Making Race and Nation: A Comparison of the United States, South Africa, and Brazil. By ANTHONY W. MARX. Cambridge Studies in Comparative Politics. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998. Notes. Bibliography. Index. xviii, 390 pp. Cloth, $29.95.

This is an ambitious book. It proposes a comparative explanation of the relationship between state-building and "race-making" (state policy concerning race) in "the three most prominent cases in which European settlers dominated indigenous populations or slaves of African origin" (p. 6): the United States, South Africa, and Brazil. During the late 1800s and early 1900s, Marx argues, political struggles and conflicts within the white populations of the United States and South Africa led to the enactment of state-enforced racial segregation in those countries. "Blacks were sacrificed on the altar of white unity" (p. 12) as a means to overcome regional and class divisions among United States whites, and ethnic (Boer vs. English) and class divisions among South African whites. Conversely, the relative absence of such intra-white conflict in Brazil, and the greater capacity of the Brazilian state to manage such limited tensions as did exist, removed any need to enact racial segregation in that country. Brazil was thus free to "construct" itself as a racial democracy. These differences in "race-making" then produced corresponding differences in levels of black political mobilization: high and effective in the United States and South Africa, low and relatively ineffective in Brazil.

The author makes some useful points along the way, and his chapters on black mobilization in particular are vivid and informative. But one feels some uneasiness about trying to shoehorn three large, complex national histories into such a simple analytical framework. I agree that divisions within the white population are the principal explanation for turn-of-the-century segregation in the United States and South Africa; indeed, I have thought so ever since I first encountered this argument 15 years ago in the works of Stanley B. Greenberg (*Race and State in Capitalist Development: Comparative Perspectives*, New Haven, 1980), George M. Fredrickson (*White Supremacy: A Comparative Study in American and South African History*, New York, 1981), and John W. Cell (*The Highest Stage of White Supremacy: The Origins of Segregation in South Africa and the American South*, Cambridge, 1982). Yet much of the structure of South African apartheid was not created until after 1948, by which time English-Afrikaner divisions had declined greatly in importance. Clearly other factors were at work.

Marx's analysis of Brazil is even more problematic. These sections of the book are riddled with factual errors and misinterpretations of the work of previous authors. (Thomas Skidmore suffers particularly in this regard, being cited several times in inaccurate and misleading ways—see for example p. 68 at note 16, p. 166 at note 38, p. 171 at note 70.) The cumulative result of these errors is an interpretation of Brazilian history that few specialists on that country would be willing to accept. Regardless of historical period, Marx sees the Brazilian state as powerful, centralized, and perfectly capable of maintaining the country's "immutable unity." And he pointedly contrasts turn-of-the-century Brazil to South Africa and the United States, portraying the First

Republic (1891–1930) as a period of racial inclusion, during which elites outlawed racial discrimination, celebrated African culture, and proclaimed an image of Brazil as a racial democracy (pp. 164–67).

This is simply incorrect. Far from celebrating African culture and racial democracy, the Republican state warred on the former and trumpeted doctrines of white supremacy not greatly different from those espoused in the United States and South Africa. The reasons why Brazil did not resort to racial segregation are to be found not in a powerful central state, but rather in the interactions between a political and social history that Marx does not seriously engage.

Finally, by constructing this three-way comparison, Marx seems to imply that the United States and South Africa represent a historical norm, with Brazil the exception. But even passing attention to the history of European imperialism elsewhere in the Americas, Africa, and Asia immediately shows the opposite: that in its lack of formal racial strictures, Brazil is much closer to world historical experience, while the United States and South Africa are the outliers. Marx does explain those exceptional cases reasonably well (though again, that explanation can already be found in the work of previous scholars), but contributes little toward an understanding of cases in which segregation did not occur. Why then is this book being hailed (to judge by the blurbs on its cover) as a theoretical breakthrough?

GEORGE REID ANDREWS, University of Pittsburgh

The Mexican War Correspondence of Richard Smith Elliott.
Edited and annotated by MARK L. GARDNER and MARC SIMMONS. The American Exploration and Travel Series. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997. Photographs. Illustrations. Maps. Notes. Bibliography. Index. xi, 292 pp. Cloth, $29.95.

Timed with the sesquicentennial hoopla, Mark L. Gardner and Marc Simmons provide primary sources for the mill of commemorative historical reassessment of the Mexican War. In this book they gather and edit the letters of Lieutenant Richard Smith Elliott, a Missouri volunteer who doubled up as a war correspondent for the St. Louis *Reveille*. Elliott's war reports cover familiar ground: the gathering of volunteer and regular forces at Fort Leavenworth; the swift movement along the Santa Fe Trail; and the "peaceful" occupation of New Mexico, where Elliott would remain for the reminder of his one-year enlistment. If the truth be said, Elliott had little luck as a war correspondent. As the editors are quick to point out, he did not take part in any battle except for one minor skirmish toward the end of his tour of duty. Moreover, due to illness Elliott missed the only violent episode that took place in New Mexico during the entire war: the anti-American rebellions that erupted at the end of 1846 and early 1847 and the anti-insurgency operations that ensued. No wonder that we often find this 30-year-old lieutenant complaining about the dullness of life or convalescing in rather peaceful locales.