

## Book Reviews

John B. Frantz and William Pencak, eds., *Beyond Philadelphia: The American Revolution in the Pennsylvania Hinterland*.

(University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1998. Pp. 273. \$55.00 cloth, \$19.95 paper.)

Professors John B. Frantz and William Pencak of Penn State University conceived of this volume as a way to redress the lack of scholarship on the American Revolution in Pennsylvania outside Philadelphia. They recruited historians to write chapters on different counties and regions of the state, focusing on their role in the Revolutionary struggle against Great Britain, and the social, political, and economic impact of the war. By looking at eight localities, each with a unique revolutionary experience, the book contributes substantially to our understanding of the Revolution as a civil war.

Similar to the South and the region around New York City, the Wyoming and Juniata valleys witnessed constant fighting among Americans—loyalists, patriots, and Indians. In places closer to Philadelphia, such as Bucks County, battles among tories, whigs, and neutrals were more political than military, but still were significant in aiding or impeding the patriots' success.

The multiplicity of stories helps explain how the Quaker province became the radical state; it provides detail about the impact of local allegiances on George Washington's ability to wage war, such as his failure to obtain adequate supplies and troops in Bucks County before the battles of Trenton and Princeton; and it suggests that for settlers and Indians in northern and western Pennsylvania the contest between the Continental Congress and Britain was actually the sideshow to their own tragic struggle over land. *Beyond Philadelphia* demonstrates, like Ronald Hoffman's work on Maryland, Joy and Richard Buel's biography of Mary Fish Silliman, Alfred Young's sketch of George Robert Twelves Hewes, and others, that we can understand why Americans fought the British—or refused to fight—only by examining their actions up close.

Frantz and Pencak argue, in an introduction that usefully provides context for the volume's nine essays, that three patterns characterized the Revolution in Pennsylvania. In general, rural Pennsylvanians voiced little concern about British taxation and imperial "reforms" until the Coercive Acts of 1774 (much like Robert Gross found in his study of Concord, Massachusetts). Rosemary S. Warden and Owen S. Ireland illustrate the first pattern in their essays, respectively, on Chester and Bucks counties. These localities, dominated by pacifist Quakers, dropped support for anti-British protests once Congress declared independence. Whig elites soon took control, disenfranchising the

Friends with a test oath banned by their religion. Quaker and Anglican neutrals and loyalists apparently prospered economically, though, selling supplies to Philadelphia even during the British occupation. The second pattern pertained to what Frantz and Pencak call "Pennsylvania's middle region—Berks, York, Cumberland, and Lancaster counties and the Lehigh Valley—[which] saw no internal revolution and not much violence within its communities, despite ethnic and religious diversity" (p. xix). According to Karen Guenther, Paul E. Doutrich, Robert G. Crist, and Eugene R. Slaski, these areas gained greater power after 1775 and moved the state toward radicalism. Most Pennsylvanians in this region welcomed destruction of the old Quaker regime as well as independence from Britain.

The third pattern took place on the frontier, in the Wyoming and Juniata valleys. Their histories were not identical. On the upper Susquehanna, as Frederick J. Stefon argues, the Revolution became part of the ongoing struggle between Connecticut settlers sponsored by the Susquehannah Company, who contended that the Wyoming (present-day Wilkes-Barre) area lay within the bounds of Connecticut's charter, and settlers who purchased land from the Penn family on the basis that William Penn's 1681 charter superseded Connecticut's. In the Juniata Valley, according to Tim H. Blessing, settlers called themselves whigs, but were really fighting their third war in a quarter century against Native Americans for control of the land. Isolated from Philadelphia and imperial politics, the Juniata settlers considered Indians the enemy. Gregory Knouff, in his essay on backcountry soldiers, graphically depicts the frontier violence, arguing that among Revolutionary troops it generated racist hatred toward all Indians. Knouff contrasts the attitudes of officers, who believed that Native Americans were inferior and dupes of the British but distinguished between hostile and friendly Indians, and ordinary soldiers who called all Indians savages and, as in the case of Gnadenhutten in 1782, killed even pacifist Moravian Indian women and children.

