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Book Reviews -- Monographic Musings

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Bernan Press has carved out a publishing niche by cleverly repackaging government statistics. Fortunately, by adding valuable editorial touches, they have also developed a list of useful reference titles. *The Who, What, and Where of America: Understanding the Census Results* (2003, 0890597634, \$95) is a recent example. Edited by former Director of the US Census Bureau, **Martha Farnsworth Riche** and **Deirdre A. Gaquin**, this book serves to complement another Bernan publication, the annual *County and City Extra*. (2002, 0890595976, \$120). The *County and City Extra* "provides up-to-date statistical information for every state, county, metropolitan area, congressional district, and all US cities with a population of 25,000 or more as of the year 2000." In order to supplement this information, the *Who, What, and Where of America* takes data

from the census long form, filled out by a sample population, and presents it in three parts. The first part covers information on "age, race, Hispanic origin, household structure, ancestry, and the languages spoken at home." Part 2 offers statistics on "education, labor force, status, work and family patterns, income and poverty," while part 3 provides figures on migration patterns, housing, and transportation to work." Each part is introduced by a section of colored maps, along with an explanation of the data that follows. Other useful features include a section of rankings on a number of "key demographic and housing characteristics," as well as five appendices. These appendices help clarify geographic concepts and codes, define metropolitan statistical areas and components, provide state maps locating metropolitan areas, counties and central cities and lists cities by state and county.

All of these features provide added value to the data in the tables. In particular, the editors' analysis of trends like our aging population, and its increasing diversity and changing distribution, is of value in understanding

what all of the numbers are saying. However, there is one suggested improvement. For the vast majority of tables, a citation for the source is not listed within immediate view. There is a listing of sources and definitions "hidden" in appendix F, but that takes a while to locate and, in any case, does not provide much assistance in locating the tables on the Census Website. (Actually, that is an idea for another publication, a guide for using the Census Website.)

In any case, this minor concern is outweighed by the actual data being presented in a useful and handy single volume. In short, *The Who, What, and Where of America* provides the researcher with a wealth of information in an accessible format. Of course, making full use of this book requires spending a little time reading through the explanations and "getting the lay of the land." But, it is well worth the effort. Academic libraries and larger public libraries where statistical research is common will want to consider this title. 🐼

Book Reviews — Monographic Musings

Column Editor: **Debbie Vaughn** (Reference Librarian, College of Charleston) <vaughnd@cofc.edu>

Column Editor's Note: December and January are saturated with holidays and festivals; Hanukkah, Christmas, Ramadan, and Kwanza are among the more universally observed. This year, why not celebrate lesser-known holidays such as the Rice Cake Festival, or *Mochi No Matsuri*. This Japanese tradition takes place on the eighth day of the twelfth moon, and participants offer special rice cakes in prayer. While you are at it, mark Sylvester Day on your calendar as well. On this day, December 31, Pope Sylvester is heartily honored. Another exciting celebration is Vasant Panchami. Kept on the fifth day of the waxing half of the month of Mahaga, Sarasvati, the Hindu goddess of learning, is honored with—none other than—books.

Whatever your flavor of festivities, this time of year provides us the opportunity to relax and catch up. Reviewers **Steven Profit** and **Ellen Finnie Duranceau** suggest a variety of books for your reading pleasure, as reading is undoubtedly a popular leisure activity among ATG family. Happy reading, everyone, and happy holidays to you and yours. — DV

Dover, Edwin. *The Disputed Presidential Election of 2000: A History and Reference Guide*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2003. 0313323194. 166 pages. \$44.95.

Reviewed by **Steven Profit** (Reference Librarian, College of Charleston) <profits@cofc.edu>

In the preface of his book, **Edwin Dover** writes that his "... primary goal is to provide solid background information about the personalities, politics, laws, events, and meaning of the disputed presidential election of 2000." To that, this reviewer responds, "Mission accomplished!" *The Disputed Presidential Election of 2000* is a focused and robust history of that controversial balloting.

