Tuuri’s account moves from WIMS to a number of ways in which the council promotes “black self-help and community survival,” including through its support of the Freedom Farm and low-income housing. Moreover, Tuuri shows that Height, as the long-serving president of NCNW, takes a shining to a number of young women like Prathia Hall and Frances Beal who cut their activist teeth in radical groups like SNCC, and she hires them in various capacities at NCNW, which provides them the capacity to carry out other, more radical projects. For instance, Frances Beal did the work to publish the Third World Women’s Alliance’s *Triple Jeopardy* newspaper while working for the council in New York. Here, Tuuri claims that hiring women like Beal “allowed for more radical views to permeate the generally staid organization” (159), but this is not effectively evidenced. Tuuri has done black freedom movement historiography a service in detailing the contributions of the NCNW but stops short of a compelling analysis of this work in relation to the larger movement.

*Strategic Sisterhood* releases the NCNW from the sober, elite frame that it is often captured within. While its central arguments might have gone further, overall the book contributes to a more multilayered view of the movement in the South.

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In the introduction to *World War I and Southern Modernism*, David A. Davis argues that “World War I played a pivotal role in the emergence of southern modernism” (4). Davis notes that the South’s relation to modernism is problematic, because the movement is so often associated with the urban. His argument is that modernism in the South looked somewhat different, because there “modernism preceded modernity” (6). Useful to understanding Davis’s argument are his conceptions of proximal and distal modernism. Proximal sites of modernity are those urban centers that attracted artists and writers who were working in the avant-garde and experimental – in the United States, primarily New York City. On the other hand, Davis states, distal modernism occurred outside these primary sites, such as in the South, where modernism reflected more rural settings, and was marked by more conservatism, less artistic experimentation, and a resistance to modernity.

World War I meant that southerners came into contact with modernized cultures and proximal sites of modernism, and the changes it brought transformed the South’s economy and, in many cases, conventional attitudes related to southern society, gender, and race. Despite the differences between traditional and southern modernism, southern writers “clearly recognized changing conditions in the region” (6).

Chapter 1, “The Forward Glance: Modernity, Southerners, and Interregional Contact,” examines how the contact between southerners and non-southerners facilitated by World War I affected how each group viewed the other and how they represented the South in their writing. Prior to WWI, since travel outside one’s region was not terribly common, the perceptions northerners had of southerners were often limited to what they saw in print or onstage, such as the romanticization of the Old South in literature or stereotypes perpetuated by minstrel shows. Interregional contact precipitated by the war affected how non-southerners such as F. Scott
Fitzgerald and John Dos Passos represented the South, leading them to more nuanced portrayals. Davis uses William Faulkner’s novel *Soldier’s Pay* (1926) and Allen Tate’s work to explore how southerners recognized the disruptions caused by World War I and developed a uniquely southern modernist literary technique.

In chapter 2, “The Southern Soldier in the American Army: Sectionalism, Nationalism, and Modernity,” Davis outlines the difficult position that the southern soldier found himself in at the start of World War I: “those who identified as southerners more than as Americans found themselves scripted to fight for a virtually foreign army against a completely foreign enemy in an absolutely foreign country” (50). He explores the wartime experiences, letters, and writings of southern soldiers and writers William Alexander Percy, Paul Green, and Donald Davidson, which reflect their personal negotiations with nationalism, sectionalism, and modernity.

The third chapter, “The Army of the Disillusioned: Black Southerners, World War I, and Civil Rights,” examines the racial, regional, and national identities in conflict for black southerners, ones that very often rendered them “both not American and not southern” (81). While black labor was crucial to the war effort, questions about the proper role for black men in uniform created conflict at the level of policy and decision making, and, more tragically, in camps and communities, often leading to racial violence. However, for many African American soldiers, having fought for their country gave them a sense of empowerment, and they saw in France a model of racial equality that led them to come home ready for combat of a different kind: to challenge racial hegemony. In this chapter, Davis considers the work of African American novelists Victor Daly, Walter White, and Claude McKay and their depictions of black soldiers in Europe and the South.

Chapter 4, “Domestic Disruption: World War I, Modernity, and Southern Women’s Fiction,” assesses the role that the war had on female agency, ultimately leading women to take a more critical view of gender roles in their writing. However, factors such as race, age, class, and their relation to proximal sites of modernity affected women’s literary depictions and the extent to which they utilized modernist experimentation and challenged patriarchal structures. Black women, who were bound by both their race and gender, often worked within more traditional forms and upheld patriarchal systems, due in large part to pressures related to racial uplift. In this chapter, Davis considers the work of African American writers Alice Dunbar-Nelson, Mary Burrill, and Zora Neale Hurston, and white writers such as Ellen Glasgow, Elizabeth Madox Roberts, and Zelda Fitzgerald.

In the final chapter, “Mules and Machines: Modernity, World War I, and the Southern Economy,” Davis focusses on the ways in which the introduction of machines during WWI unsettled the region’s economy, even while rural agriculture still remained the primary mode of production. These disruptions were reflected in literature, such as Glasgow’s novel *Barren Ground* (1925) and Faulkner’s *Flags in the Dust* (1927), and southern intellectuals like W. J. Cash and the Agrarians also reflected upon and debated the nature of the southern way of life and the tensions between agrarianism and industrialism.

Overall, Davis’s book is a thorough, well-researched study that makes an important contribution to understandings of the unique features of southern modernism and the role that World War I played in precipitating the movement.

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