In their introduction and epilogue, the editors pull together these varied essays and demonstrate the necessity of local studies to understanding the progress of the Revolutionary war. Each of the authors suggests directions for further research. Clearly, to identify the sources of support for and opposition to the Revolution, and to understand how the patriots won, we need to go beyond Philadelphia.

Jean R. Soderlund, *Lehigh University*

Edited by Paul H. Smith and Ronald M. Gephart: *Letters of Delegates to Congress, 1774-1789: Vol. 25, March 1, 1788 - July 25, 1789 with Supplement, 1774-87.*

(Washington: Library of Congress, 1998. Pp. xxx 843, \$56.00 cloth).

This volume is the 25th in a series of 26. The final volume is pending in 2000. Covering March 1788-July 1789, volume 25 also includes supplementary material for the years covered by earlier volumes (1774-1787). In addition to the adoption of the Federal Constitution and planning for the implementation of the new Federal government, the major issues confronting Congress in 1788-1789 were administration of western lands, Kentucky statehood, and Indian affairs. Failure to achieve quorum was a constant problem during this period, especially in the months immediately preceding the new government. Beginning in October 1788, the Continental Congress did not reach quorum; on November 3, 1788, only two delegates attended the first session of the government that year.

Delegates were very concerned with the progress of the Constitution's ratification; they wrote home with news and rumors and requested the same in return. Another issue was the location of the new government's capital. Philadelphia eventually lost out to New York, which was named the temporary home. The discussion on the topic, both inside and outside Congress, grew heated. Pennsylvania John Armstrong, Jr. wrote of the matter from New York to his future wife Alida Livingston. "I know not whether a Pennsylvania Delegate can mingle in any society without a risque of either insult or seduction . . . (if the reports says true) that when the tongue (their natural weapon) fails, they resort to the hand, & even box & pull hair" (p. 254).

The supplementary material will be of particular interest to scholars of Congress and the Revolutionary era. Most of it is full text, although some entries are corrections or addenda to items published in earlier volumes. The supplement, which amounts to over 200 pages, would be even more useful if the delegates were identified by state. If a reader is unfamiliar with a delegate, he or she must consult the list in the volume that covers the appropriate period, or the comprehensive list that will be published in volume 26. One of the more fascinating additions is the full text of "Proceedings of a Treaty Held at Easton [January 30-February 6, 1777]" (pp. 601-611). The treaty, which was referred to the committee for Indian affairs, was not well received by Congress. The committee's report was tabled. In volume 6 of *Letters*, the editors "mistakenly reported that 'no copy of the offending treaty is known to exist'" (p. 611). The surviving treaty was located in the Scottish Record Office.

The personal lives of the delegates are intertwined with their professional duties in many of the letters. Some, however, do not mention Congress-

sional business at all. The March 4, 1777 letter from John Hancock to Dorothy Hancock makes no reference to government or war. After remarking upon the problems caused by bad roads and an ice-blocked ferry, Hancock relayed his problems with a servant. "My Boy Joe has Treated me very ill, he drank a deal of my Wine and in the Waggon, broke & lost several Bottles, dropt out my Trunk which was luckily found, & was brought to the Tavern drunk & put to Bed, I shall turn him adrift at Phila. I am Glad I did not leave him with you, he would have been a plague to you" (p. 613). Hancock's irritation is palpable 222 years later.

The editors of this project have done an impressive job of locating material, no matter how far-flung. The only evidence of the existence of some manuscripts was information available from auction catalogues. In these cases, the editors have included descriptions from the catalogues or transcriptions from catalogue illustrations. For example, the Hancock letter was transcribed from a 1992 Sotheby's catalogue. Previously published transcriptions or descriptions were used for documents no longer extant.

*Letters* contains a timeline of Congressional actions and a list of delegates, by state, with attendance records. A complete summary of all delegates with attendance information will appear in the final volume. It is well-indexed by both name and subject. The series, without illustrations, is also available on CD-ROM from Historical Database of Summerfield, Florida.

