post-revolutionary social norms’ (4). On the other hand, Davidson acknowledges the curtailment of women’s equal participation in public space. She alleges that female respectability – sustained by controls on women’s sexuality – did become an anchor of social respectability, and she asserts that ‘even those spaces that did not separate men and women were nonetheless organized by ideas about gender: women’s and men’s presumed roles in clubs, salons, and charities reflected notions of their “natures”’ (151). Accordingly, elite men held administrative posts in mixed-sex charitable association, while women executed gender-limited tasks.

Davidson is at her best in presenting the lived realities of different urban landscapes. She has unearthed impressive comparative evidence, showing, for example, how provincial theatres functioned more like elite clubs than did early Parisian boulevard theatres. In the former circumstances, disruptions resulted more from differences of politics and age instead of class divisions, which stirred Parisian audiences. Additionally, Davidson reveals the way oppositional politics under the Empire fostered mixed-sex groupings, and she insightfully clarifies how different regimes organized political festivals or policed different venues in order to maintain public order and social hierarchy. Still, questions remain about the book’s overarching account of change. What was the source of ‘post-revolutionary social norms’ if not the revolution? Why were the popular classes and feminists more inclined to revolt when there existed ‘more stable rules of behaviour’ (187)? If ‘separate spheres’ is deemed inadequate as an analytical tool (187), what accounts for the increasingly hegemonic gendered class practices of the period? If women’s increasing domestication is to be laid almost entirely at the door of bourgeois society rather than revolutionary republicanism, what distinguishes the author’s approach from earlier Marxist feminist accounts of these same developments?

Davidson asks her readers to take virtually on faith her claim that the French Revolution resulted in an unstable, even blurred social order, whose reformation had to await the consolidation of bourgeois rule some decades later. What saves the bourgeoisie from being nothing more than a deux ex machina is the author’s attentiveness to the processes of social mingling and sorting, along with measures of policing, conformity and desire by which men and women learned to address or avoid one another in ways that sustained a class order. It is in the latter respect that this book makes its strongest contribution.

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In 1775, Virginia was the largest of the thirteen colonies in rebellion. Though it had enjoyed prosperity as a producer of tobacco and grain, and relative harmony within colonial white society, this fascinating volume shows that Virginia’s experience of rebellion and war was a wrenching one. McDonnell explores themes of nationalism, military recruitment, mobilization and social conflict in an effective (if straightforward) chronological format. The Declaration of Independence is the book’s unspoken fulcrum, with the first half of
the book devoted to the anxious months preceding the middle of 1776, and the second half covering the further conflicts that unfolded within the wider American conflict against Great Britain.

*Politics of War* is an exciting example of military history as social history. In a situation like the American Revolution, where the allegiances of civilians mattered as much as battlefield outcomes, it is impossible to understand the progress of the war in Virginia without understanding social relations on the home front. Class, therefore, is paramount in this volume. McDonnell touches only occasionally on ethnic, racial, religious or regional conflicts within Virginia, except where black slaves are concerned – and even then, he refracts his history primarily through the lens of class rather than race.

McDonnell’s social history focuses on military units, and the hand-wringing of upper-class Virginians like Landon Carter and Thomas Jefferson (in letters, diaries and legislative proceedings) comprise his principal sources. These politicians experimented each year with laws for recruitment and taxation in order to mobilize money and manpower for the war effort. If, as the old saying goes, lawmaking is akin to sausage-making, then McDonnell shows us the spice and the meat of Virginia’s military mobilization as well as the guts and the nitrates (and at 544 pages, a bit of fat). The final picture is far from the romantic gloss that usually coats Virginia’s wartime history.

The recruitment of men – and Virginians’ resistance to recruitment – became a cyclical process, occasionally prodded by external events like British invasions or the demands of the Continental army. Because McDonnell is so effective at digging into the details of this cycle and its myriad local manifestations, we get only a loose sense of change over time. McDonnell is also forced to leave some narrative threads dangling, though no one would ask the author to make the book any longer. The abundant, meticulous footnotes allow ample opportunities to follow up on his findings, even if the author presents surprisingly little quantitative data. Perhaps there was too little numerical information to be found in the historical record – in any case, the lack of charts does aid the volume’s crisp readability.

McDonnell spends some time evaluating the *ends* of the Revolutionary War – independence and republican government. Yet he is more interested in the *means* which Virginians from all social classes employed to achieve these ends. In the process of this exploration of the ‘small politics of war’, the author reveals that the Virginia gentry faced steep challenges in mobilizing the state (13). In early 1778, for instance, many Virginians were able to take advantage of economic opportunities and avoid recruitment; on other occasions, legal loopholes, bounty markets and local intransigence hampered the legislature’s efforts to fulfil manpower quotas.

McDonnell flushes out unfamiliar yet vital incidents of Revolutionary Virginia: rent strikes, salt riots, draft resistance, tax revolts, the burning of Norfolk (by Virginians themselves), and Virginia’s abject failure to recruit men for George Washington’s forces on the eve of the crucial battle of Yorktown.

McDonnell’s critics will no doubt accuse him of trying to cast the American Revolution as a social conflict, which (if defined narrowly enough) it was not. Instead, the dogged (yet not dogmatic) McDonnell looks at the revolution in Virginia and sees *disagreement* – and not just bilateral disagreement – among participants from different social (and racial) ranks. Sometimes, in order to detect such disagreement, the author digs beneath the rhetoric to observe the
actions – even violent actions – of slaves, elites, small farmers, tenants and labourers who had very different ideas about the revolution’s direction. If this seems a simple point, it is still a point too often ignored by historians of the revolution.

People in Virginia did challenge one another during the revolution – and, indeed, those challenges sometimes stemmed from the unequal distribution of wealth within society. Taxation, recruitment, land distribution, army discipline, shortages, legal restrictions and traditional expectations of obedience placed unequal or disproportionate burdens on poorer or enslaved Virginians, and the people of the past knew it. They could not always articulate their social grievances as well as McDonnell does for them. Yet it is impossible to deny, after reading this book, that those grievances were present – and that they shaped the Revolutionary War in Virginia.

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Studies of globalization have often emphasized the temporality of late capital and the international spatiality of American cultural and economic policies. In addition, histories of US empire have prioritized the production side of the expansionist economic engine and masculine arenas of militarism and international politics. Hoganson’s Consumer’s Imperium provides a much-needed corrective to these approaches by constructing an alternate periodization of America’s transnational connections to the rest of the world and highlighting the reverse flow of international connections from the world to the American home. It reconfigures US domestic culture by viewing the topic through a transnational lens that prioritizes the consumption of imported goods and practices in American homes in the years between the Civil War and the First World War. The heart of the book is an examination of the home as a contact zone and American women as agents of consumption and cosmopolitanism. Focusing on the spaces and practices of middle-class and upper-class white women, Hoganson shows that American domestic material culture was profoundly affected by the commodities of empire and that, in fact, domestic consumers played a big role in the economies and imaginaries of imperial politics.

The book is organized into five chapters, each focusing on a different imported object or practice that drew heavily from the offerings of the international marketplace: architecture/interior design, fashion, cooking/entertaining, armchair travel clubs, and the immigrant gifts movement. While each chapter can stand alone in the detailed treatment of its particular subject and the development of thematic foci, the book as a whole persuasively argues for a US domestic culture that was heavily globalized through the consumer actions of American women. Hoganson’s account is attentive to the tensions between cosmopolitanism and appropriation, illustrating both the possibilities opened up by women’s engagement with the world and the limitations of a colonially inflected, consumer-driven pluralism. She suggests that in opening up their homes to the foreign and thereby blurring the gendered boundaries of