The book's introductory material works well as ready-reference information. There are one-sentence biographical sketches of 20 key figures in the campaign and post-election events and a 122-entry chronology that covers the entire campaign season from results of a May 11, 1998, Gallup poll to December 13, 2000, when Gore conceded the elec-

tion after the Supreme Court's ruling that ended the legal battles over the Florida vote recounting process.

The six chapters present detailed histories of campaign, election, and post-election events as well as examinations of relevant background issues. Chapter one provides an overview of the election in a manner that elaborates on certain events and processes noted in the chronology. Dover focuses on the party primaries both in general and regarding the 2000 contests in particular; the general election campaign including the four debates involving the presidential and vice-presidential candidates; election day including demographic and geographic breakdowns for the vote tally; and a brief overview of the situation in Florida before, during, and after election day.

Chapter two concerns the electoral college. Dover explores its creation, its history, and how changes in the law and the political environment in the United States over time have affected its role in the national electoral process. He presents the popular arguments for and against the continued use of the electoral college. The author is of the opinion that the status quo will likely hold for the foreseeable future due to a lack of consensus on the need for reform.

The third chapter is a detailed narrative of the legal challenges and the counterchallenges of the post-election struggles over the vote tallying process in Florida. Dover examines the avenues of redress open to the Gore side and explains why the Democrats chose the goals and strategies they did. The Bush response is given similar analysis. The decisions and reactions of various other actors—county election officers, state government officials, judges in the state and federal courts—at turns furthered and frustrated the intentions of both the Bush and Gore camps. The text gives a play-by-play account of the series of court battles in the context of this greater environment where other parties exercised their duties and their influence. Definitions and illustrations of butterfly ballots and hanging, dimpled, and pregnant chads are provided, and the disputes surrounding the use of such ballots and the counting of chads are well explained. Dover handles this complex interplay of thrusts, parries,

continued on page 66

Book Reviews

from page 64

and external interventions with conciseness and clarity.

Chapter three also casts light on a poignant irony underlying the vote counting dispute. Journalists from *The Miami Herald* counted the 64,248 ballots that would have been subject to recounting had the Gore legal challenge been successful. They counted the ballots using the various criteria endorsed by the competing campaigns, and their analysis found that the most lenient criteria, which Gore's team was advocating, would have resulted in victory for Bush. Moreover, a recount by the most restrictive rules, which Bush wanted applied to any recount, would have added up to a Gore victory.

The court cases are subjected to somewhat greater analysis in chapter four. Dover focuses on what he views as the themes in the legal struggles: equal protection, due process, and abuse of discretion. He shows how these concepts were used by both sides in the suits and counter suits concerning Palm Beach County's decision to use the confusing butterfly ballot design; allowing Republican Party members to fill in missing information on absentee ballots in Seminole and Martins counties; allowing three extra days for overseas absentee ballots to arrive and be counted; and in the battle over recounts and the counting standards to be applied therein. The contestants used the different levels of court jurisdiction and the varying interpretation of these legal concepts to try and compel election officials to recount votes by the standards each felt to be most beneficial to their causes. The Bush side got the ultimate victory in the highest court. Dover writes that the Supreme Court reduced equal protection rights by shrinking the pool of eligible voters when it decided in favor of the strictest of recount criteria.

In the fifth chapter the author discusses federalism as a system of government and how it affects electioneering in the United States. **Dover** feels federalism as practiced in this country creates an electoral process that is problematic in a number of ways. Elections are the responsibility of state and county governments and are managed by elected government officials, the majority of which came to power through partisan contests. This arrangement puts officials with party loyalties in charge of conducting what of necessity need to be unbiased balloting processes. Moreover, and more significant from the author's point-of-view, is the poor funding of elections. Whereas the federal and state governments draw revenue from income and sales taxes over wide geographies and large populations, counties collect taxes from smaller bases and on less valuable resources. From these resources (in addition to some state and federal funding) county governments must fund the elections for all levels of government and finance all other official business. Disparities in revenue generation create disparities in the quality of elections from county to county, and **Dover** sees this inequality as a basic and widespread breach of the equal protection clause of the federal Constitution. Specific to the 2000 presidential contest, he sites, among other

things, understaffed election offices for incomplete voter lists and cheaper, less accurate punch-card ballots in less affluent counties for relatively high numbers of unreadable ballots. Although most serious observers of elections agree that reforms that boost and equalize the quality of elections across the country are desirable, Dover states that the very fact that elections in the country occur no more frequently than every two years make the problems seem less important to county officials who must cope with other challenges that demand their attention much more of the time.