The editors have provided easy access to important material that was, in many cases, unavailable or difficult to locate. *Letters of Delegates to Congress* depicts not just the workings of the Continental Congress, but the lives of the delegates. It is a wonderful reference tool.

Laurie A. Rofini, *Chester County Archives*

**Laura Rigal, *The American Manufactory: Art, Labor, and the World of Things in the Early Republic*.**

(Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998. Pp. 253 . Cloth \$29.95.)

Laura Rigal's *The American Manufactory* is an attempt to bridge the gap between mainstream history and theory-oriented cultural studies. Rigal, an associate professor of English and American Studies at the University of Iowa, focuses on the early national period when the "manufactory" briefly emerged. (Rigal uses the term "manufactory" to mean the transitional stage when craft-organized production was experiencing "the gradual . . . rationalization and mechanization that define mass production" [p. 14].) But what she really wants to examine is not labor or manufacturing but federalism as a structuring cultural phenomenon. Hers is a monumentally ambitious and abstract project. In examining the "exhibitionary complex" (museums, collections, antholo-

gies, etc.) that emerged in Philadelphia after the Revolution, Rigal unveils the underlying ways in which “as forums and formats of federalism, the arts and sciences of Philadelphia constituted the extended republic as a set of stages for the performance of production itself” (p. 10). “Federalist-era republican festivity,” exhibitions, and related phenomena, she argues, together serve “as a grand federal mechanism for the creation and division of labor and the constitution of an American working class” (p. 54). Encountering such speculative formulations as the ones just quoted, readers not already steeped in the discourses of neo-Marxist, post-structuralist cultural studies will find themselves struggling to enter the author’s world. Mercifully for the unconverted, there are also many stretches of more traditional historical narrative and analysis.

The bulk of *The American Manufactory* is divided into three parts of two chapters each, with chapters focusing primarily on some publication or exhibition that either took place or was produced in Philadelphia after the Revolution. In the first division, “Federal Mechanics,” one chapter considers the Grand Federal Procession of 1788 and William Russell Birch’s 1800 engraving depicting the building of the frigate *Philadelphia*, both of which, the author argues, “rehearse . . . the centrality of viewership to the successful raising of the federal frame” (p. 46). A second chapter, “The Mechanic as the Author of His Life,” discusses the manuscripts “Life” and Steamboat History” of Philadelphia metalworker, inventor, and failed self-promoter John Fitch. In the second division, “The Mommoth State,” the first chapter takes up *The Artist and His Museum* (1822) and *The Exhumation of the Mastodon* (1806-8), Charles Willson Peale’s two extraordinary paintings depicting the excavation of his famous mastodon skeleton and its display in his Philadelphia museum. There follows a chapter on “The American Lounger: Figures of Failure and Fatigue in the *Port Folio*, 1801-1809.” The final division, titled enigmatically “The Strong Box,” considers, first, Alexander Wilson’s nine-volume *American Ornithology* (1807-1814) as an exhibition of “feathered federalism,” and then takes up John Neagle’s well known painting, *Pat Lyon at the Forge* (1829), in the context of Lyon’s complicated career.

In the extensive footnotes as well as in her text, Rigal moves easily between the worlds of traditional historical studies and post-modern discourse. For example, after noting the standard interpretation of the *Port-Folio* as “a mouthpiece for the anti-Jacobin economic, foreign, and cultural policies of the Federalist period,” Rigal argues that “the American loungeur suggests that . . . republican disinterest and detachment cannot be understood apart from the expansion and proliferation of an early industrial commodity market—international, incomprehensible, imperial, disintegrating, disorganizing—that is brought flickeringly into view by . . . the loungeur” (p. 122). Aside from the issue of the number of assumptions that are embedded in the list in this sentence, many historian-readers will find the “flickering” meaning she perceives

far too evanescent. At times, she pushes an agenda mechanically, as when, for example, she finds the street grid in William Russell Birch's map of Philadelphia in his 1800 collection of engravings to be "individuating, egalitarian, and homogenizing" (p. 50) when other quite contradictory "readings" are possible.

