

opportunities for community service, forums for addressing police brutality, and the start of the Black Lives Matter movement, although it continues to be ritually celebrated locally and internationally. Fleming concludes that official compromise is needed to reinvigorate the King holiday by embracing King's legacy, combating injustice, and expanding equality for all Americans. Fleming's volume is a much-needed chapter in the historiography of civil rights.

Rose Thevenin  
Florida Memorial University  
Miami Gardens, Florida

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*The Arc of Truth: The Thinking of Martin Luther King Jr.* By Lewis V. Baldwin. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2022. xxiv, 384 pp. \$35.00.)

Written in response to increasing attacks on truth in U.S. culture and politics, Lewis V. Baldwin's *The Arc of Truth* examines Martin Luther King Jr.'s deep commitment to truth in his life and public leadership. Baldwin asserts that King "did more than anyone in his time to organize truth into a movement for liberation, uplift, and empowerment of humanity" (p. 1). By carefully examining King's formation, education, papers, speeches, and public leadership, Baldwin concludes that King "epitomized that vital nexus between spoken, lived, and applied truth" (p. xix).

Baldwin makes a compelling case that King's leadership was based on a deep commitment to truth and was rooted in confronting the racism and white supremacy that undergirded discrimination, segregation, and violence against African Americans. Believing in the inherent dignity of every person, as found in biblical scripture and the sublime words of the nation's founding documents, King consistently sought to set "the record straight about the Black experience" (p. 73).

King frequently concluded speeches with truth-based rhetorical flourishes, citing poets and philosophers such as James Russell Lowell ("Truth forever on the scaffold, Wrong forever on the throne," from the 1844 poem "The Present Crisis," p. 96); William Cullen Bryant ("Truth, crushed to earth, shall rise again,"

from the 1839 poem "The Battlefield," p. 95); and Thomas Carlyle ("no lie can live forever," from *The French Revolution: A History* [1837], p. 97). In one of King's most significant speeches, delivered at the conclusion of the Selma-to-Montgomery marches in 1965, just a few weeks after "Bloody Sunday" (March 7), he concludes with the repeated cadence, "We are on the move now," and reaches a crescendo by quoting the lyrics of the "Battle Hymn of the Republic": "His truth is marching on. . . . Our God is marching on" (p. 239).

Baldwin reckons with areas of King's life and leadership where he failed to live up to his own standard of truth. He cites significant evidence of plagiarism in King's academic papers and particularly in his 1955 dissertation, acknowledging that "King was not being his 'higher' or 'best self' when he appropriated the words of others without proper acknowledgement" (p. 111). Baldwin also reckons with King's treatment of women and his failure to be faithful to his wife, Coretta Scott King.

At times *The Arc of Truth* overstates the case, squeezing King's legacy into this frame, as when Baldwin claims that the pursuit of truth "remained King's chief concern until the end of his days" (p. 10). While important, pursuits such as loving one's enemies, nonviolence, and redemption are no less important.

The book concludes by positing King's commitment to truth as a needed antidote to Donald J. Trump's "war on truth," from racially charged birtherism to leading a significant portion of the U.S. population down a path of "alternate facts." As an antidote in a time when truth is so contested, Baldwin's book is a timely and important reminder of the vital role truth played in King's life and witness.

Troy Jackson  
Moscow, Ohio

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*Up against the Law: Radical Lawyers and Social Movements, 1960s–1970s.* By Luca Falciola. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2022. 402 pp. Cloth, \$110.00. Paper, \$32.95.)

This book is valuable for understanding the

progress of revolutionary movements in the United States from the late 1960s through the late 1970s—from civil rights protest to virtual anarchy, from movements with well-conceived philosophical underpinnings and deep roots in American history to sects fueled by rage and cavalier rejection of civil society. All protest movements face opposition from the status quo ante, and all find themselves at some point in need of lawyers. Luca Falciola makes a clear distinction between moderate lawyers, or liberals who used the law to defend their clients, and radical lawyers, the topic of this book, who identified with rebels they defended and employed emotional attacks on systematic racism and other evils both in court and in the world outside the courthouse. They used “militant litigation . . . a conscious and elaborate strategy . . . to manipulate and subvert legal proceedings to further a political agenda” (p. 89). Radical lawyers fought legal battles and raised funds in the media and on the streets; they encouraged and helped organize the groups they supported. History remembers many civil rights lawyer-partisans as heroes; those who took up the cause of the Weathermen or the Symbionese Liberation Army garner less retrospective admiration. The Sixth Amendment, clarified by later law, states that every person called before a U.S. court deserves professional representation. Liberal lawyers acted on this principle and hoped to get justice for their individual clients, but radical lawyers, using “mass defense” techniques, sometimes became defendants themselves (p. 37). The opprobrium surrounding highly publicized cases multiplied as it became known that some of these lawyers had once been members of the Communist party.

The book centers on the work of “radical lawyers” who were members of the National Lawyers Guild. Some members of the guild’s founding Old Left generation (from the late 1930s) had been Communist party members, and they attracted others, especially labor lawyers, to this alternative to the conservative American Bar Association. The period of the civil rights movement, which reinvigorated a declining organization, marks the stressful beginning of change from Old Left to younger, less formal, and less lawyerly New Left leadership in the guild. Falciola’s book is best in

describing the guild and its New Left member attorneys in the years after the 1960s civil rights laws were passed. It gives us a thorough account of the work of guild lawyers as the methods and activism of southern civil rights workers were translated to new causes, including urban poverty and racism, policing, Vietnam War resistance, prisoner’s rights, and farm labor. Synopses of major causes, events, and trials (the Attica prison riots, George Jackson, etc.) are important parts of the narrative, as are the stories of government agencies surveilling and attacking both the causes and persons involved. This reviewer hoped for a bit more about the organization’s changing leadership and structure, though the influence of strong personalities, such as William Kunstler, Leonard Boudin, and Fay Stender, is clear. The book is highly recommended for students of history, law, and politics.

Sarah Hart Brown  
Pensacola, Florida

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*Rock and Roll, Desegregation Movements, and Racism in the Post-Civil Rights Era: An “Integrated Effort.”* By Beth Fowler. (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2022. x, 363 pp. \$100.00.)

Beth Fowler’s detailed study of race relations in the United States between 1946 and 1964 vis-à-vis the emergence and stratification of rock and roll music offers an important, if somewhat undertheorized, account that challenges simplistic desegregation narratives. Drawing on forty-five interviews of Black and white Americans born between 1934 and 1956 who listened to rock and roll (a sample that is, the author admits, disproportionately middle class), as well as archival sources, Fowler problematizes the common assumption that “rock and roll music helped white people to appreciate Black culture, leading to support for the desegregation movements that civil rights activists were staging at the same time” (p. 3). Rather, as Fowler points out, there were divergent interpretations of rock and roll and racial politics among Black and white teenagers. Fowler contrasts the “color-