and State Department correspondence, generally without accounting for the specificity of their perspectives.

None of these methodological and stylistic considerations detracts from the book’s principal contributions. It provides an extremely useful primer on how UN conventions function and how CEDAW’s particular reporting process gives leverage to civil society organizations. Given how unfamiliar most people are with the UN and how it operates, this aspect alone makes Baldez’s book an extremely useful contribution. Second, Baldez traces the ways that geopolitical context and domestic conflicts within the United States have undermined support for a treaty that seems entirely in line with US policies on women’s issues. Finally, Defying Convention shows the indispensable role that NGOs have played in developing and implementing CEDAW. Indeed, as Baldez demonstrates, without NGO involvement, CEDAW would be a dead letter.

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*Journal of American Studies*, 51 (2017), 4. doi:10.1017/S0021875817001104


In recent years, the study of twentieth-century literature and fashion has gained significant momentum. Single-author studies such as Katherine Joslin’s *Edith Wharton and the Making of Fashion* (2009) and R. S. Koppen’s *Virginia Woolf: Fashion and Literary Modernity* (2009) have deepened our understanding of these authors’ interest in contemporary sartorial politics and in the garments culture of their time. More comprehensive studies such as Hope Howell Hodgkins’s *Style and the Single Girl: How Modern Women Re-dressed the Novel, 1922–1977* (2016) and Celia Marshik’s *At the Mercy of Their Clothes: Modernism, the Middlebrow, and British Garment Culture* (2016) also throw into sharp relief how significant the engagement with modern fashion has been for the creative explorations of a wide range of different authors writing in the early decades of the twentieth century.

Lauren S. Cardon’s *Fashion and Fiction: Self-Transformation in Twentieth-Century American Literature* stands out among existing scholarship on the topic because this study – as its title indicates – focuses exclusively on American authors and their explorations of fashion as the facilitator of the democratic ideals that underpinned American culture at the turn of the twentieth century. As Cardon explains in her introduction, her monograph aims to show that the selected “authors use clothing as a barometer for achieving American ideals of upward mobility and the pursuit of happiness, defined here as the pursuit and expression of individual desire” (5). Since fashion is a cultural force that effectively brings into view the subject’s conflicting desires for individual expression and community building, the suggestion to use it as the indicator of the individualist imperative pervading turn-of-the-century American society is certainly compelling, and Cardon needs to be applauded for juxtaposing authors who habitually appear in studies on fashion and literature with writers who have, perhaps, not received their due attention in existing scholarship on the topic. The inclusion of immigrant writers such as Anzia Yezierska is thereby particularly rewarding because it allows Cardon to investigate how the rise of the ready-made
clothing industry intensified desires for, but also facilitated socioeconomic ascent through processes of, sartorial self-styling in 1920s America. Indeed, in this particular chapter Cardon convincingly suggests that Yezierska’s fiction hoped to instruct poorer immigrant women to find their place in modern American society through adopting garments that might have been mass-produced but that nonetheless favoured “the contemporary mode of simplicity chic” over “gaudy and cheaply made clothing as well as the traditional garb in which most working-class women attired” (89). If correctly employed, clothing can function, as Yezierska’s fiction repeatedly illustrates, as the marker but also the maker of immigrant women’s social mobility.

By comparison, other chapters in Fashion and Fiction make less of an intervention into existing debates on twentieth-century literature and fashion. When the author turns to the analysis of Edith Wharton, for instance, the presented arguments rehearse ideas and opinions already familiar to Wharton’s critics. The chapter on William Faulkner, F. Scott Fitzgerald, and Ernest Hemingway follows a very predictable path. And the monograph’s concluding analysis of Nathanael West’s The Day of the Locust (1939) – a potentially rich site for critical inspection – goes little further than naming text passages in which fashionable clothes feature prominently. It is clear that Cardon has opted for a broad-stroke approach to reinforce the monograph’s thesis that “over the years, fashion extends to a larger demographic, transcends lines of class and race, and affords increasing opportunities to express one’s personality and lifestyle through a range of stylish garments and accessories” (181). In support of this argumentative arch, much different literary material has been assembled. The result is an enjoyable, often insightful, overview of turn-of-the-century American writers and their critical attention to contemporary garment culture. If the book falls short of significantly advancing our understanding of these scholarly debates, it will nonetheless be a very useful source or handbook for students and scholars beginning to familiarize themselves with these writers and with their interest in contemporary fashion. The explicatory comments on developments in the turn-of-the-century garment industry helpfully contextualize the literary debates of fashion. Cardon’s writing style is accessible and engaging and the range of different authors covered makes this study a most welcome addition to an expanding critical tradition. Most importantly, this book can show us how important fashion and clothes were for individual attempts at self-styling in modern America. It is no wonder that this is a subject repeatedly turned to by authors with very different socioeconomic and racial backgrounds who lived and worked in a national culture deeply committed to the idea that individuals should be empowered to design their lives and economic fortunes to fit personal preferences and desires.

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I expected Unfit for Democracy: The Roberts Court and the Breakdown of American Politics by Stephen E. Gottlieb to be an in-depth examination of the controversial decisions of the Roberts Court and an attempt to explain these outcomes. However, there