In the end, Rigal has not succeeded in bridging the great divide. In cultural studies circles, *The American Manufactory* will probably be widely praised. Outside those ethereal readers, her book, for all its ingenuity in discovering (or inventing) connections among federalist-era cultural phenomena, will likely prove more provoking than provocative.

Gary Collison, *Pennsylvania State University, York*

**Alice Ford, *Edward Hicks: Painter of the Peaceable Kingdom*.**

(Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998. Reprint of 1952 edn. Pp. 184. Cloth \$24.95.)

Writing a review of a book originally published in 1952 is always a challenge. The fact that there is enough interest in the volume after almost one half of a century is a testament to its worth. The subject matter is, of course, Edward Hicks, probably the best known folk painter in American history. The republication comes in time for a major show of the artist's work which was originated by the Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Folk Art Museum in Williamsburg, Virginia, and which will be touring several other major museums in America, including the Philadelphia Museum of Art. Carolyn Weekley of the Williamsburg museum, who curated the exhibition and wrote the handsome new volume on Hicks (*The Kingdoms of Edward Hicks*) which accompanies the exhibition, composed a forward to this new edition in which she acknowledges her debt to this class work. "This volume" Weekley writes, "unlike many other early American art historical studies published from the 1930's through the 1950's continues to be a vital source for those interested in the artist's life and work" (xv).

What makes this work special is a set of circumstances that cannot be duplicated today. The research for the book was undertaken at the right time and in the right place. The bulk of Hicks documentation was locally held. Hick's granddaughter, Sarah Worstall Hicks, who died in 1946, preserved and collected many of the family letters and papers. Hick's great-grandson, Robert W. Carle, with a significant knowledge of Hicks descendants, was able to open many doors for the researcher. Carle and his brother would even provide the funds to permit the inclusion of several color plates in the 1952 edition. In the ensuing 45 years or so this intimate circle has vanished.

Additional praise should be given to the author, Alice Ford, who was a meticulous researcher, who ferreted out the most obscure references to her subject, and who wrote with clarity and grace: not always an easy task when religious philosophy was concerned. It always surprises people to learn that Hicks was not born a Quaker, but rather converted to the faith. Once a Quaker, the Society of Friends' religious principles guided him and he became an admired fiery preacher who traveled widely, and plunged deeply into the Orthodox-Hicksite dispute which rocked the usually quiet Quaker world. Edward, sided with his cousin Elias Hicks, for whom the movement was named.

Trained as a carriage painter, Hicks made his living painting utilitarian objects and he considered his easel painting a "weakness," but one he returned to often during his life. Many of his Peaceable Kingdoms were gifts of the spirit to friends and relations, but he expected to be paid well for his other productions. He was a complex man behind a simple veneer, perhaps, the Benjamin Franklin of painting. This well-written volume deserves to be in the library of not only art historians but also in those of scholars of Quaker and Pennsylvania history as well.

Irwin Richman, *Pennsylvania State University at Harrisburg*

**Edited by Beverly Wilson Palmer and Holly Byers Ochoa. *The Papers of Thaddeus Stevens*, volume 2, *April 1865-August 1868*.**

(Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1998. Pp. xxii, 547. \$37.50 Cloth).

Sometimes timing is everything. At a moment when the nation was enduring the second impeachment and trial of a president, along came this fine collection of the papers of Pennsylvania congressman Thaddeus Stevens, one of the prime movers behind the impeachment of another president, Andrew Johnson. Its appearance proved timely in another way as well, for one of the lessons of the crisis just past is how little impact the revolution in Reconstruction historiography has had on some people, especially that charmed circle of scholars who seem to spend much more time dispensing what passes for history on television program after program than in actually considering the events of which they speak, and who seem far more practiced on what to wear, when to smile, and how to court the host than on what they presume to explain.

