and the role it played in German reunification. McLellan provides scholars with a stepping-stone for investigating people's private spaces under Communism. Her findings open up the possibility of discussing sexual dissent and western influences in how East Germans saw notions of love, intimacy, and sexuality before the end of Communism. Those interested in the history of sexuality, gender, repression, and the Cold War era will enjoy this new perspective on East German society through its exploration of private life under communist authoritarianism.

Stefan Ogbac

Anthony Everitt. *The Life of Rome's First Emperor: Augustus*. New York: Random House, 2006. Pp. 377. Paper $18.00.

Anthony Everitt, a visiting Professor in the Performing and Visual Arts at Nottingham Trent University, provides a unique look at the *man* who was arguably one of Rome's most influential rulers. Everitt argues that most books written about Augustus only highlight his achievements and not his life as an individual. His book is based on the premise that there is more to Augustus than the fact that he ruled Rome with an iron fist. To support his argument, Everitt uses texts from ancient and modern historians that range from letters, a plethora of museums, and personal visits to locations significantly related to Augustus' life such as the houses of Augustus and his wife Livia.

Much of the first part of the book deals with Augustus as a child (known then as Octavian prior to becoming emperor) and the first twenty years of his life. Everitt highlights significant events such as the death of his great grand-uncle, Julius Caesar, which had a profound affect on Augustus. In fact it was at this moment that Augustus, who had no previous political aspirations, decided to return to Rome from personal exile to pursue politics. Everrit gets a bit carried away, however, in his descriptions of people around Augustus since they distract from him as the main focus. Apart from the first chapter, the book is a chronological account of the life of Augustus that ends with his death. Overall, Everitt does a fantastic job delving deeply into the mindset of Augustus during key moments in his life that allow readers insight into the personality of Augustus.

Later chapters go much further into his career as Rome's first emperor and the expansion of the empire. These chapters recount his personal struggles including the loss of many designated heirs, political strife, and his legendary ruthlessness. The book also addresses the change Augustus underwent to a more benign ruler. Everitt maintains

the overarching framework that this is not another discussion on the achievements of Augustus. He ensures that the content humanizes Augustus while still providing a scholarly account of his triumphs that the average reader will appreciate.

Overall *The Life of Rome's First Emperor* makes a well-balanced argument that allows the average reader to get an in-depth glimpse of *who* Augustus was. This is a biographical text worth noting as a source for scholars looking for insight into Augustus as human being first and then, the most influential ruler of Rome.

Eddie Organista

Allison Varzally. *Making a Non-White America: Californians Coloring Outside Ethnic Lines, 1925–1955.* Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2008. Pp. 305. Paper $24.95.

In *Making a Non-White* America, Allison Varzally, a Professor at California State University, Fullerton, explores the ethnic neighborhoods of California, particularly in Los Angeles and Oakland from 1925 to 1955. Varzally claims that minority groups recognized their similarities and developed compassion for each other because of their shared experience of racism. As a result, minorities were able to control and shape their own identities despite legal, social, and cultural restrictions created by whites.

Using oral interviews and newspaper articles written by Japanese, Filipino, and Mexican residents, Varzally describes the hostile environment minorities encountered. Japanese people were unable to own land, African Americans had to use separate facilities from whites, and many Mexicans were repatriated to Mexico regardless of their citizenship status. These groups shared a common experience of discrimination and as a result, interacted. They had contact with each other at schools, which lead to cultural borrowing. For example, Japanese youths adopted the dress of zoot-suiters, commonly associated with Mexican Americans. Mexican Americans in turn frequented the jazz clubs of African Americans.

Varzally demonstrates the importance of World War II for minority groups in the second half of the book. She argues that men who served in the U.S. Armed Forces enlisted to fight for freedom from oppression. As a result of their military service, soldiers of color gained a sense of duty to uplift their race and oppose racial oppression. Fighting in World War II made these groups eager to challenge white discrimination in California and achieve social mobility. They also gained important organizational skills that assisted their new political