

versary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. And, he also expands his coverage to three-wheeled vehicles by recounting his experiences riding in a rikshaw in oppressively crowded Dhaka, Bangladesh, dubbed the “rikshaw capital of the world” (p. 221).

A few years ago, I was cruising on the Seine in France when I witnessed a young man on the shore heave his bike into the river, a scene that illustrated firsthand Rosen’s point that today waterways in France, England, and The Netherlands have become common depositories for unwanted or stolen bicycles. (I think the fellow I observed had fallen off his bike and gave it a watery burial in a fit of anger.) So Rosen is cognizant of both the abuses as well as the uses of this universal vehicle. Rosen’s book is replete with information like this, as well as his own experiences, that make it an engaging read.

A disappointment for me is that Rosen barely mentions the importance of bicycles to childhood and play. Not until page 252 does he make the point that “a child’s first bike ride . . . enacts the flight from the clutches of adult caretakers.” As anyone who grew up riding a bike can attest, this simple invention has been central to a youngster’s quest for freedom. True, a kid might have used it to run errands for the family, but mostly their ride was one of escape to join peers in acts of independent play and joy. Rosen’s use of recollections of such acts of release from interviews and autobiographies or, better yet, from young people’s own voices would have enriched the book.

—Howard P. Chudacoff, *Brown University, Providence, RI*

Cosplay: A History

Andrew Liptak

New York: Saga Press, 2022. Foreword, introduction, acknowledgments. 368 pp. \$24.99, paper. ISBN: 9781534455825

Andrew Liptak’s *Cosplay: A History* discusses the development, creativity, and playfulness of fan costumes. In recent years, cosplay (the dress-up and reenactment of fictional characters) has become more popular at conventions and social media. By now, it is a well-known practice within fan cultures and also known by outsiders. Liptak’s book explores the history of these cultures in detail. Through its many examples and cases, it paints a lively picture of these cultures, as well as their participants and their passion for costuming. The book provides insider views as well, drawing from Andrew Liptak’s experience as a journalist, historian, and member of the costuming organization of *Star Wars’* The 501st Legion.

Cosplay: A History discusses the long history of cosplay and cosplaying, including such traditions as Halloween. Cosplay’s development happened alongside the growing popularity of fan conventions. Different competitions, groups, and scenes emerged and gradually became more international, as Liptak explains. Recent trends in cosplay are discussed as well. Cosplay, for instance, is increasingly mediated by internet platforms. Liptak discusses the different technologies that drive cosplay and are used to create communities, share tutorials, photoshoots, and new types of content. How have online forums, social media, and gaming contributed to the success of cosplay? Liptak traces the development of these different

platforms and also examines what forms of cosplay content have flourished lately, such as YouTube videos, TikTok dancing, and streaming.

The design of costumes takes a prominent role in the book as well. Liptak, for instance, explores the ways in which fans and makers add to existing stories and characters. Why do fans choose to represent characters in costume, and what is the relationship between franchises and costuming? The book provides many insights around this, as well as the maker culture of cosplay. How do fans, for instance, move from amateur to pro and sell their own costumes? What does professional cosplay look like?

Furthermore, readers can find insights on the legalities of cosplay, its economy, the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, and more. Liptak's work offers an insightful and comprehensive guide of fan costuming as a practice, as storytelling, and as a subculture. It is an exhaustive work about this practice that will certainly be of use to media and fan scholars, and to fans interested in the practice. My only complaint is that the work explores specific histories of costuming at the expense of others. It focuses more on the development of fan costumes in a Northern American context than on that in Japan and other countries. This limitation could have been corrected by drawing from other cosplay scholarship and documentation to compare more across cultures. However, the subcultures themselves, particularly in Western countries, as well as their complexity, are studied in great detail in this book. Liptak, for instance, provides some nuanced reflections on gatekeeping in these commu-

nities, as well as their sexist and racist aspects. More broadly speaking, the book also includes sections on cosplay and politics and on protest cosplay and activism. Although cosplay is not an inclusive hobby yet, it can be used to spur change.

A key strength of the book is that it is very accessible and outlines the history of cosplay in a clear and thorough way. The poignant cases and examples really bring this volume to life. Overall, *Cosplay: A History* is a full guide to cosplay for newcomers and long-term fans. This is a fantastic read if you have a passion for cosplay but also if you want to know more as an outsider.

—Nicolle Lamerichs, *Utrecht University of Applied Sciences, Utrecht, Netherlands*

Gaming Sexism: Gender and Identity in the Era of Casual Video Games

Amanda C. Cote

New York: NYU Press, 2020.

Introduction, conclusion, acknowledgments, appendix, gameography, notes, bibliography, index, and about the author. 280 pp. \$30.00, paper. ISBN: 9781479802203

Amanda Cote has undertaken an ambitious project in *Gaming Sexism*, which seeks both to explore the already completed academic work about gaming sexism and to fill in the existing gaps. In a day and age when the attempts to reverse women's rights are growing in Western society, it is particularly pertinent to explore women's experiences in all fields—