Stevens himself would have railed against portrayals of Johnson as a victim of rabid partisanship and the target of a vindictive and partisan impeachment effort by venal Radical Republicans who in their eagerness to punish the defeated South looked to destroy efforts to reunite the country. For if anyone was the prototype of a Radical Republican, it was Thaddeus Stevens. As the letters and speeches reprinted in this volume show, he had a way with words,

and no one ever doubted where he stood. Unlike many of his colleagues, from the beginning he expressed doubts about the willingness of the seventeenth president to protect black rights or to ensure that the Confederate spirit was forever eradicated; he pushed for the fundamental reorganization of southern society through the confiscation of plantation estates and the redistribution of land to the freedpeople. He was just as willing to deride the measures of his fellow Republicans as being insufficient to meet the challenges posed by emancipation and reunion as he was willing to assail the president's embrace of white supremacy; his sharp tongue and pen proved a fitting counterpart to the public tauntings of the chief executive. And yet the very tenor of these letters and speeches reveals that all too often Stevens did not prevail. Confiscation and redistribution never took root; neither did a prolonged military occupation of the South. In the end impeachment proved a miserable failure, the culmination of an approach to Reconstruction that concentrated more upon handcuffing the president to prevent him from obstructing legislative initiatives than it did on establishing a just and lasting peace that protected black Americans and offered them meaningful opportunities to define for themselves what freedom meant.

This volume includes a selection of the microfilm edition of the Thaddeus Stevens Papers, and doubtless scholars and researchers should turn to that far more comprehensive edition. However, there is a suggestive sampling of correspondence, both incoming and outgoing, as well as Steven's most important speeches and exchanges on the House floor. The presentation of the texts is clear; the annotation is informative without overshadowing the documents themselves. While Reconstruction and the move to impeach Johnson occupy center stage, readers can also learn about local Pennsylvania politics, monetary policy, and constituent concerns. Much space is taken up by debates and speeches which are reprinted from the *Congressional Globe*, and the best that can be said for their inclusion here is that they make such material more widely available in convenient form with helpful annotation. That, after all, is the major virtue of most selected letterpress editions. However, the nature of documentary editions, together with the available evidence, will force those people interested in learning about Stevens's effectiveness as a legislator and party leader to look elsewhere.

In tandem with Hans Trefousse's recent biography of Stevens, this edition of his letters makes a valiant attempt at rescuing the man from the grips of distorting myth and stereotype. Whether Americans are ready to accept the result is another matter entirely: the renditions of Reconstruction and impeachment broadcast across the nation and reprinted in the press suggest a grim conclusion. One wonders whether Stevens would have been all that surprised.

Brooks D. Simpson, *Arizona State University*



Edited by Randall M. Miller, Harry S. Stout, and Charles Reagan Wilson:  
*Religion and the American Civil War.*

(New York: Oxford, 1998, Pp. xvii, 422, \$24.95 Paper).

This provocative collection of essays (the result of an October 1994 conference held at Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary) asks the deceptively simple question, "What, if anything, did religion have to do with the Civil War?" Collectively, the writers answer that "religion stood at the center of the American Civil War experience" (pp. 3-4).

The individual articles are far too rich and subtle to summarize adequately within the space allotted to this review, but even a cursory survey can suggest the book's scope and usefulness. The articles—which are grouped under the headings Ideas, People, Places, and Comparisons—include information on Biblical interpretation, both Northern and Southern clergy and women, the religious military press, camp revivals, the mythology of the Lost Cause, Irish Catholic soldiers and priests, providential interpretations of the death of Stonewall Jackson, Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address, religious life in the city of Richmond, and a comparison with the English and Spanish civil wars; an insightful "afterword" by James M. McPherson concludes the volume.

Religion and the war were related in three ways. First, religion functioned as a cause. We have long known that evangelical religion drove abolition, and Mark Noll is persuasive here when he argues that divergent readings of the Bible both shaped and limited discussion. Faith inspired some to organize revival meetings for soldiers, and faith could motivate and sustain soldiers faced with the moral ambiguities of camp life and the dangers of battle.

