Although much of the information in the book was already public knowledge, Goldsmith's perspective departs drastically from the popular discourse around the Bush administration's relationship with the law. Whereas the administration was often portrayed as acting in disregard to the law, he describes a hypersensitivity to the law that, at times, bordered on obsession. From Goldsmith's account, it seems as though every time the law "restrained" the administration, the administration depended on lawyers to redefine the laws. This is consistent with Addington's statement that the administration acted in the manner they saw fit until a "larger force" stopped them, and this "larger force" rarely did (126). Instead of accepting the domestic and international laws around torture, the administration became obsessed with changing the definition of torture so that the administration could approve the "enhanced interrogation" techniques. The administration used OLC opinions to ensure that they would not be prosecuted, and were not concerned with the quality of the opinions because it would be difficult to prosecute anyone who was acting under one.

Even Goldsmith, despite his repeated use of history to justify many of the events, believed that 9/11 was a new starting point and that everything before this event could not apply because we were in unprecedented times, became distressed by the Bush administration's view of presidential powers. While Goldsmith emphasizes the administration's desire to avoid another terrorist attack, he concedes that it led to a situation in which lawyers became policy makers. However, the rest of his book illustrates that the administration was also afraid of losing power. In other words, the administration appeared more obsessed with the idea of potential prosecution and not giving away any of the President's power than actually securing the country. Goldsmith's account provides an illuminating glimpse into the legal policies and motivations of the Bush administration, which would be a valuable asset for any contemporary historian interested in the War on Terror.

Marissa Jackson

Pamela Fox. *Natural Acts: Gender, Race, and Rusticity in Country Music.* Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2009. Pp.350 Paper $28.95.

Since the publication of the genre's first academic history in 1968, Bill Malone's canonical *Country Music, U.S.A*, the historiography continues to grow more sophisticated. Diane Pecknold's new essay collection on the African American presence in country music and a forthcoming

monograph from historian Peter La Chapelle promise to tackle America's unique history of ethnic diversity and socioeconomic inequality. Historians, musicologists, and cultural studies specialists employing diverse approaches seek a deeper understanding of music's relationship to constructions of gender, class, and race in America.

Pamela Fox sets a new standard for the field with her interdisciplinary study of the genre. Fox, English Professor at Georgetown University, effectively historicizes country music's constructions of authenticity. To deconstruct country's evolving ideology of authenticity, she analyzes song lyrics, signature sounds, and iconic figures from nineteenth-century blackface minstrelsy to twenty-first century alternative country (alt. country) performances. Drawing on Eric Lott's "mask" theory and Judith Butler's notion of performativity, Fox shows how gender "in its conjunction with race as well as class…produce shifting models of authenticity at particular moments in country music history" (5). Rusticity, *Natural Acts* contends, developed a masculine, working-class and urban sensibility, subsequently affecting the identity of performer and fan and continuing to shape the music's iconography into the present day.

Natural Acts chronologically and thematically traces the centuries-long naturalization process deeming white working-class men the model of county rusticity. Reading scripts from Grand Ol' Opry duo Jamup and Honey, Fox puts the minstrel show back into the history of country music. As late as the 1940s, Fox provocatively contends, blackface acts informed the emasculated whiteface rube, or hillbilly specter. Honky-tonk star Hank Williams, emblematic of the hillbilly figure, assured male audiences of their claim to modernity in the context of the postwar gender crisis with his emotionally charged singing style. Analyzing lyrics and performances and borrowing Pierre Bourdieu's notion of *habitus*, Fox shows how the publically located honky-tonk bar became the new domestic space of the country subject. Women no longer symbolized the traditional rural home but, rather, its loss. They represented urban immorality constituting the first shift to the masculinization of country identity.

Fox's chapter on female stars, in particular, promises to take country music historiography in a new direction by opening a discussion on the role of autobiographies. Female singers, from honky-tonk performers Kitty Wells and Jean Shepard, of the 1950s to late-twentieth century autobiography authors Loretta Lynn and Dolly Parton, used these particular performance modes to maintain claims to their own rusticity. The "answer song" and life-story genre both challenged honky-tonk's negative representations of modern women and reified traditional roles like motherhood. Fox demonstrates how

Lynn's autobiographical film *Coal Miner's Daughter* and her hard-hitting lyrical style proved her rural authenticity in a similar fashion to andocentric honky-tonk lyrics. *Natural Acts* concludes with an analysis of alt. country in the 1990s and early twenty-first century, suggesting that the sub-genre draws on the music's past, elite orchestrated, gender and race constructions, and class practices to set it apart as the authentic alternative to top 40 country hits.

Fox uniquely contributes to the debate on authenticity and commendably challenges country music culture's official history. Detailed attention to feminist scholarship on women and gender in country music and blackface theory make *Natural Acts* an excellent resource for graduate students and academics in the fields of American popular culture, gender studies, critical race theory, and country music history. As the latest scholarly history on the topic, her argument reflects the state of country music historical criticism and offers insightful new ways to think about the implications of popular culture's relationship to its audience.

Natasha Lueras

Ann S. Blum. *Domestic Economies: Family, Work, and Welfare in Mexico City, 1884-1943*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009. Pp. 396. Paper $30.00.

Ann S. Blum, Assistant Professor of Latin American Studies at the University of Massachusetts, Boston, sheds light on class and state formation during Mexico's Porfirian and Revolutionary eras. Differing from other works on these well-known periods of Mexican history, Blum positions the family as the main site of "class and state formation" (xvi). She examines the encounter of Mexico City's urban poor families and the state's welfare system, which contributed to patterns of child abandonment and child labor. In addition, Blum illuminates the changing elite beliefs about childhood and motherhood, as well as the application of these ideologies on the urban poor, thus revealing a disjunction between ideology and practice.

Using legal documents, census data, juvenile court records, public welfare documents and newspaper articles, Blum uncovers the state's discourse on family relations and reconstructs social conditions of the urban poor, including the urban poor's familial relations. Her book evades a single historiographical classification, instead contributing to "histories of women, gender, law, labor, and medicine, and an emerging history of childhood" (xxvii).