

plethora of complications inherent in each. Only once does Watt hesitate when discussing literary comparisons of the Northern Irish Troubles and the Holocaust, admitting that “*all* contextualizations of contemporary traumas with the Shoah are not equally valid or efficacious” (196, original emphasis). However, he soon concludes that “whatever the risk, [it] is well worth taking,” before swiftly wandering off to explore another idea, another Irish-Jewish anecdote. As such, it lies with readers of Watt’s work to evaluate whether the risk is worth taking. There is no denying that his volume includes an impressive range of examples and astute theatrical observations, many of which gesture towards fertile points of interaction between Irish and Jewish art and artists. But for some, the unquestioning recourse to problematic labels may ultimately prove more “dreadful” than “grand.”

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Robert Schmuhl, *Ireland’s Exiled Children: America and the Easter Rising* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016, £19.99). Pp. xvii + 210. ISBN 978 0 1902 2428 8.

Miriam Nyhan Grey (ed.), *Ireland’s Allies: America and the 1916 Easter Rising* (Dublin: University College Dublin Press, 2016, £30.00). Pp. xxiii + 480. ISBN 978 1 9108 2013 1.

Among the myriad publications produced to mark the centenary of the Easter Rising, these studies focus specifically on the American aspects of the rebellion. Robert Schmuhl’s is much the slimmer of the two and focusses on four individuals. On a first glance at the dust jacket most readers will easily identify three of the four depicted thereon – Eamon de Valera, Woodrow Wilson and John Devoy. The fourth, depicted in his US Army uniform, is the poet Joyce Kilmer, best known to generations of schoolchildren, in both the US and Ireland, as the author of “Trees.”

The four subjects represent four different perspectives and influences on the Rising: Devoy, the old Fenian intriguer who had long been fomenting rebellion from afar; Kilmer, the romantic poet whose reporting of events in Ireland was influential in formulating US public reactions to the Rising; Wilson, representing the Ulster Scots tradition among the Irish in America, whose anglophone tendencies would later colour his attitudes to the first Dáil’s ultimately unsuccessful efforts to seek American recognition of the Republic; and the American-born De Valera.

In many ways it is hard to find much new to say about the better-known triumvirate of Devoy, De Valera and Wilson, but what Schmuhl does effectively here is to place their individual connections to the Rising in the wider context of the interaction between the forces that each represents. For this reader at least, the chapter on Kilmer was the most revealing. Set in the broader context of American newspaper coverage of the Rising – which in spite of censorship and competing war-related stories “made the front page of the *New York Times* seventeen times, the *Boston Globe* sixteen, the *Washington Post* thirteen, and the *Chicago Tribune* and the *New York World* eleven [each]” – Kilmer’s coverage has been chosen for analysis because of its exceptional “breadth, variety and consequence” (46).

Kilmer was already noted by 1916 for the composition of “Trees,” and Schmuhl does a fine job in rescuing him, on the Rising in this case, from this “literary albatross,”

now largely critiqued as simply a “bad poem” (47–48). Writing a feature-length article for the *New York Times* magazine on 7 May 1916, while the executions were still in progress, Kilmer focussed, not too surprisingly, on the role of poets in the revolutionary movement, identifying at an early stage this theme that is still central to many studies of the Rising, and presenting a marked contrast to the critical attitude to the Rising adopted by the editorial line of the *Gray Lady*.

Kilmer’s second significant feature-length article for the *New York Times* magazine, published in August, contained an interview with a Cumann na mBan member, Moira Regan, and highlights yet another still topical issue in the historiography – the role of women in the Rising. This article was subsequently picked up in Ireland and reprinted in Jasper Tully’s *Midland Reporter and Westmeath Nationalist* and the *Roscommon Herald*, incurring the wrath of the Irish press censors under the Defence of the Realm Regulations. However, possibly due to the pro-Allied stance of the newspaper of origin or the authorities’ wariness of resorting to more unpopularly coercive measures, Tully’s publications escaped the seizure of his plant.

The question of why Kilmer appears to have been so interested in Irish affairs is explored, and the idea he propagated of having some Irish ancestry appears to be a myth. The answer is more likely to be found in his conversion to Catholicism in 1913 and his attraction to the Irish devotion to Catholicism. This work effectively locates Kilmer’s commentaries on the Rising within the context of viewing him as a Catholic writer.