Second, religion provided the discourse by which Americans processed what was happening to them; in Elizabeth Fox-Genovese's apt metaphor, religion was a 'prism' through which people made sense of experience (p. 229). Fast days were a ritual by which the South's identity was created, and the concept of God's providence was the framework within which Northerners understood victory and Southerners coped with defeat. As the editors note, "in victory and defeat, each side looked to God for meaning" (p. 5).

This much seems convincing, but I am less consistently persuaded when the essayists turn to ways that war affected religion. Certain connections seem safe, even obvious; the war caused temporary disruption to organized religion; it split denominations, and it gave independence to black churches. The war also forced a crisis of faith among defeated Southerners: if the cause was righteous and God just, then why had they not prevailed? As Paul Harvey explains, evangelical Southerners blamed defeat on their own "pride, ingratitude, folly, and wickedness," and they predicted that "a sanctified, purified South would rise from the ashes to serve as God's 'last and only hope' in a secularizing nation" (pp. 174-75).

However, I am more skeptical of other proposed 'results'—that the Civil War led to the Social Gospel, to muscular Christianity, to the privatization of Christianity, to more practical and less doctrinal preaching, and to a new importance of the laity, especially of women. One difficulty is that some of these trends began before the war, and for the rest we still must avoid the *post hoc ergo propter hoc* fallacy (as Samuel S. Hill recognizes in his essay). It is the same concern that has long troubled historians of the 1920s about World War I, or that Thomas C. Cochran raised nearly forty years ago when he challenged historical thinking about the Civil War and industrialization.

A further reason for skepticism is that these same trends emerged in Britain where there was no nineteenth-century civil war at all. Possibly our Civil War caused the Social Gospel or muscular Christianity to develop differently here than in Britain, but such an argument would require a comparative analysis like those found in David Englander, ed., *Britain & America: Studies in Comparative History, 1760-1970* (1997).

Nevertheless, we should be grateful for this provocative and thoroughly engaging volume which, as the editors themselves suggest, raises more questions than it answers.

Charles D. Cashdollar, *Indiana University of Pennsylvania*

**Kathleen A. Foster, *Thomas Eakins Rediscovered: Charles Bregler's Thomas Eakins Collection at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts.***

(New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997. Pp. 512. \$65.00 Cloth).

While information in most acknowledgments is perfunctory, Kathy Foster writes of her husband, Henry Glassie, that "He began by teaching me about folklore and has now shown me how to be an art historian" (p. xii). Folklorist Glassie is justly famed for weaving the most minute observations into his rich cultural studies, most spectacularly in his recent *Turkish Traditional Arts Today*. The scholarly problems facing Dr. Foster were two-fold; to write a fresh book about Thomas Eakins and to do so by quite literally incorporating the leavings on the floor of his home and studio. Dr. Glassie was her perfect inspiration.

This reviewer literally has a shelf of studies devoted to the great American painter Thomas Eakins (1844-1916). A Philadelphian by birth, Eakins lived most his life in that city. As an art student he traveled to Paris, and he made one extended trip to the American West. On his death, Eakins life's work was essentially intact in the house at 1729 Mount Vernon Street in Philadelphia where he had lived for almost his entire life. His estate passed to his wife Susan Macdowell Eakins who along with his companion, Mary Adeline Williams, spent the next twenty-two years enhancing Thomas Eakins reputa-

tion. They placed the artist's important works in major American institutions and they helped Lloyd Goodrich to write a biography, published in 1933, which would establish Eakins importance as a major hero in American art. When Mrs. Eakins died in 1938, the bulk of her husband's work was still in the house. A former student of Thomas Eakins, Charles Bregler helped to conserve and organize the art prior to its being sent to heirs and their agents. On a visit to the now emptied house Bregler found "The most tragic and pitiful sight I ever saw. Every room was cluttered with debris as all the contents of the various drawers, closets, etc., were thrown upon the floor. . . . All the life casts were smashed" (p. 1). Bregler gathered up the detritus—memorabilia, drawings, oil sketches, photographs, letters, plasters, etc.—which he added to a small collection of items he had been given by Mrs. Eakins. This became Charles Bregler's Thomas Eakins Collection. Over the years Bregler, who always needed money, sold various items from the collection (most of which are accounted for) and eventually his widow sold the remainder to the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts where the documents and photographs have served as the basis for other publications. The remnants of the Bregler collection is the last major body of Eakins material not heretofore carefully incorporated into a monograph.

