movement, followed by a précis of Buddhist history and doctrinal developments. Section Two, "Traditions," outlines the development of the main traditions within the modern construct "Buddhism." The third and final section of the book considers Buddhist art, Buddhist identities, socially and environmentally engaged Buddhism in the United States, and the global context of American Buddhism. Mitchell briefly addresses the difficulties inherent in determining when nominally Buddhist groups have strayed far enough beyond the (loosely demarcated) mainstream to be considered new religious movements.

Though the subject matter of the text is restricted, the author still faces huge content challenges. Mitchell employs Thomas Tweed's translocal analysis as a framework to approach the multiple strands of converging and diverging cultures, practices, and beliefs that, in aggregate, make up an evolving construct that is both "American" and "Buddhist." This methodology facilitates the author's historical analysis of the roles played by colonialism, orientalism, romanticism, modernism, Transcendentalism, immigration patterns, countercultural movements, and more, in shaping both majority culture perceptions of Buddhism and Asian Buddhists' ongoing reconfigurations of their own traditions. In the later chapters, Mitchell employs feminist and queer theories to examine the intersections of race/ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation that are crucial to the ways in which Americans create their Buddhist identities.

Each chapter concludes with several discussion questions and suggestions for further reading. Select URLs for helpful internet resources are provided in the chapter notes at the back of the book. Mitchell provides a useful glossary of Buddhist terms in Sanskrit, Pali, Chinese, Korean, Japanese, and Tibetan (including diacritical marks, which are not given in the text), along with an extensive bibliography and index. The black and white photos, maps, and charts are well chosen and effective.

Unlike some textbooks, *Buddhism in America* offers both excellent content and a methodologically astute analysis. Despite the sophistication of the analytical methods, the book is written in clear language that most students are likely to understand. Undergraduates, graduate students, general readers, and non-specialists will all find the book engaging and informative.

Scott Lowe, University of Wisconsin–Eau Claire

Cyber Zen: Imagining Authentic Buddhist Identity, Community, and Practices in the Virtual World of Second Life. By Gregory Price Grieve. Routledge, 2017. 265 pages. $108.00 cloth; $35.96 paper; ebook available.

The popular online virtual world, Second Life, is the object of this ethnographic study in which Gregory Grieve and his research team at

the University of North Carolina at Greensboro explore the intersection of Buddhism and digital media. Grieve's work is part of Routledge's Media, Religion and Culture series, which analyzes the role of media in the history of contemporary practices of religious belief. The focus of *Cyber Zen* is Second Life's Zen community, comprising five groups in 2008 totaling about 3,800 members. The community's central practice consisted of online meditation, which in this context meant the avatars rested on cushions for 20–30 minutes while users meditated in front of their computer screens.

Grieve concedes that online religious practice can be trivial and perhaps even harmful if they are distractions from real-life genuine experiences. However, pixels on a screen open the door to a fascinating, sophisticated, and, according to Grieve, authentic spirituality that can clearly be very meaningful to participants. A central conclusion is that Second Life Zen has only a family resemblance to canonical Buddhism, but that it is authentic Buddhism nonetheless, because users do existentially explore and create alternative identities and communities.

If physicality and face-to-face interaction are considered essential components of authentic Buddhism, then Second Life Zen fails. Grieve rejects this view as a nineteenth-century romantic notion, however, and a quest for Asian spirituality untouched by the modern West. Traditional religious structures are giving way to novel forms, which should not be rejected out of hand, he argues.

Grieve explores in some depth various aspects of this digital spirituality, including the following. A cybersocial being emerges from the feedback between user and their avatar. Grieve categorizes residents as cyborgs, that is, flesh and blood people on the computer keyboard and avatars in the virtual world. These cyborg residents develop genuine community through their online meditation and off-the-cushion events and interactions. These groups meet in a virtual place, built by residents, that serves as a liminal alternative to real-life work and home.

The findings of this study, while thoroughly grounded in the history of cybernetics and in Buddhist doctrine and practice, are well illustrated in online interviews with Second Life residents, i.e,. avatars, befriended by the author and his research assistants. To give a sense of the variety of Second Life Buddhist residents, in this study we meet Cassius Lawndale, the founder of Hoben Mountain Zen Retreat, a key community analyzed; Buddha Hat, a classically trained scholar of Theravada Buddhism; Twinkle MoonLight, disabled in real life and using Second Life as her major form of socializing; and Georgina Florida, a meditation leader suspected of being a male in real life.

More social-psychological analysis would be helpful to better understand the nature of virtual world experience and the groups' residents form. This is not so much a criticism of the work as it is identifying a need for further study. One finding that needs additional investigation is

Grieve's claim that deficits in personal relationships seemed to lead residents to participate in Second Life.

Innovative virtual world spiritualties are likely to increase. With his deep understanding of traditional Buddhism and cybernetics, Grieve is well equipped as a guide through this dynamic intersection of Zen and digital media. We need more studies like this one to understand digital spirituality both in terms of contemporary culture and the evolution of religion.

Calvin Mercer, East Carolina University

Architects of Buddhist Leisure: Socially Disengaged Buddhism in Asia's Museums, Monuments, and Amusement Parks. By Justin Thomas McDaniel. University of Hawai'i Press, 2017. 240 pages. $68.00 cloth; $28.00 paper; ebook available.

Justin McDaniel's book *Architects of Buddhist Leisure*, the first in the new Contemporary Buddhism series from University of Hawai'i Press, is a study of the often overlooked daily leisure activities that take place at certain monuments, parks, and museums all across the Buddhist world, as part of what the author cleverly calls "socially disengaged Buddhism." Sites such as the Suôi Tiên Amusement Park in Vietnam, or the Sendai Daikannon in Japan, are not what scholars have traditionally considered religious spaces, since they are neither temples nor monasteries; but they are not entirely secular either, despite the fact that many of these sites include restaurants, as well as shopping and entertainment opportunities, such as amusement parks and karaoke bars.

One of the main goals of McDaniel's book is, in fact, to make the case for a reexamination of what he argues is the traditional (and often artificial) scholarly distinction between the secular and the sacred. Most studies of contemporary Buddhism focus on what academics deem "important" or "serious" religious topics, such as doctrine, scripture, or ritual practice, which have a tendency to present Buddhism as a religion that rejects desire and pleasure, and that is more concerned with the karmic consequences of actions than in their enjoyment. McDaniel makes a convincing argument for the importance of introducing leisure studies as part of a broader understanding of how Buddhists actually live and practice religion in their daily lives. In his own words, he wants to reclaim "the joy of Buddhists—the sensuous, the entertaining, and beautiful aspects of Buddhist life that can be overlooked in attempts to get at 'actual Buddhism'" (ix).

In order to make his case, McDaniel offers three main arguments, that will also be the lenses through which he will explore three different Buddhist leisure sites. First, McDaniel argues that the locations