

The richest part of Banner's text traces the evolution of dominant images of female beauty from the "steel-engraving lady" of the antebellum years to the voluptuous beauties of the Lillian Russell era through the Gibson girl to the gamine of the 1910s and 1920s before ending with a quick review of the reigning beauties over the last sixty years. She goes beyond simply categorizing the various images to examine the image-makers. She looks at commercial interests from fashionable dressmakers to garment manufacturers to beauticians and the hordes of advertisers who have created markets for beauty products by their ability to inspire women to anxiety about their appearance and offer commodities to assuage women's insecurities. Included here are discussions of the role of the creators of high and low culture from academic painters to television writers in promoting ideals of beauty and in fostering new enthusiasms such as the bicycle craze of the 1890s, which encouraged the emergence of new models of beauty.

Throughout the text she carefully integrates the feminist critique of feminine artifice and obsessive concern with attracting male admiration as a counterweight to the demands of fashion. She credits feminists together with female athletes and working women with creating a demand for comfortable, practical fashions and healthy, natural beauty in direct opposition to those forces that required women to improve on nature by devoting their energies to achieving visual perfection. Yet, her study fails to carry the feminist critique to its goal by posing the question of why beauty has assumed such importance in women's lives. By isolating beauty from the rest of women's "separate experience of life," she has avoided describing the ideologies, movements, and social pressures that have encouraged women to remain enthralled to elusive visions of beauty. By invoking the mysterious figure of Fashion as the antithesis of the feminist critique, she has never satisfactorily explained why men are freer to display themselves "warts and all" while women must learn to conceal their blemishes. By testing the theories about beauty expounded by feminists like Simone de Beauvoir, Susan Brownmiller, and John Berger with the same use of historical evidence she offers in identifying the shifting models of American beauty, she might have provided a more satisfying explanation of the reasons the ideals of female beauty have changed over the last two hundred years but the pursuit has become more insistent.

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INVISIBLE POLITICS: *Black Political Behavior*. By Hanes Walton, Jr. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1985. Pp. xxii, 366. Cloth \$36.50, paper \$12.95.

This survey text on black politics seeks to provide a comprehensive description of political science's research findings concerning black Americans. Professor Walton, the author of several previous monographs on black politics and a faculty member at Savannah State College, rightfully criticizes the

modest quantity, erratic quality, and common biases of the existing scholarly literature on black politics. Many of those shortcomings, he repeatedly argues, can be attributed to the regrettable predominance of behavioralism in American political science over the past three decades.

This repeated critique of political behavioralism's shortcomings is, unfortunately, the sole unifying theme of this book. It is a valid criticism, and one that Walton sometimes articulates very well. The crucial behavioralist failing, he notes, is to focus much more heavily on the individual political actor than on the overall political system: "A focus on the individual leads inevitably and logically to the weaknesses and imperfections inherent in man and away from the imperfections and weaknesses of the political system" (2-3). This has been particularly problematic when behavioralists have studied black Americans; "the crux of the problem is their tendency [*sic*] to base all political [*sic*] behavior on sociopsychological and intrapsychic causes, even for a group that has faced overwhelming systemic influences and forces" (xxi).

Regrettably, Walton chooses to reiterate this simple, valid point chapter after chapter rather than moving on to focus his book on any of the many other important themes more deserving of emphasis. Walton's preference for voicing a repetitive critique of the existing literature prevents him from ever developing an affirmative argument more elaborate than calling for a "systemic-structural approach" (18) to the study of black politics. *Invisible Politics* is thus both tedious and notable for its many missed opportunities to look in more productive directions.

Unfortunately, *Invisible Politics* also suffers from more typographical errors than this reader ever before has seen in a single volume and from textual passages and statistics that often seem rather dated. At one point, for instance, Walton names the four black women who "presently" serve in Congress; three of them—Representatives Yvonne B. Burke, Shirley Chisholm, and Barbara Jordan—all left the House of Representatives several years before this book was published (209).

In short, *Invisible Politics* is a major disappointment, especially for scholars who found much of value in Professor Walton's earlier works. Lamentably, this volume is a book that only critically minded specialists in the field need to take note of.

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HAWTHORNE'S SECRET: *An Un-Told Tale*. By Philip Young. Boston: David R. Godine Publishers, 1984. Pp. 3, 183. \$15.95.

Twelve years since, in *Three Bags Full*, Philip Young hinted he knew Hawthorne's "secret," and what we have here is the Fourth Bag, stuffed like the others with wool from a black sheep. As gathered wool, it is made up of conjecture, guesswork, imaginative even intuitive leaps of logic, a mingling of