Dr. Foster, and her contributors Mark Backrath, Catherine Kimock, Cheryl Leibold and Jeannette Toohey, have not changed our overall view of Eakins, his work styles, and his techniques, but they have enhanced and refined Eakins scholarship. Methodically studying each visual object in the collection, they have provided the reader with freshly drawn insights into selected aspects of Eakins life and into a better understanding of some of his best known works. *Thomas Eakins Rediscovered* is an exemplar of the highest level of modern artistic scholarship: one which significantly incorporates an interdisciplinary approach into its materials and its subject.

Irwin Richman, *Pennsylvania State University at Harrisburg*

**Alan Derickson, *Black Lung: Anatomy of a Public Health Disaster.***

(Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1998. Pp. 244. \$29.95 Cloth).

The history of Pennsylvania's coal miners is frequently punctuated by dramatic strikes, spectacular explosions and cave-ins, broken bodies and severed limbs. Alan Derickson's compact and compelling study directs us instead to the sounds of fatigued and wheezing lungs of sickened miners, a steady dirge droning beneath the tumult of deadly accidents. Although miner's asthma, or coal workers' pneumoniosis (CWP) was well recognized before 1900, for most of the twentieth century medical authorities dismissed, discounted, or

ignored the ailment. In the 1960s, the miners, in successful collective action with sympathetic medical specialists and political activists, rediscovered CWP. Rechristened "black lung," CWP became a recognized, and compensable occupational disease. In this sense, then, black lung was a disease that coal workers fought to get.

The social relations of anthracite coal production guaranteed that coal workers would face decades of exposure to coal dust. To augment their fathers' low wages, many miners' sons became "breaker boys," picking slate out of coal amid clouds of coal dust so thick they could not see across the room. Graduating from the breakers, young men moved slowly up the wage and skill ladder, though further down into the mines. Those who survived cave-ins and fires could look forward to one or two decades as skilled miners before failing health sent them back to the breakers, making them, in the words of a miners' song "twice a boy" (p. 31). The meager pay raises after the 1902 anthracite strikes were insufficient to break this cycle.

The consequence of this life-long exposure was no mystery. Medical specialists over a century ago reported miners' asthma to be nearly ubiquitous among coal workers, and understood it to be distinct in symptoms and cause from silicosis. Despite this early recognition, between 1902 and 1930, miners' asthma disappeared from medical discourse, through a process Derickson calls "the production of misunderstanding." Fear of labor unrest and class conflict "turned many middle-class doctors, engineers, and journalists into loyal partners of the mine operators" (p. 43). These professionals reinvented the very idea of the coal mines, all but touting the healthfulness of coal dust, and framing a sharp distinction between so-called miners' asthma and the "real" occupational disease of silicosis, which was far less prevalent among coal miners. During and after the Great Depression, worker's compensation laws offered little relief for established occupational diseases such as lead poisoning or silicosis; CWP was seldom compensated, unless it was accompanied by silicosis.

Between the end of World War II and the mid-1960s, CWP reclaimed its old status as a distinct disease entity. Under the watch of the wartime Coal Mines Administration, the miners' unions secured industry-funded, union-controlled welfare plans that supported sickened miners and sponsored epidemiological research. Meanwhile, British epidemiologists built a new understanding of CWP that distinguished between it and silicosis. Finally, more and more juries awarded damages to CWP sufferers. Operators had good reason to seek less costly remedies.

