revolution from without and within. Gómez Sicre certainly drove a counter-revolutionary course, not least with respect to Cuba (see, for instance, 14–15, 134). However, as Fox shows, his crusade for modern art was more than a simple reflection of a policy agenda as defined by the United States. And rather than simply imposing a conflict from without, we may add here, the Cold War seems to have exacerbated and sometimes distorted existing tensions about what Latin American art (and, for that matter, society in general) should be.

To unravel this picture is a rather intricate task. In Making Art Panamerican, this task is further complicated by the author’s penchant for addressing subjects that are too big or too tangential for the investigation at hand. Issues such as “continental consciousness” or “cultural citizenship” are important, but would have required sustained attention in order to avoid the drifting apart of larger chunks of the text, including chapter 4, which discusses HemisFair ’68, an event too remotely connected to the previous chapters to merit inclusion in this book. Conventional historians, like this reviewer, would prefer a more focussed and more coherent organization of this genuinely important material.

Universidad Nacional de Colombia
GISELA CRAMER

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Kenneth Osgood and Derrick E. White (eds.), Winning while Losing: Civil Rights, the Conservative Movement and the Presidency from Nixon to Obama (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2014, $79.95). Pp. 304. ISBN 978 0 8130 4908 3.

Histories of the African American freedom struggle have typically presented the civil rights politics of the last half-century as a zero-sum game, in which the setbacks suffered by civil rights advocates have been matched, almost stride for stride, by the growing ascendancy of political conservatism.¹ Kenneth Osgood and Derrick White’s new edited collection on the intersection between civil rights and an increasingly conservative executive offers a much-needed corrective to this narrative, by outlining the “paradox” of “winning while losing” in a post-civil rights era. Civil rights activists could still win in a period of conservative governance and electoral predominance, the book argues, only in narrower, more limited terms. Equally, conservatives’ attempts to limit or roll back those victories were often resisted, or even thwarted, in a landscape transformed by the civil rights revolution of the 1960s. Such a paradox explains why we can celebrate the achievement of formal and political equality, the longevity of racially redistributive policies such as affirmative action, and the presence of an African American in the White House for two consecutive terms, yet at the same time acknowledge that Martin Luther King’s dream of socioeconomic equality and an assault on the structural problems of race and racial discrimination remain as elusive and incomplete as ever.

¹ For examples see Harvard Sitkoff, The Struggle for Black Equality (New York: Hill & Wang, 2008), 210–36; Robert J. Norrell, The House I Live in (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 269–302; Stephen Steinberg, Turning Back: The Retreat from Racial Justice in American Thought and Policy (Boston: Beacon Press, 1995).
The focus of *Winning while Losing* is on presidential politics, and the book’s ten essays, covering nearly every presidency from Nixon to Obama (George H. W. Bush is the only absentee), expertly link executive decision-making and electoral strategizing with the politics of civil rights. They chart the redirection of civil rights advocacy away from Congress, the Supreme Court or public debate towards what Osgood and White call “the shadows” – the courts, bureaucracy and federal agencies – a trend which enabled conservatives to pack and politicize such institutions and thus limit or even reverse old legal precedents and definitions. They illustrate the emergence of a new conservative discourse on race, implicitly rather than explicitly racialized, which utilized decreasing public support for government intervention and regulation – the traditional engines of civil rights reform – to limit and restrict civil rights initiatives. And they highlight the important support role played by purportedly racial liberals – from Jimmy Carter and Bill Clinton to a young Delaware Senator named Joseph Biden – in helping to shape, consolidate and legitimize this discourse. Yet *Winning while Losing* also recognizes the limits of the conservative ascendancy, reflecting a wider recent trend in the historiography of American conservatism that now argues for the “failed revolution” of the political right.\(^1\) As the essays demonstrate, conservatives initiated affirmative-action policies and then failed in their attempts to reverse them, typically bowed to political pragmatism before political ideology, and at times even aided the expansion of “big government,” as in the case of George W. Bush’s No Child Left Behind Act. Liberalism’s surprising resilience, and a transformed and often uncertain post-civil rights polity, ensured that conservatives were forced to compromise and innovate as often as they were able to “turn back the clock” on civil rights.

