unconvinced historian. Any critiques with this volume, however, are minor—the underuse of GIS in academic history is a broad problem, so there are no easy solutions in convincing a discipline to change methodological direction.

Alexander Von Lünen and Charles Travis have gathered a strong set of arguments, and this book adds important perspectives to scholarship of the geospatial humanities. Understanding and expanding on GIS in history is no simple task, yet the combined authors of this work present compelling geospatial invitations to academic historians. The overall approach and content of this work makes a successful argument for the active utilization of GIS in history. The editors noted that "GIS should be the killer app for digital history" (p. vi). Given the chapters that follow, historians who approach this work will surely agree.

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Sight Unseen: How Frémont's First Expedition Changed the American Landscape. ANDREW MENARD. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2012. Pp. xxix+249, illustrations, maps, index. $29.95 hardcover. ISBN 978-0-8032-3807-7.

Andrew Menard's *Sight Unseen: How Frémont's First Expedition Changed the American Landscape* offers a new approach to understanding critical environmental perceptions of the west in nineteenth century America. By placing John C. Frémont at the center of text, Menard claims it was Frémont's 1842 expedition of the west that changed perceptions Americans held towards a broader western landscape. Menard argues that Frémont read manifest destiny into Great Plans and Rocky Mountain landscapes. As a result, the West evolved from a feared landscape to an environment filled with the potential of American expansion.

The text is divided into two sections. The first section places the West, more specifically the Great Plains and Oregon, within a larger American conversation of western spaces. Menard argues that politicians constantly debated the value of an American settlement too far removed from the political and economic centers of the east. For example, in the early nineteenth century it was often debated whether Oregon was an entity of the United States or its own autonomous political body. There was a concern among American politicians that its distance would promote lawlessness and hinder proper practice of patriotic democracy. Menard argues that naturalists and their reports reiterated the political arguments of the day. The American prairie was seen as the American Desert, a salty flatland that would never accommodate the agricultural demands dreamed of in Jeffersonian America. However, as Menard points out, this mentality would soon shift with the assistance of Frémont's *Report*. The *Report* broke the standard western script for early nineteenth century naturalists. Frémont certainly saw the west as a violent wilderness; it was not, however, an environment to be feared.

The second portion of the text focuses on Frémont's role in changing the definition of western space. As Menard points out, for Frémont western space was not defined by eastern standards, but rather appreciated for its own natural qualities. In this thinking, Frémont's observation of Courthouse Rock embodies a piece of America rather than a distant and foreign landscape. Courthouse Rock came to represent a piece of American geography, as indicated by its name. Through name association, Menard links Frémont's observations of the western landscape to the early beginnings of manifest destiny. The author places Frémont's *Report* at the birth of manifest destiny and the text that helped change the discourse of the western United States from barren wilderness to celebrated extension of American landscape.

The author uses Frémont's experience with a bee to create a convincing portrayal of the explorer's view of manifest destiny. While resting during a hike in the Rocky Moutnains, Frémont was accompanied by a traveling bee. Presumably tired from the increase in elevation, the insect rested upon his knee. After a few moments of inspection, Frémont crushed the bee with a nearby journal. Menard argues that the choice to include this narrative into the report speaks to Frémont's view of conquering the western landscape. Instead of fearing the bee, Frémont kills it in a symbolic act that represents the American conquest of the western landscape. Menard argues that this event is placed in the *Report* specifically to embody a transition from the old sentiment of a barren West to a new and uniquely American West.

Frémont's *Report* is one among other reports coming from an expanding American West. Menard believes that more than other naturalists, Frémont expressed optimism toward western expansion, which transformed and conquering formerly wild spaces. This argument can be hard to place among nineteenth-century naturalists. Eric Olmanson uses the reports of Henry R. Schoolcraft to shape the history of imaginative landscapes of the northern Great Lakes (*The Future City on the Inland Sea: A History of Imaginative Geographies of Lake Superior*, Ohio University Press, 2007). Both Frémont and Schoolcraft explored distant landscapes once perceived as wild and barren but came back reporting redemptive qualities of wild spaces. Both naturalists were equipped with the same cultural baggage during their expeditions. Schoolcraft and Frémont brought back narratives that embraced wild spaces and embodied a movement to understand foreign places on their own terms rather than as a digression from eastern landscapes. Although similarities may exist between Schoolcraft and Frémont, Menard effectively distinguishes Frémont's role in changing American discourse on the West. Frémont's findings and observations shifted the western landscape from an alien world to American landmark.

Menard's work offers a fresh approach to understanding Frémont within American discourse on the West. The author's references to political publications that appeared during Frémont's expedition not only place the *Report* in a historical timeframe but also emphasize the distinct shift this expedition created in developing the theme of manifest destiny. As politicians debated the management of the West, Frémont saw a cohesive continent driven by one American system. Frémont did not perceive the continental divide as an obstacle to an American progress. Rather, the range acted as a unifying force, the spine of America that held the western and eastern United States together. Through the imaginative eyes of Frémont, Menard makes significant strides in linking the words of the explorer and naturalist to the cultural concept that would shape the future land use and settlement of the American West.

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The Caribbean: A History of the Region and Its People. STEPHANE PALMIÉ and FRANCISCO A. SCARANO, editors. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2011. Pp. v+660, maps, index. $35.00 paper. ISBN 0-226-64508-8.

As the fields of Atlantic and Transatlantic history have grown over the past two decades, so has the importance of the Caribbean as an area of study. Nowhere is this more clearly reflected than in the proliferation of generalist texts on the region which have emerged to provide a foundation for the more specialized works that typically characterize Caribbean studies. One of the more welcome recent entries into this growing body of work is the collection *The Caribbean: A History of the Region and Its Peoples*. Edited by anthropologist Stephan Palmié, a specialist in Afro-