The final chapter concerns the lasting impact of the controversial presidential election of 2000. The author thinks that the dispute in Florida will increase pressure on governments at all levels to upgrade voting technology to better ensure tally accuracy. He also feels that the public perception of the Supreme Court as a politically neutral institution has suffered as a result of its involvement in Florida's troubled electoral process. For all its peculiar aspects, the election also demonstrated characteristics that **Dover** has observed in other national elections. He points to the high place of primaries in the candidate selection process, the ever-growing use of mass media for distributing campaign information, and the discrepancy between the popular and the electoral vote counts. Included is a discussion of the various divisions that split the national electorate and offered in support of the author's view that the United States is a divided nation with two highly competitive minority parties.

Each chapter ends with a list of references, and there is an annotated bibliography of resources about the 2000 presidential election. Other useful back matter includes primary source materials such as the court decisions from the various cases, relevant election law, and election results from all 50 states and all the counties of Florida; more in-depth biographies of the 20 major actors in the election and post-election events; and a focused and effective index. The several photographs depict a butterfly ballot and the physical process of recounting questionably marked ballots as well as some of the people involved in the controversy.

Evidence of **Dover's** liberal persuasion appears here and there in the text, but he clearly situates his opinions in commentary after the facts have been laid down. He doesn't experience parallax due to his leftist vantage point; instead of distorting facts, **Dover's** comments express an honest frustration with certain facts, particularly choices made by the Gore team at different points in the campaign. Even if created to some degree from frustration, *The Disputed Presidential Election of 2000* nonetheless offers a clear, concise source of facts, informed analysis, statistics, primary source material, historical background, and insightful discussion to satisfy the needs of students and researchers in political science and the curiosities of anyone who'd like a better understanding of what happened during those 37 odd days of American history. 🐼

Books That Matter

Column Editor: **Ellen Finnie Duranceau**
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Shortly after my new irregular column of mini-reviews first appeared (in the February 2003 issue), I tore through **Matthew Scully's** book *Dominion: The Power of Man, the Suffering of Animals, and the Call to Mercy*. (New York: St. Martin's, 2002. 0312261470. 464 pages. \$27.95.) In the months that followed, I was like the victim of one of **J.K. Rowling's** horrific dementors, whose cold kiss sucks out your soul, leaving you howling in despair for eternity. I've been unable to write a second column, feeling both that I must write about this book, and at the same time that I can't write about this book. I feel I must—because the book does matter, so very very much; yet I feel I can't, because I am not sure how to write successfully about a book that is painful, overwhelming, scary, deeply disturbing, and depressing.

Taking my "books that matter" theme as my guide, I will try to explain why I wish every person in the United States would read *Dominion*. It is a book on animal rights by a Republican presidential speech writer and confirmed political conservative, **Matthew Scully**. He offers a heavily researched, angry, often bitter and darkly ironic account of

how nonhuman animals are being treated in the United States and around the world today. He makes the case that animals do have feelings, experience pain, and suffer—and that mankind has a sacred responsibility to care for other creatures. He carefully dissects every argument against nonhuman animals' lack of emotions, consciousness, or ability to communicate. He conscientiously raises and rejects argument after argument that tries to hold human beings apart and above all other animals; he successfully takes the philosophers and the professors on.

He places his argument in a Christian context, arguing that while man was given "dominion" over the animals, man is abusing this power. While this may bring animal rights issues into a frame of reference important for some people, I can assure you it is not necessary to need or be convinced by his religious argument in order to believe that the appalling mistreatment of animals he describes must be stopped. He admits that his topic is not easy, that animal rights advocates are dismissed as part of the fringe, or as ridiculous

continued on page 67