Despite its strengths, *Winning while Losing* is not without its omissions. First, the majority of the book’s coverage is given over to the cause of African American civil rights, yet as John Skrentny’s work on the “minority rights revolution” makes clear, from the 1970s onwards African Americans were working in an increasingly competitive civil rights marketplace, facing challenges from Latinos, Asian Americans, women, homosexuals, the disabled and even ethnic whites.\(^2\) Despite some discussion of the growing appeal of the Latino vote for conservative Presidents and candidates, or the contrasting fortunes of women’s rights, *Winning while Losing* might do more to discuss how the arrival of these competitors challenged, defined and limited the potential civil rights gains of African Americans in an increasingly crowded field. Second, the international dimensions of civil rights, which grew in importance with the amplification of an African American foreign-policy voice in the 1970s and 1980s, receive remarkably little coverage in the book. These are areas in which civil rights advocates won notable gains from conservative executives, from the 1986 Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act to Bush’s anti-HIV/AIDS campaigns in Africa, yet they are rarely addressed in these pages.

Nonetheless, *Winning while Losing* offers valuable and much-needed insights into both the trajectory of civil rights politics after the racial revolution of the 1960s and the intersection of that politics with the wider conservative movement, against a

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\(^1\) Julian Zelizer, “Rethinking the History of American Conservatism,” *Reviews in American History*, 18, 2 (June 2010), 367–89; Kim Phillips-Fein, “Conservatism: A State of the Field,” *Journal of American History*, 98, 3 (2011), 723–43.

\(^2\) John Skrentny, *The Minority Rights Revolution* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2002).
changing political, economic and intellectual backdrop. Its essays tell stories of entrenched racial problems and difficult solutions, ambiguous victories and unlikely obstacles — stories that are awkward and even unpopular, certainly, but in our increasingly individualistic and unequal society, more important than ever to share.

University of Nottingham

JOE MERTON

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Maha Marouan, Witches, Goddesses, and Angry Spirits: The Politics of Spiritual Liberation in African Diaspora Women’s Fiction (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2013, $53.95). Pp. 180. ISBN 978 0 8142 1219 6.

With a relatively limited corpus of just three novels, this study explores the literary representation of female spirituality in the African diaspora. Marouan’s selection of Edwidge Danticat’s Breath, Eyes, Memory (1994), Toni Morrison’s Paradise (1998), and Maryse Condé’s I, Tituba, Black Witch of Salem (1992) generates an insightful analysis of the complexity of African diasporic religious practices as they intersect with gender and historiography while offering new perspectives on each of the novels in her corpus. While these three writers are often mentioned in the same breath, this kind of extensive study of their work in a comparative framework is harder to find. Marouan’s work is thus an original contribution to African diaspora studies that bridges the disciplines of religion and literary criticism in thoughtful ways to tease out the common threads in her corpus.

The book’s introduction lays out the principal theoretical and thematic concerns of the project: the outlines of an African diaspora consciousness traced through the three novels, the empowering potential of transnational, creolized readings of witchcraft and religious practice, and the lens of historical revisionism through which the corpus will be examined in putting forth these new models of black female spirituality. Duly attentive to the span of historical, geographical, linguistic, and cultural references represented by the works and biographies of these three formidable writers, Marouan also takes care to tightly anchor her corpus to the themes she identifies as their unique contribution to the literary representation of African diasporic spirituality. Of particular note is her argument that the novels in her corpus propose a more nuanced — and often more critical — view of Africanism than their peers. Pointing to the affirmation of Africanist cultural traditions in representative texts by such authors as Paule Marshall and Gloria Naylor, she claims that the novels in her study “are unusual in the sense that they subject these traditions to a critical lens, expressing a sophisticated concern with the socially constructed nature of historical consciousness and of religious traditions themselves” (28). This antiessentialist impetus seems in many ways fundamental to Marouan’s assessment of the unique vision shared by Danticat, Morrison, and Condé, and her insights on this subject are complemented by a concerted attention to the fluctuations between wholeness and fragmentation, suppression and liberation, celebration and skepticism, that characterize these novels.

Turning to each novel individually in her three remaining chapters, Marouan begins with Danticat’s portrayal of Haitian and Haitian American women, focussing on the ways in which the imagery and symbolism of Breath, Eyes, Memory generate a dense tapestry of references to Christianity and Haitian Vodou. The Vodou loa Erzulie, for example, appears here in her multiple manifestations, transformed and revised yet again by Danticat, in a narrative that celebrates a culturally symbiotic