

of *Dissent* might view the marches as the story, for Ghaziani, the marches are important staging grounds for theorizing the dynamic interplay between culture, dissent, and emergent identities organized around sexual orientation from the 1970s to 2000.

The book alternates between historical overviews and close studies of each march. In the chapters on the marches, Ghaziani focuses on six organizational tasks each had to address: whether and when to march, title or theme, speakers, platform, and organizing structure. Similarly, historical chapters examine a consistent set of issues: community consciousness, organizational development, external threats, and the cultural and political status of sexual minorities. The beauty of Ghaziani's organization is that readers see change and continuity at the same time. In having a consistent point of comparison, Ghaziani offers ample evidence of the way that knowledge, expertise, and identities are passed along, and also altered or cast off. The drawback is that one's view is harnessed to one paradigm of politics. Within that paradigm many wonderful archival details are on display, ranging from which local groups participated and whose views dominated to the platforms (tentative evidence of consensus) each march produced. Highlights of the big historical story told here include details of the tremendous momentum of gay activism that was unleashed by acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) and effectively harnessed in the late 1980s; and the movement from locally derived gay identities to nationally managed and celebrity-informed ones by 2000. The combination of Ghaziani's attention to identity formation as fashioned from dissent and material expression of political solidarity, as well as the archival record of GLBT group process, make this a fascinating account.

Jane Gerhard  
 Mount Holyoke College  
 South Hadley, Massachusetts

*Queen's Court: Judicial Power in the Rehnquist Era.* By Nancy Maveety. (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2008. xii, 194 pp. \$29.95, ISBN 978-0-7006-1610-7.)

The political scientist Nancy Maveety's brief

monograph on the U.S. Supreme Court during William H. Rehnquist's years as chief justice (1986–2005) will interest primarily scholars already familiar with that discipline's recent analytical literature on the high court. Maveety's title refers to Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, whose retirement, in tandem with Rehnquist's death, marked the end of a judicial era during which O'Connor's narrow-gauge moderation often trumped the chief justice's traditional conservatism.

Maveety's characterizations of the Rehnquist court and its justices will occasion no surprise. She highlights "O'Connor's critical role as a decisional pivot" on a court that will be "best remembered for its judicial individualism and presumptive theory of judicial power" (pp. 3, 4). By individualism Maveety means the justices'—and particularly O'Connor's—unusual proclivity for writing concurring opinions rather than, or in addition to, signing on to a majority opinion of the Court. This "decisional multivocality," as Maveety calls it, underlies her book's "main claim . . . that the Rehnquist Court's 'supremely individualist' conception of judicial power was its primary contribution" to both American law and the Court's own legacy (pp. 6, 61).

*Queen's Court* likewise reiterates how O'Connor's "rule-of-thumb jurisprudence" and "her context-based and multifactor doctrinal style" came to define most of the Rehnquist era's best-known decisions (pp. 103, 102). Maveety accurately states that this was "a decisional methodology that seemed restrained in particular cases, but in reality profoundly increased judicial power and discretion" (p. 148).

The most interesting portion of *Queen's Court* is a fourteen-page section of chapter 4 (pp. 112–26) where Maveety discusses how the Rehnquist court's "practice of judicial supremacy" significantly altered many "court commentators' views of the judicial role" (pp. 117, 108). Between 1954 and the 1970s, "a progressively activist Supreme Court . . . became the contemporary standard of normalcy" as decisions from *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) through *Roe v. Wade* (1973) became judicial coin of the realm (p. 108).

However, "the Rehnquist Court's record changed those sanguine views of judicial in-

volvement in the political process and instead inaugurated a profound reconsideration of the influence and role of the Supreme Court in public policy making and in American life” (pp. 107–8). Recognizing how the justices were betraying “a notion of judicial power that defied limitation, because ad-hoc rule-of-thumb balances could always be struck,” critics on both the left and the right expressed “disapproval of the Court’s new-style judicial pre-eminence” (p. 115). Before long, many liberal legal academics who had once been cheerleaders for the most famous rulings of the Warren and Burger courts were suddenly voicing “diminished contemporary faith in judicial review” (p. 153).

To the more cynical among us, such a rapid and pronounced academic change of tune appeared to stem from purely political biases about what sort of Bush-era oxen the Rehnquist court’s Republican majority was most likely to [G]ore. Maveety offers a more charitable, or naïve, view, writing that “the reaction to the Rehnquist era was not ideologically motivated,” but *Queen’s Court* is a consistently smart commentary on O’Connor and Rehnquist’s judicial legacy (p. 126).

David J. Garrow  
*University of Cambridge*  
*Cambridge, United Kingdom*

*Riding Pretty: Rodeo Royalty in the American West.* By Renée M. Laegreid. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2006. xii, 273 pp. \$29.95, ISBN 978-0-8032-2955-6.)

This book fills an important place in the growing field of rodeo studies, a subfield of western history pursued by historians, economists, cultural anthropologists, folklorists, and gender and sports studies scholars. Renée M. Laegreid has produced a well-written, well-documented history explaining how “communities throughout the West adopted and adapted the rodeo queen phenomenon to suit the characteristics of their own celebrations” (p. 212).

One of the tricky aspects of studying rodeo royalty is that these queens (and princesses) have been, and to an important degree still are, *cowgirls* as well as figureheads in the rodeo

arena. As Laegreid shows, in the early twentieth century, rodeo courts were sometimes chosen from the ranks of women bronc and trick riders, racers, and ropers. But this practice declined as “community-sponsored rodeo queens” provided a more “genteel alternative of a cowgirl athlete” (pp. 18, 57).

Yet horsemanship remained, and remains, a principal criterion for queen selection. Thus, unlike National Association for Stock Car Auto Racing and fishing derby royalty, or football homecoming queens, rodeo queens always appear in the sports arena, mounted and racing their horses at great speed (and at considerable personal danger) around the track. Although their competitive role in rodeo events has declined since World War II, rodeo queens and princesses still ride through the rodeo arena as *cowgirls*, not as sponsors or window dressing.

Laegreid is the first scholar to successfully research and analyze this subject. Her work is preceded by Elizabeth Atwood Lawrence’s *Rodeo* (1982); Teresa Jordan’s *Cowgirls* (1982); and Mary Lou Lecompte’s *Cowgirls of the Rodeo* (1993), which analyzed, respectively, the gender component, oral traditions, and athleticism of rodeo royalty as small components of their larger studies.

The only other rodeo royalty-specific book, Joan Burbick’s *Rodeo Queens and the American Dream* (2002), is too mired in feminist/Marxist theory to provide a truthful view of these cowgirl queens and princesses. Laegreid’s book now replaces Burbick’s, and is the only objective, research-based, scholarly work on the subject.

Laegreid utilizes a case study method, focusing on the famed Pendleton (Oregon) Round-Up, Cheyenne (Wyoming) Frontier Days, and Stamford (Texas) Cowboy Reunion rodeos, and the Miss Rodeo America pageant (she also examines other rodeos). She uses oral interviews and a quantitative survey of four dozen former queens and princesses; she has, to this writer’s knowledge, read every published rodeo royalty cowgirl memoir in print. And she has incorporated this primary material into the analyses of the above-mentioned scholars and the great rodeo historians—Clifford P. Westemeier, Kristine Fredriksson, Wayne Wooden, and Gavin Ehringer.