
Late in the spring of 1867, the founding members of Atlanta's First Congregational Church gathered in the chapel of the American Missionary Association's (AMA) Storrs Free School. In attendance were Frederick Ayer and Edmund Ware – leading representatives of the Boston-based AMA – and select members of Atlanta's black middling class – Albert Watts, a grocer, Robert Johnston, a postal clerk, Anna Morgan and her husband Charles, a carriage trimmer, and fellow carpenters Jacob Fuller and John Hartsfield. The meaning of this interracial religious assembly and the significance of the African American attendees’ occupations are the subject of Joseph O. Jewell's well-crafted sociological history *Race, Social Reform, and the Making of a Middle Class*.

Set between the early years of the AMA's missionary ventures in the post-war South and the race riot that overtook Atlanta in 1906, Jewell's study examines the ways that postbellum social reform initiatives aligned white AMA missionaries with “upwardly mobile” African Americans in Atlanta. Across the color-line – as Jewell argues – the goals and methods of AMA reform in newly emancipated Atlanta drew coherence from intersecting structures of race and class. AMA attempts to reform southern black schooling and religious practice were mutually concerned with regulating African American access to middle class resources and with maintaining the privileged status of white Protestant leadership. In turn, a pivotal number of black Atlantans worked within the racial hierarchy of AMA reform projects in order to acquire middle class markers – in education and religious affiliation – that could withstand allegations of black inferiority and vice and distinguish an African American middle class from the poorest ranks of black Atlanta. As Jewell persuasively argues, the nexus of AMA missionary interests and African American aspirations that helped found Atlanta's First Congregational Church, the Storrs Free School, and its sister institution Atlanta University is a historical locus where the meanings and hierarchical frameworks of race and class came to intersect and mutually (re)constitute the boundaries of white, black and middle class identity.

Jewell's six-chapter study begins with a careful account of the significance of intersectional analysis for the study of social reform. The introductory chapter situates the AMA's southern missionary efforts in a late nineteenth century historiography that identifies a multitude of social tensions – industrialization, immigration, emancipation, urbanization and westward expansion included – as catalysts for Anglo-Protestant reform initiatives. Jewell's study aligns with a wide range of historical accounts that associate social reform movements in housing, religious education and family planning with heightened anxieties over race and class, but his intended intervention is to examine the meanings of race and class in postbellum U.S. reform as intersecting – rather than separate – constituents of social identity. Integrating the analytical frameworks of Michael Omi, Howard Winant, William Sewell and Evelyn Nakano Glenn, Jewell's first chapter broadly explains the ways that hierarchies of race and class inform each other and help produce the “complex and contradictory” impulses of reform work. Although Jewell's attention to gender and the particularities of missionary-driven reform are underdeveloped in the framing of his study, his introductory chapter deftly outlines the mutual, if competing,
concerns for the racialization of class and the classed dimensions of race that set the stage for the alliance of white AMA missionaries and an emerging black middle class in post-war Atlanta.

The second and third chapters of Jewell's study turn to northern periodicals, AMA correspondence and Atlanta city directories to examine the shifting identifications of AMA reformers and newly free African American workers in the half-decade following the Civil War. Reading across an exchange of editorials in *The Nation* and the AMA's post-war pamphlets, Jewell identifies the AMA's evolving plans for southern freedmen reform as a platform from which Congregationalist churchmen rearticulated the authority once exerted in their earlier abolitionist campaign. As Jewell explains, the AMA's post-war concern for the stability of southern African American churches, homes and schools registered a more deeply self-conscious concern for the continued recognition of New England Anglo-Protestantism as an arbiter of race, faith and class in the postbellum U.S. Although Jewell carefully notes the significance of African American activism in the development of AMA missions in the South, attention to the leading debates of the AMA's most vocal representatives largely eclipses an account of how African Americans engaged the terms of reform within the public discourse that enabled the AMA to reassert its civic mission.

The African American perspectives missing in the second chapter's study of reform print culture is offset, in part, by the nuanced analysis of Atlanta city directories and tax digests in Jewell's third chapter. While detailing the schemas of race and class that constrained black employment and housing in New South Atlanta, Jewell emphasizes the ways southern African American workers negotiated access to middle class status through entrepreneurial occupation and investment in the neighborhoods and social institutions that ensured class mobility. As the case studies provided in the second half of Jewell's manuscript assert, southern African Americans' keen understanding of the ways race and class structured labor, housing and education guided their collaborations with AMA reformers in Atlanta. The black grocers, carpenters, clerks and ministers that joined AMA instructors in launching Atlanta's Storrs Free School for black children intended to secure access to the skills and resources that would enable the emergence of a black elite. Jewell's study of state records, local press and missionary correspondence outlines the alliance and contestation of black intentions for upward mobility that subsequently resulted in the founding of the AMA-sponsored Atlanta University and the First Congregational Church of Atlanta. Jewell's fourth and fifth chapter studies offer a triangulated view of power brokering between southern white policy makers, northern white missionaries and southern African American leaders that is familiar in the historiography of Protestant missionary reform in the post-war South. Yet his focus on the interrelated significance of schoolrooms, churches, neighborhoods and jobs in the potential reconfiguration of race and class places distinct emphasis on the importance of postbellum reform movements for exposing, reproducing and reconstructing racialized hierarchies of class and belonging.

The parting reflections of Jewell's *Race, Social Reform, and the Making of a Middle Class* contemplate the repercussions of Atlanta's 1906 race riot. While the violence that erupted in the city betrayed the fragile interracial networks engendered through the AMA's reform work, the response of the African American leadership installed in Atlanta's First Congregational Church reflected the class-compromised politics of respectability so frequently criticized in social and intellectual histories of the emergent African American middle class. Jewell's study seeks neither