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Langley's observations about Simón Bolívar's, and other South Americans', fears of the colored masses are not applicable to Mexico, which began its national life with mass popular politics.

The section entitled "Bolívar's America" highlights the problem of homogenizing the Spanish-American revolutions. Bolívar's actions did not affect either Mexico or Central America, and they had very limited impact in the Río de la Plata and Chile. His "America," therefore, constituted perhaps twenty percent of the land area and thirty percent of the population of Spanish America. Moreover, Bolívar was a destroyer, not a builder, and an autocrat, not a democrat. His was not the lasting heritage of the Spanish-American revolutions, despite the claims of a vast hagiographical literature. More significant were the contributions of civilian statesmen, such as José Guridi y Alcocer and Miguel Ramos Arizpe of Mexico, who wrote democratic constitutions and established representative government.

Langley's failure to understand the evolution and process of Spanish-American independence is evident in the section entitled "The Revolutionary Legacy." There he does not discuss in any detail the nature of government and society in Spanish America after independence. He seems to believe that the Spanish world lacked representative and democratic traditions. Throughout the book, he asserts that Spanish Americans, particularly Mexicans, were influenced by the United States. Contemporary scholarship, however, holds the opposite view.

Despite his critical attitude toward the American Revolution, Langley has an American—that is, U.S.—perspective on the period. That view is evident in his argument that the United States avoided the "militarism" and the "dictatorship" of the Spanish-American nations, an assessment that emphasizes the former's success and the latter's failure in instituting civilian government. The problem with such an argument is that it is not only misleading but also false, depending on how one defines militarism. The United States certainly established civilian government, but it became one of the most aggressive, expansive, and warlike nations in the world. The northern republic's success resulted from a number of factors. It obtained independence through an international treaty in time to benefit from the great economic opportunities generated by the French Revolution and the wars it engendered. Moreover, the United States had no strong neighbors to challenge its territorial and economic expansion. It did not, therefore, require a large army and navy. In contrast, the nations of Spanish America did not obtain recognition until the 1830s, and as a result they were forced to spend large sums to defend themselves from Spain and other foreign enemies, including the United States. Facing economic as well as political and social crises, many Spanish-American nations turned to strongmen to restore internal order and political stability. But they did not possess strong military forces and thus did not estab-

lish militarist systems. One can only speculate about how those countries might have evolved had conditions been as favorable as those enjoyed by the United States.

The book would have benefitted from a more extensive discussion of Haiti at mid-century. Like Spanish America, Haiti did not enjoy order or prosperity after independence. The European nations, which failed to subdue the Haitians, isolated them by expanding profitable tropical agriculture to other Caribbean islands, thereby reducing Haiti to poverty. That context is important in explaining why the Haitian people failed to achieve economic prosperity and political stability.

Despite these criticisms, Langley's effort to compare those revolutions is to be commended because it highlights both the opportunities and the difficulties of comparative history. His book will generate considerable discussion and, I hope, will inspire more research and analysis of the American, Haitian, and Spanish-American revolutions.

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VERNON A. ROSARIO, editor. *Science and Homosexualities*. New York: Routledge. 1997. Pp. 308. Cloth \$65.00, paper \$18.95.

The study of homosexuality contains potential minefields for the scholars researching the topic, especially historians. This book edited by Vernon A. Rosario, grew out of a series of papers presented at an annual meeting of the History of Science Society. It concentrates on one such hazardous area: the debate between essentialists and constructionists. Essentialist theories propose that homosexuality is a biologically determined, objectively detectable, erotic orientation that can be identified in all cultures and throughout history, albeit under diverse behavioral appearances and at different prevalence rates. Constructionist theories propose instead that homosexuality is a concept used relatively recently in Euro-American cultures to describe a specific type of person and that person's erotic interest in others of the same sex. Notice that the term used is homosexuality, not same-sex activity. This is important, because same-sex activities have been almost universal among some segments of any society, but homosexuality is a late nineteenth-century term and implies, according to the constructionists, a kind of gay culture and a self-definition of being gay (although just when this occurred is still being argued by historians). Note, too, that much of the discussion above is about male sexual behavior, not female, and that is because the debate has concentrated on males.

The discussion of lesbianism has usually been tied into discussions that tended to view women as weaker and less intelligent than men but important as mothers and wives. Two articles in this collection bring attention to this kind of put-down by physician observers. Margaret Gibson looks at clitoral corruption and the

construction of female homosexuality in the period 1870–1900, while Erin G. Carlston studies the American medical community and female homosexuality from 1926 to 1940.