Recognition of CWP alone would not suffice, however. By the late 1960s, falling demand for coal had straitened mine operators, crippled the miners' unions, and threatened to bankrupt the union welfare funds. But then "an angry insurgency," comprising miners and "outside agitators" from VISTA, the Poor People's Campaign and advocates such as Ralph Nader, pushed for a

federally-funded redistributive aid program to reduce the incidence and personal costs of CWP, now renamed "Black Lung" (p. 143). The Federal Coal Mine Health and Safety Act of 1969 set air quality standards, guaranteed partially disabled workers safe work at full pay, and established the Black Lung Benefits Program. By the late 1970s, the program was compensating over half a million miners and their families.

Historians from many fields will want to read this book. Derickson tells a complex story in less than two hundred pages by avoiding lengthy historiographic or epistemological meanders. He does presume some familiarity with the social and labor history of the coal mines. On the other hand, Derickson presents medical issues with ample, lucid and relatively jargon-free prose: readers should not be put off by the medical aspects of this essentially social and political history. Labor historians will want to weigh Derickson's sophisticated take on the unions' on-again, off-again advocacy of health issues. Medical historians will find a quite literal example of the "social constructedness" of disease. And most readers will find renewed appreciation for the men who spent half their lives gasping for breath, that a nation might light its cities and heat its homes.

Christian Warren, *Emory University*

**By the Office of the City Controller, City of Philadelphia. *Philadelphia: A New Urban Direction*.**

(Philadelphia: St. Joseph's University Press. 1999. Pp. 293. \$21.95.)

At first sight, it may seem odd that a university press should publish what essentially amounts to a strategic planning document produced by a city agency, and equally curious that the work should be reviewed by an academic journal: after all, academics have a notorious tendency of writing and publishing for each other's eyes only. In the present case, however, scholars from a wide range of disciplines have a great deal to learn from this thoughtful and beautifully produced volume, which tries to imagine how Philadelphia can sustain its much vaunted recovery of the 1990s into the new century. In the process of reviewing and projecting recent trends, historians, geographers and sociologists are offered abundant evidence which in sum comprises a snapshot of the city at the end of the twentieth century. We can wholeheartedly endorse the boast in the book's blurb that this is "an extraordinary insider's account of the inner workings of city government."

For the authors, accurately discerning the *New Urban Direction* must take account of a wide range of factors, including the city's changing industrial basis, the shift to an economy based on services, and the area's changing demographics; and the appropriate response must be a multifaceted plan to

address problems of housing, education, taxation and criminal justice. Briefly, the city must learn not merely to survive, but to become an attractive place, a "preferred place" in which to live or operate a business, or to visit as a tourist. The report is frank about the parlous conditions which overcame the city between about 1965 and 1985, the often grim years of fiscal crisis, soaring violence and political unrest, and the optimistic tone of the present document is happy testimony to the extent of the recent recovery: finally, the city government has the chance to think creatively, and not merely lurch from crisis to crisis.

This is a fascinating document at many levels, and not merely for those interested in the specific case of Philadelphia: most of its lessons can be applied to any metropolis. This wider applicability is especially true of one problem which recurred throughout the document, namely the growing irrelevance of city boundaries as they are presently constituted. If we consider not just the city and county of Philadelphia but the sprawling metropolitan complex which surrounds it, then many of the most familiar urban trends simply cease to apply. In the Metropolitan Statistical Area as a whole, for example, population has not plummeted as it has in the core, and economic development has flourished and continues to boom. It is a truism, but the apparent decline of Philadelphia is in fact not a failure but rather a shift of population outside the core, a revolution made possible by epoch-making changes in transportation technology. Given their bureaucratic responsibilities, we could have forgiven the authors of this report for having ignored trends at this macro level, and it is refreshing to read their assessment of regional conditions in chapter five, their "Declaration of Independence."

In summary, this is a valuable contribution to urban history and social science. Congratulations to St. Joseph's University Press for having tackled such an innovative venture.

Philip Jenkins, *The Pennsylvania State University*



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