Gypsies—people who had never deviated from the ways of the Romany" (46). While acknowledging their "selective intermarriage with other traveling people" (53), Harte hews to romantic notions of what he calls true Gypsies. The problematics of Romany identity—of labeling, representation, blending, and assimilation within a shifting legal and economic landscape that has long occupied scholars—are blithely ignored.

Harte's chapters are arranged chronologically, following five hundred years of English Gypsy history, but his grasp of detail before the Victorian era is uncertain. He notes that "the records of Gypsy life in sixteenth-century England form a depressing sequence of arrests, apprehensions and deportations" (25), but provides scant evidence of such dealings from the archives. Rather, he is concerned to assert that "wherever the Gypsies came, they brought a touch of the exotic into otherwise humdrum lives" (24). He describes the 1563 statute criminalizing "Egyptians" as "ridiculous" and, misunderstanding the early modern calendar, misdates it to 1562 (29, 62). Skipping most of the seventeenth century, in the next chapter (on Georgian Britain) he retells the stories of Mary Squires, the Gypsy falsely accused of kidnapping, and the celebrity Gypsies of Norwood, south of London, who created "a successful brand" (49). One would not know from Harte's account that the Quaker John Hoyland (d. 1831), described here as "a bookish old gentleman" who would listen when Gypsies "came and rokkered to him" (71–72), wrote the most sophisticated account of Gypsy occupations and practices of the early nineteenth century, *A Historical Survey of the Customs, Habits, and Present State of the Gypsies* (1816).

Harte is more concerned with Gypsy genealogy than with their interactions with settled society. He follows the most famous Gypsy families across generations, offering fascinating detail on their naming practices, travels, and escapades. The sections on Victorian England include lively depictions of fairs and festivals, prize fights and races, tents and wagons. The twentieth century is similarly served with accounts of Gypsy servicemen in the First World War, gatherings on Surrey commons and the "golden memories" (172) of Gypsy autobiographers. Harte briefly mentions "mogadi" (169), the sense of ritual uncleanness, but allows no reference to the pioneering anthropological work of Judith Okely, *The Traveller-Gypsies* (1983), which explores Gypsy customs of purity and contamination.

Recent times have seen many changes, including intensive harassment by authorities, racist campaigns in the popular press, and struggles over caravans and encampments, the arrival in England of Irish Travelers and European Romanies, and the emergence of educated media-savvy Gypsy celebrities. Harte offers anecdotes about these developments without much argument. His approach throughout is romantic and eclectic rather than analytic or systematic. *Travellers through Time* is pitched to general readers and Gypsies, with little to occupy a historian.

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Kevin Hickson, ed. *Neil Kinnock: Saving the Labour Party?* Routledge Studies in British Politics. Abingdon: Routledge, 2022. Pp. 288. $273.00 (cloth).
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Neil Kinnock's leadership of the Labour Party, and its wider political legacy, has been subject to a vast array of differing scholarly and popular interpretations. To some, he is the "Welsh windbag," (87) a gaffe-prone political lightweight who lacked the temperament or even intelligence to have been prime minister. For others he is "Ramsay MacKinnock," (David Howell,

"'Where's Ramsay MacKinnock': Labour Leadership and the Miners" in Huw Benyon (ed.), *Digging Deeper: Issues in the Miners' Strike* [London: Verso, 1985], 181–98) a traitor to Labour's socialist heritage (in the same mold as Labour's infamous first prime minister, James Ramsay MacDonald) who abandoned his principles for power and still lost in the process. Today, the more complimentary, and increasingly the most popular interpretation, casts Kinnock as a heroic figure. According to this narrative, Kinnock's nine-year leadership, and the profound organizational and ideological overhaul he orchestrated, seemingly saved the Labour Party from terminal decline. Despite losing two consecutive elections, his modernizing revamp of the party's image, abandonment of unrealistic policies, and all-out war against the party's left laid the foundations for Labour's rehabilitation and Tony Blair's eventual landslide victory in 1997.

In his introduction to *Neil Kinnock: Saving the Labour Party?* editor Kevin Hickson claims that the contributions "offer a fresh appraisal" (2) of the Kinnock leadership. The volume has three sections, the first focusing on the wider political, social, and cultural contexts of the Kinnock leadership; the next a deep dive into the numerous changes in party policy Kinnock oversaw, ranging from education and constitutional reform to economics, Northern Ireland, and nuclear weapons; and the third a series of personal reflections from an ideologically wide-ranging collection of political actors. Yet while the question mark at the end of the collection's title invites us to question Kinnock's heroic image, not all the diverse contributors to it take up the challenge.