Schmuhl picks up the theme of American press coverage of the Rising more widely in an essay in the much more wide-ranging collection edited by Miriam Nyhan Grey. The opening chapter of this compendium mirrors that of Schmuhl in focussing on John Devoy. One subject who could easily have been chosen by Schmuhl in his own book to represent the Fenian tradition of American support for armed rebellion, possibly instead of Devoy, is Joseph McGarrity, and he is the subject of a chapter (by Anand, Hicks and Willis) in Grey’s edited volume. Among the other personalities studied are the well-known influences, including Tom Clarke, Casement, Pearse, Jim Larkin, James Connolly and Judge Daniel Cohalan. In the same way that Schmuhl has brought Kilmer’s influence to the fore, lesser known yet nonetheless influential figures among the Irish in America are treated here also, including John Quinn, Victor Herbert, Bourke Cochran, John Kilgallon and Cardinal John Farley of New York.

A welcome feature is the focus on women and especially Mary Jane O’Donovan Rossa, the “Bold Fenian Wife,” and Gertrude Kelly, the chapter on whom by the editor (Miriam Grey) provides a very insightful account of the founding of Cumann na mBan, an organization whose activities and branches outside Ireland are under-studied. The theme of gender and the role of women is examined further in Patricia Keefe Durso’s examination of Irish and Irish American suffragists.

While a majority of the chapters (fifteen of twenty-four) are based around particular individuals, there are also a number of thematic chapters that deal with a comprehensive range of subjects including the collapse of the United Irish League in America, German propaganda, Protestants, the Irish language, newspaper coverage (in addition to Schmuhl’s essay referred to above, Thomas Rowland focusses specifically on the reaction of the American Catholic press to the Rising), Irish county associations and anti-colonial sentiment in New York at the time.

Francis Carroll’s essay on the decline of the American UIL indicates that more could be done to look at the state of support for constitutional nationalism in the

US at this time, and possibly to help answer the question, posed in the foreword by J. J. Lee, whether the essential US funding for the Rising “derived from a transfer in direction from the earlier sources of supply for Redmond or came instead from tapping new pockets” (xxx). While the Rising is essentially the culmination of the studies in this volume, and it is tasked primarily with examining the dynamics of diasporic nationalism in the lead-up to the Rising, an opportunity remains to examine further the impact of the Rising in further diminishing Irish American support for Home Rule, as seen in T. P. O’Connor’s last-ditch effort to shore up US funds for the IPP in 1917. Another aspect of the Rising that has gained popularity in recent literature is commemoration, and that is another area of the American relationship with the Rising that could be pursued by researchers in the future.

A word should be said about how beautifully produced this volume is by UCD Press. It is a large tome, running to 361 pages of text, including a number of illustrations, and the publisher is to be complemented for not skimping on proper endnotes, which of themselves run to over a hundred pages.

If the large volume of works produced around the centenary of the Easter Rising might have led some to groan about yet another book on 1916, or wonder what new insights such authors have provided, these two volumes supply ample evidence of the ongoing vibrancy of research on many aspects of the rebellion. In addition to rescuing less well-known aspects, such as Kilmer’s journalism, and delving deeper into well-established themes, such as the importance of American money, they leave us with a sense that many of the new directions in revolutionary historiography – such as the role of women and perpetuating memory – will provide fertile ground for students of the Irish diaspora in America for quite a while to come.

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Ronald Angelo Johnson, *Diplomacy in Black and White: John Adams, Toussaint Louverture, and Their Atlantic World Alliance* (Athens and London: University of Georgia Press, 2014, \$49.95). Pp. 264. ISBN 978 0 8203 4212 2.

Although there are more general accounts of American–Haitian diplomacy in the colonial and antebellum periods, Ronald Angelo Johnson is the first to engage in detail with the remarkable relationship formed between the governments of John Adams and Toussaint Louverture in the last years of the eighteenth century. Johnson combines meticulous research with narrative flair to illuminate the dynamics and ambiguities of early American diplomacy. He argues that the Adams–Louverture alliance reflected the United States’ pursuit of commercial and diplomatic power in an Atlantic world still dominated by France, Spain and Great Britain. This desire for national status coincided with the emergence of Haiti as the second independent republic in the western hemisphere. For a brief period between 1798 and 1800, American diplomatic, commercial and military agents effectively improvised their way to a pragmatic and productive relationship with their Saint Dominguan counterparts. The partnership was to be short-lived, however, abrogated by the election of Thomas Jefferson in 1800, the cessation of the quasi-war with France, and the Haitian war of independence of 1802–3.