Several of the articles in the book appeared earlier in different form, such as Hubert Kennedy's study of Karl Heinrich Ulrichs. Kennedy has written a full-scale biography of Ulrichs, who is regarded as the founder of modern studies of homosexuality, or at least as close to that as one person can be. Also receiving attention from authors who have previously written on them are Richard van Krafft-Ebing (by Harry Oosterhuis) and Magnus Hirschfeld (by James D. Steakley). The study on Krafft-Ebing is particularly valuable because of the archival material about the collection of cases and Krafft-Ebing's response to them. Similarly, Steakley brings new data to bear on Hirschfeld and emphasizes how the so-called English translations of his works were not very good; at least one of them was of a book attributed to Hirschfeld by his translators, who wrote it themselves and included only a mishmash of what Hirschfeld had written. Both articles will give new importance to these early pioneers. Ulrichs, Krafft-Ebing, and Hirschfeld were all what might be called essentialists, however, while most of the current generation of historical researchers tend toward constructionism, a view that began to gain influence in the 1970s.

History certainly offers strong support for aspects of the constructionist viewpoint, as Alice Dreger's study of the misconceptions about hermaphrodites illustrates. The conclusions of the "scientists" were picked up by the intellectual community in general and accepted as proven, which of course they were not. Rosario looks at how deeply the French novelists of the turn of the century were influenced by the accepted interpretation of homosexuality. His essay is especially valuable, because he also recounts some of the findings of the French researchers in the field, a group mostly ignored in the standard histories of homosexuality.

Most of the remaining articles concentrate on the American scene, including an article by Julian Carter, who ties in prejudicial earlier studies of homosexuality with similarly prejudicial studies about African Americans and other minorities. Extending the argument for essentialism in the volume is Richard C. Pillard, who examines the work of other biologically oriented researchers as well as reporting on his own.

One reason that medical studies of homosexuality gained such a strong following, even in the gay and lesbian community, is that they seemed socially progressive. That is, by attempting to define homosexuality either as inborn or as an illness that could be cured, they offered either a medical solution, which was much preferable to incarceration or other punishments, or, in the more daring cases, held homosexuality to be simply a variant of behavior. As Stephanie H. Kenen points out, the ultimate authority in this essentialist view was the non-physician Alfred Kinsey, who attempted to render the whole question moot. For

Kinsey all sexual behavior was "natural," including homosexual contact. But many medical and biologically oriented professionals, not content with such an answer, wanted to find some kind of difference in the brain, or in hormones, or even in the "gay" gene, and the search which Kenen examined in the 1930s and 1940s continues.

Most critical of this search into causal factors are two biologist contributors: Garland E. Allen and Anne Fausto-Sterling. Fausto-Sterling is more of a constructionist than Allen, although both are far too good biologists to deny any biological influence.

Whether one subscribes to one or the other of these theories or looks for a middle ground, as I do, the reader will come away with a better understanding of the current state of studies into same-sex love and the dangers of making simplistic definitions. Dreger, Carter, Kenen, and Jennifer Terry all emphasize in different ways the seductive power of "scientists" drawing conclusions when the data have been incomplete. Although we can hypothesize about the factors involved in making one homosexual or heterosexual or bisexual, there is as yet no answer, neither from science nor from history.

Each article has its own separate notes and bibliography, and these for the most part represent a good sampling (although many researchers whom I would have expected to find are somehow missing). Rosario and his contributors are to be commended for making a diverse collection so provocative and interesting. Anyone anticipating research on the topic would be well advised to read this book before venturing out into the minefield.

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WILLIAM R. EVERDELL. *The First Moderns: Profiles in the Origins of Twentieth-Century Thought*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 1997. Pp. xi, 501. \$29.95.

William R. Everdell's book advances three broad propositions: that Modernism is a viable, though beleaguered, cultural tradition whose origins can be traced back to the years between 1872 and 1913; that it was the invention of a group of intellectual pioneers or "geniuses" spanning national and disciplinary boundaries; and, finally, that their story can, and should, be told in the form of a "narrative history of ideas" based on a chronological linking of their biographical profiles and ground-breaking works.

Everdell's narrative opens with the achievements of a trio of mathematicians, Georg Cantor, Julius Wilhelm Richard Dedekind, and Gottlob Frege, who, in the decade between 1872 and 1883, raised the problem of numerical continuity and opened the way to a foundationless, discontinuous, nonobjective universe that was to be the hallmark of twentieth-century Modernism. It continues at an ever-dizzying pace with the experimental work of Ludwig Boltzman, Georges