At its weakest, the contributions tend to uncritically repeat many of the romanticized narratives that cast Kinnock as Labour's unambiguous savior. Anthony Seldon's pub chat with Kinnock himself is a particularly frustrating read for failing to question any of his judgments as leader. For instance, while Kinnock claims to have done his "damnedest" (17) to strengthen the representation of women within the party, his consistent opposition to explicit campaigns for the self-organization and greater representation of women and other marginalized groups (such as black sections) suggests otherwise. Far from a fresh appraisal, many of the other arguments and interpretations Kinnock offers have also been published before in various other studies and biographies.

While Harry Taylor's chapter on Kinnock's battle against the Militant tendency (perhaps his most praised and romanticized moment as leader) provides a helpful chronology and richly captures the perceived threat of "the scourge of Trotskyism" (79) to the party leadership, there is little critical judgment on just how real such a threat really was. There is no mention of Militant's tiny numerical size, for instance, or that Liverpool council's anti-ratecapping stance was emulated by numerous other local authorities, and that its actual policy program was far less radical or experimental than, for example, Ken Livingstone's Greater London Council. The danger here is a mere repetition of well-known but potentially misleading historical myths about the party in the 1980s.

In contrast, by far the most insightful chapters in this volume are those that are refreshingly unsentimental in assessing Kinnock's leadership. In his chapter on Kinnock's awkward engagement with popular culture, Alwyn Turner is not only willing to be critical but also offers up Livingstone as an alternative left-wing politician far more culturally savvy (even considered "cool" [57]) than the Labour leader. While Martin Westlake repeats the misleading ideological binary of modernizers versus traditionalists within the parliamentary party, his helpful history of Kinnock's shadow cabinet demonstrates how the leader's control over the frontbench was not absolute, and indeed by 1992 much of its cohesiveness had "corroded" (72). Mark Garnett and David Denver's study of Kinnock's two general election campaigns challenge prominent partisan myths, demonstrating that the 1984–85 miners' strike was not necessarily the vote-losing distraction the leadership thought it was (85), that 1987 and 1992 *were* winnable contests, and that Kinnock's own personal unpopularity played a significant role in both defeats (88). While the 1987 "Kinnock: The Movie" broadcast and the polling-informed communications expertise of Philip Gould and Peter Mandelson have gained mythologized status

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among Labour's so-called modernizers, Garnett and Denver demonstrate both how the iconic broadcast had little impact, and how the party's spin-doctors made a fatal mistake in overemphasizing a leader who was both uniquely unpopular, and increasingly seen as ideologically inconsistent (97). Richard Johnson takes a similarly critical stance in his chapter on Labour's attitude to Europe. Johnson characterizes the shift from critical hostility to enthusiastic support for the European Union as "a product of fatalism" motivated by electoralist pragmatism, and more importantly by "a loss of confidence in British political institutions to deliver socialism" (184).

In the final section of the book, there are some interesting personal insights from Kinnock's allies and adversaries. Charles Clarke highlights the debilitatingly negative media environment Kinnock's leadership team were forced to endure (206). Jon Lansman's reflections on Kinnock's early (and mostly half-hearted [220]) associations with the activist left further complicates popular narratives about his ideological transformation. Hilary Wainwright challenges the characterizations of the left at the time as old-fashioned and dogmatic, and argues that Kinnock's crusade against Militant was also part of a proxy war again the wider, typically more creative, popular, and pluralistic left (245).

With such diverse authorship, and the sheer multiplicity of interpretations of Kinnock's leadership, a central theme is sometimes difficult to identify. Simon Lee's chapter, for example, on the economically nationalist elements of Kinnock's early concept of the "developmental state" (42), is complicated by Jim Tomlinson's chapter on the later adopted concept of the "enabling state" and "supply side socialism," which was specifically defined by a growing "scepticism about the state's role in the economy" (107). Implicit throughout the volume, however, is the clear view that Kinnock's profound changes in the party's policies and organization laid the foundations for New Labour. While Blair and others may have been sometimes "embarrassed by [Kinnock's] presence" (1), he was undoubtedly, as convincingly argued by Patrick Diamond, "the originator of the New Labour project" (238). This is borne out in the very strong policy chapters that make up half of the book. Tomlinson's chapter on Labour's economic policy excellently demonstrates how the critical shift from the interventionist state paved the way for New Labour's accommodation with the free market. Andrew Taylor's chapter on Kinnock's acquiescence to post-1979 trade union legislation similarly shows how such changes prefigured New Labour's emphasis on individual workers' rights instead of greater collective union power (114) and also directly accelerated Blair's rise to political prominence (121). Joseph Tiplady similarly argues that Kinnock's education policies, particularly with its emphasis on standards, was "proto New Labour" (149). Even Kinnock's mostly disastrous engagements with pop music are seen as foreshadowing Blair's own courting of popular culture in the 2000s (60). Apart from on Northern Ireland (where Kinnock remained committed to Irish unification [165]), almost all of Kinnock's policy commitments were expanded, accelerated, or radicalized under Blair.

