

personal interviews conducted with these actors. This lack of empirical originality hinders the ability of the author to develop a more in-depth perspective about the question whether Islamists' utilization of three master frames actually results in some transformative changes. An approach based on primary sources and highlighting internal debates and tensions taking place *within* Islamist actors regarding human rights, democracy, and the use of violent means would have made a more significant contribution to the scholarship.

While the book generally provides accurate and well-sourced information, certain observations should be based on research that is more meticulous. For instance, Karagiannis's brief discussion of initial Muslim experiments with democracy in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (77) fails to mention such monumental events as the Tunisian constitution of 1861 and Iran's constitutional revolution of 1905–11. In addition, Alevis in Turkey (89) and Alawites in Syria (162) could not be described as Shiite sects given their highly distinctive belief systems and religious practices.

Overall, scholars interested in Islam and politics will find few theoretical insights and novel empirical findings in *The New Political Islam*. For scholars looking for a balanced and well-written textbook providing a general overview of different configurations of Islamist politics, however, Karagiannis's book could be a reliable choice.

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William E. Connolly: *Facing the Planetary: Entangled Humanism and the Politics of Swarming*. (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2017. Pp. 232.)

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William Connolly is probably best known for his work in the 1960s and '70s on the ambiguity and ideological contestation of political concepts. From the 1980s, "postmodernist" preoccupations began to appear in those of his writings that are now identified with "new pluralism," and it is in this idiom that he is now tackling man's relationship with the natural world.

In *Facing the Planetary*, Connolly argues that conventional political theory is "sociocentric": that is, it interprets and explains social processes by reference to other social processes alone (15). In the real world, he says, there are multiple series of temporal, self-organizing "force fields" which "impinge upon each other and human life in numerous ways" (4)—systems that are

“creative” and “teleodynamic,” exhibiting “micro-intentions” (46) to which man’s “hubristic modes of explanation” (83) are “insufficient.” For Connolly, we must affirm our “entanglements” with—and indeed our “belonging” to (33)—these planetary processes, recognizing “agency” in them (55). Meanwhile there is an “urgent” need for an “active cross-regional pluralist assemblage composed of multiple minorities” (34) and “subject positions” (121) to pursue a “politics of swarming.” The beehive, like the human brain, is a “decision-making assemblage without a central coordinator” (124). From “creative role experimentation,” Connolly says, we will “deepen appreciation of the attractions and sweetness of life on this rare planet” (119), and a “new event will surely erupt” (128), perhaps “general strikes in numerous countries and regions at the same time” (35). Political theorists meanwhile must “break the theory of individualism” (59) and work “creativity” into “familiar images of desire, will, agency, intentionality, collectivity, and freedom” (65), replacing “generic responsibility” with “regionally distributed responsibilities and vulnerabilities” (33). But as “specific intellectuals” and “scouts” of the swarm (124–25), political theorists must also become *activists*, and use their skills strategically to “excite modes of response” (125). The book closes with an illuminating “Postlude” conversation between Connolly and Bradley J. Macdonald, who has written favorable reviews of Connolly’s two previous books, *A World of Becoming* (2011) and *The Fragility of Things* (2013).

*Facing the Planetary* comes off the same production line as its two predecessors, inspiring in the reader a strong feeling of déjà vu. The discussions of the titular “planetary” and “politics of swarming” are short and, sadly, little more than exercises in repackaging old ideas. Indeed, because *Facing the Planetary* is so similar, it also perpetuates the same errors that have been detailed at length elsewhere in the *Review of Politics*: Connolly’s selections and interpretations of natural science are invalid, his theory of “creative freedom” is unusable, and his attack on individual reason in favor of “affect” is unwarranted and regrettable. I will not rehearse those criticisms here. (See *Review of Politics* 79, no. 1 [2017]: 73–98; also *Journal of Wyndham Lewis Studies*, no. 6 [2015]: 83–107.)

Rather I would like to discuss some of the linguistic and methodological difficulties of what, drawing on Edward Said, I think we can now call Connolly’s “late style”—a style in which Bradley Macdonald finds “serene tenacity, heightened theoretical articulation, and insistent political militancy” (*Perspectives on Politics* 12, no. 2 [2014]: 519).

Connolly has retained from his early work the view that prevailing concepts and modes of argument in politics constitute “an institutionalized structure of meanings that channels political thought and action in certain directions”; that they “impede the work of any student of politics” and are “particularly corrosive of efforts to explore radical perspectives on politics”; and that to use established language is “to accept terms of discourse loaded in favor of established practices” (*The Terms of Political Discourse* [Heath, 1974], 1–2). The “professionalism of mainstream political science” in the


1960s, Connolly explains, “demeaned and punished the very activism needed” (177).

