careful use of quantitative and qualitative research techniques is a model of innovative social history.

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Technology has always been a central aspect of the American cultural ethos toward progress and innovation. The ideas of Yankee Ingenuity and American Inventiveness are among the United States most cherished cultural images. This raises the question of both the accuracy and completeness of our understanding of the role of technology in the evolution of both America's culture and its place in the world. Bruce Sinclair and his colleagues question if historical accounts of technology fairly treat African Americans and what impacts this has had on the quality of the history of American technology. These essays examine the role of African Americans in how technology developed and how racism affected not only their contribution but the ways that historians have chronicled their involvement with technology.

The book begins with an essay by Judith Carney on the role of slaves in transferring rice growing technology from West Africa to Georgia and South Carolina. She argues that Africans learned the technology in their homeland and brought it to the American South, training their owners to use the techniques. Portia James then reviews the role of African Americans in the growth of technology. Particularly interesting is her discussion of the role of patent law in enforcing racist understandings of the technological competence of nonwhites. Sinclair then offers a brief examination of attempts to change the prevailing historical view of African American contributions to technology via newspaper comics.

Nina Lerman provides an excellent discussion of the industrial education movement and its impact on African Americans. This is an extremely rich discussion, full of subtle but profound insights. Barbara Garrity-Blake then provides an examination of work songs of African American fishermen. This is a fascinating
discussion but seems to provide less progress toward the theme than other essays in the book. A set of pictures from the 1900 Paris Exposition, with commentary by Sinclair, is provided to illustrate some of the points made throughout the book. Kathleen Franz discussion of the automobile in the development of the African American middle class is a treat. She explores the role of race, technology and progress in a well-crafted argument that illustrates the frustration of individual achievement within a progressive time that still suffers from the sin of racism.

In the final three chapters, Rebecca Herzig nicely lays out the major points of interaction between race and technology in recent history, Amy Slaton reviews the development of minority engineering education and Lonnie Bunch looks at the depiction of technology and race in museum depictions of history. These are brief and concise, though meaty chapters. The final section is a rather extensive topical bibliography and resource guide.

This book provides a useful introduction to the history of technology and race as it developed in the United States. It deals well with the impact of racism on distorting the record of African Americans as inventors and innovators. It also deals with the roadblocks that racism creates in the path of inventive African Americans who, absent this constraint, would have given us untold riches in technological advances. However, it is troubling that the potential for oppression in technology was not explored more deeply. There are sections in the topical bibliography on environmental racism and the digital divide, but the role of technology in the service of oppression is hard to find in these pages. More discussion of this theme would have made a stronger book.

Having said that, this is a good book which makes a strong contribution to the scholarship on the history of race and technology. For the most part, the essays are well developed, lively and informative. The editing was skillful and well executed. The book should be very helpful to those who are interested in the intertwining of race and technology in the history of the United States.

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