Yet if Kinnock was the originator of much of New Labour's electoral virtues, he might also have been the originator of some of its vices. Kinnock's presidential style, the huge centralization of decision and policy-making powers within the leader's office (14), and in particular the firm control of the party's natural executive, and the selection of by-election candidates (13), prefigured the worst excesses of control freakery seen under New Labour. The early embrace of the free market made possible New Labour's later "Faustian Pact" with the City of London (Eric Shaw, "New Labour's Faustian Pact?," *British Politics* 7, no. 3 [2012]: 224–49), while the pivot toward Europe set the party on a course to enthusiastically defending a frequently unresponsive institution, and left it out of touch with the widespread discontent in its own heartlands. A more critically penetrating study of Kinnock's leadership could have explored how his changes made Labour (eventually) a formidable electoral machine, albeit one with severe and eventually very damaging political and organizational flaws.

Hickson's collection begins to offer some insightful, critical assessments of a complex political figure who has left a long-lasting impact on the Labour Party, and British politics more

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generally. There is still, however, more work to be done. A more meaningful scholarly understanding of Kinnock's tenure and its lessons for center-left policy and electoral strategy is possible only with an unsentimental jettisoning of the many partisan myths that have developed in the intervening thirty years.

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CHRISTOPHER HILLIARD. *A Matter of Obscenity: The Politics of Censorship in Modern England*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2021. Pp. 336. $35.00 (cloth).
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In *A Matter of Obscenity: The Politics of Censorship in Modern England*, Christopher Hilliard shows that debates about obscenity between the middle of the nineteenth century and about 1979 were also debates about citizenship. England's obscenity law had Victorian origins in the Obscene Publications Act of 1857 and then *R v. Hicklin* (1868), which articulated the principle that the law was there to prevent material that might "deprave and corrupt" (18) from falling into the wrong hands (subsequently the basis of most obscenity prosecutions). Hilliard argues that the judgment in *R v. Hicklin*, almost coinciding with the second Reform Act, meant that literacy was conflated with citizenship. The spread of literacy was akin to the spread of democracy—many wondered how both might be used and whether the working man was up to the task. In that reading, obscenity laws were used to demarcate a certain kind of self-governing citizen.

Hilliard explores the history of England's obscenity laws by covering some rather familiar territory that has been quite thoroughly investigated by others—Colin Manchester on English obscenity laws and their Victorian origins; Anthony Cummins and others on the trial of Zola's translator, Henry Vizetelly; the problems of modernists like D. H. Lawrence and James Joyce (extensively dealt with by Alan Travis in 2000 and others before and since); the market in pulp magazines, novels, and the like (again quite well documented); the *Lady Chatterley* trial (surely the most written-about obscenity trial in history, dealt with in numerous accounts and histories of Penguin Books); the *Oz* trial of 1971; and, finally, through the usual suspects in the supposed anti-1960s backlash (Lord Longford, Mary Whitehouse) and the Williams Committee on Obscenity and Film Censorship of 1977–1979, whose remit was to consider public morality in all its forms. Hilliard's argument, also not that unfamiliar, is that all these events were dominated by the Victorian idea of policing the literary public in order to cultivate habits of good reading and therefore good citizenship. However, it is important to remember that this idea of a cultural hierarchy of purportedly good and bad reading was never only dictated by the obscenity laws and in fact was something that was defended and promoted by many authors themselves. It was the impulse behind the condemnation of Émile Zola by writers like Arnold Bennet, as Cummins has shown, and the motive of A. P. Herbert in his lobbying in the 1950s for a revised Obscene Publications Act. Hierarchies like this were not only given from the top down but were also reinforced by writers themselves.

There are some odd omissions for a historian who seems to want to present a political history of obscenity. Even though the 1857 Act was distinctly Victorian, England's obscenity laws long pre-dated the nineteenth century and found their origin in the common law offenses of obscene libel and of corrupting public morals. The main aim of those laws was to protect (royal) political authority and religion from satire—both of which were seen as threats to