Connolly’s solution is to deploy a highly romantic and often quite bromidic language of excitement: his approved thinkers are “adventurers” (9) who offer poetic “dramatization” (167) to inspire the envisioned “gratitude for the excess of life over being” (57). There will be “dancing in the streets out of joy in the diversity of life and attachment to this rare planet” (148). His style draws upon the Marxist enthusiasm for “action” and “tactics.” But his vocabulary also owes a great deal to the “left-Nietzschean” (190) habit of replacing the terminology of logical relation with ambiguous metaphors of movement. Concepts are frequently described as “folded” into one another, for instance, “imbricated” and (especially frequent) “bumpy.”

Unfortunately, many of Connolly’s neologisms simply rename ideas that are either commonplace—“entangled humanism” (168–74), the view that humans are not extricable from natural processes—or, if not commonplace, unsubstantiated: “the molecular or visceral registers of cultural life” (128), for instance, are left unexplained. It is my view that, in *Facing the Planetary*, as in Connolly’s “late” work generally, the correct balance between terminological innovation and reliance on jargon has not been found. Connolly is conscious that established language can constrain individual thought, but he forgets that it also *facilitates* the correct operation of research communities. Social-scientific language games might be restrictive and mutable, but that does not mean that they can be arbitrarily replaced with whatever fragmentary rhetoric might better serve the writer’s preferred narratives.

The problem is both linguistic and methodological. As academic conventions are flouted, Connolly allows himself to assert that various measures are “what is needed today,” rather than building a case for them. Debates on the nature of freedom, human agency, and “panexperientialism” are half-entered; major figures including Hayek, Berlin, and Colin McGinn are fleetingly diagnosed and dismissed, with Connolly mostly returning to his claim that they ignore *the planetary* (e.g., 193) and are tainted with “sociocentrism” (e.g., 20). But he never demonstrates that their arguments really are thereby falsified. To ignore is not necessarily to make a mistake. The assumption that haunts the primary charge of *Facing the Planetary* seems to be that, because processes are not separated in the world of becoming, the selectivity of scientists and cultural theorists is illegitimate. If this is indeed the methodological presupposition underpinning Connolly’s broad diagnosis of political and cultural theory, he needs to show that it is sound. Too often, however, demonstration gives way to rhetoric. Connolly rounds up his targets into lists: “neo-Kantians, Straussians, deliberationists, rational choice theorists, and finalists” (57); “dualism, exceptionalism, organic gradualism, and blind materialism” (117); “neoliberal ideology, the transnational oil-coal-gas combine, the right edge of evangelicalism, old-timers on Fox News, and bought climate scientists” (148)—and most universities, which are “under the control of neoliberal presidents and boards” (185). His favored positions

are labeled “wise,” “noble,” and “creative,” while opponents are “resentful,” “nihilistic,” “denialist,” “dangerous,” “aggressive,” or “neofascist.” It is a shame that a thinker once sensitive to the subtleties of political language should have resorted in later work to so much name-calling.

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Lisa Pace Vetter: *The Political Thought of America's Founding Feminists*. (New York: New York University Press, 2017. Pp. v, 289.)

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*The Political Thought of America's Founding Feminists* makes a significant contribution by uncovering and establishing the theoretical importance of some early American feminist writers who have been undeservedly neglected, while at the same time enhancing our understanding of the complex lineage of some more widely recognized strands of the American political tradition. The book discusses six early American feminists—Frances Wright, Harriet Martineau, Angelina Grimké, Sarah Grimké, Lucretia Mott, and Elizabeth Cady Stanton—devoting a chapter to each and arguing that, taken together, the work of these women represents a “constituent moment” in American history by laying the groundwork for “a transformative understanding of democratic citizenship” (5, 6). Vetter builds on existing scholarship but also advances it by delving into the work of these early feminists to highlight their distinctive theoretical contributions (where they exist) while also relating their writings and ideas to other major influential thinkers such as Tocqueville, Smith, and Bentham. Vetter thus situates her analysis of early American feminism within a broader, contextualizing discussion of how the Scottish Enlightenment “crossed the pond.”

The first chapter, on Frances Wright, seeks to counter the typical representation of Wright as a mere popularizer of better-known theories such as Bentham’s utilitarianism and Robert Owen’s utopian socialism. Vetter argues that Wright “expands and improves upon these theories to develop an insightful and original analysis of the American project” (24). For example, Wright advances “an early version of socialism that envisions itself as the extension and fulfillment of American democratic ideals” (43), especially those articulated in the Declaration, and not simply as a source of critique. Moreover, Wright’s implicit theory of citizenship anticipates