BOOK REVIEWS

The Making of the President 1789: The Unauthorized Campaign Biography.

Who says you can’t tell a book by its cover? George Washington appears on this one, in his usual dollar-bill, head-and-shoulders pose. He is not the traditional, bland Pater Patriae with the letter-box mouth, however. Marvin Kitman’s George sports a natty pair of sunglasses and a faint but discernible smirk. He’s a nineties kinda guy (the 1990s, that is!): hip, contemporary, yet more than a little calculating and sly, behind those spiffy green “shades” of his. He is, in short, the perfect presidential—or as Washington himself might have put it, “prefidential”—candidate. And this, with a nod to Theodore White’s campaign series, is the story of how the Mount Vernon machine took the 1789 election against underwhelming odds. Their boy, after all, ran unopposed.

The Making of the President 1789 is a funny and often pointed spoof of Teddy White, politicians and their handlers, the quickie candidate biography, and the tabloid expose replete with bimbos and shady deals. Yet, despite the howlingly bad jokes (the puns are worse) and the general air of pie-in-the-face irreverence, Marvin Kitman proves that a humorist for Newsday and the Los Angeles Times Syndicate can also moonlight in the library with the best of ’em. Indeed, he makes the major league Washington historians—“Colonel” Flexner and “Colonel” Freeman, for instance—active characters in the narrative, because, he says, “their way of seeing history” has affected how people think about the national past today. If the notion of reflecting today’s attitudes in a tale of yesteryear—and vice versa—is sometimes obscured by Kitman’s nonstop volleys of wit, it is nonetheless a sound idea and one perfectly in keeping with the grand traditions of Washington scholarship.

A case in point is Woodrow Wilson’s Washington biography, serialized in Harper’s in 1896. Written for a Gilded Age audience preoccupied with the appurtenances of the good life, the text calls a halt to trenchant analysis whenever the hero enters a room or changes his uniform. At such junctures, Wilson feels compelled to describe every chair, vase, and pleat in what, to modern eyes, might seem agonizing detail. But to his own readers, for whom such items spoke volumes about the character of an individual, pleats and chairs provided the link between the remote figure of Washington and their own world of vibrant consumerism.
The infamous "debunking" biographies of Washington by W.E. Woodward (he coined the term) and Rupert Hughes, published in the mid-1920s, respond to a similar logic. In a period in which hero-worship seemed as old fashioned as high-buttoned shoes and historical goody-goodies held little interest for bright young things who swilled bootleg gin, bought stocks on margin, and danced the Charleston with gay abandon, the newly debunked George Washington came as something of a revelation. Like themselves, it seemed, Washington cussed, ran up impressive bar tabs, speculated, danced—and chased frisky ladies. Like themselves, he didn't care much for reading, unless there was a snappy story to be told, that is, and the unexpurgated adventures of Washington, as recounted by Hughes and Woodward, abounded with snappy stories.

The Kitman Washington is a man for our times: the hero as shopper, the father of malls, President’s Day white sales—and more. He also fools around (à la Gary Hart); fudges the books (like Ollie North); drinks a little, just to be sociable (fill in the name of your congressperson here); and generally comports himself in the style currently favored by his countrypersons. He frets compulsively over the media by which the American idol of today must live or die. He is a superstar, as big as Michael Jackson (check out those sunglasses!), Batman—or George Bush. He is interesting, relevant, alive. No mean feat, considering that all Marvin Kitman had to work with was the forbidding old party embalmed on the dollar bill. . . .

University of Minnesota

KARAL ANN MARLING


This book presents Leonard W. Levy’s characteristically vigorous and at times intemperate response to the argument advanced in recent years by conservative jurists and legal scholars that the original intent of the framers of the Constitution ought to provide the starting point for judicial interpretation and application of the document. The volume consists of seventeen essays, some previously published or summaries of books written by Levy, dealing with judicial review, judicial activism, the Bill of Rights, and several other constitutional issues from the point of view of original intent. The heart of the book is a series of four chapters written specifically for this publication in which Levy considers and rejects the possibility of a jurisprudence of original intent.
By original intent Levy refers principally to the notion that contemporary materials, spoken or written by the authors of the documentary Constitution to explain its meaning, can and ought to provide guidance in constitutional interpretation. Among the reasons he offers for rejecting this approach are that the documentary basis for it is insufficient, that Madison’s notes on the Federal Convention are unreliable and incomplete, and that the records of the state ratifying conventions are even less dependable as a source of historical information. More important, the nature of the Constitution is a barrier to original-intent jurisprudence. The text of the Constitution is often ambiguous or vague; in a sense, Levy asserts, the text is “always unfinished even as it is perpetual.” “A Constitution of this sort does not allow original intent analysis to be dispositive or even meaningful in real cases that raise quite specific questions,” he contends (p. xiv).

Denying that original intent in the sense of extrinsic aids to interpretation has any jurisprudential validity, Levy nevertheless appeals to original intent in precisely this sense in one very important respect. He argues that the framers believed that statements made in the Convention should not be considered authoritative for determining the meaning of the Constitution, and that this original intent should control the entire project of constitutional interpretation. The founders intended the meaning of the Constitution to be determined by reference to the text, construed in the light of conventional rules of interpretation. He then dismisses these rules of interpretation, however, by stating that they are subjective and malleable, and serve only to “rationalize a preexisting viewpoint rather than point the way of reaching a result” (p. 134).

It would be peculiarly self-denying for Levy as a historian to hold that as a matter of historical fact original intent cannot be ascertained. As the essays demonstrate, he himself confidently draws conclusions about the original intent of the framers with respect to many matters, including the meaning of specific constitutional provisions. After analyzing the fallacies of originalist reasoning, he declares: “None of this means that original intent did not exist at all, or that it is at all unascertainable” (p. 298). This would appear to be, in principle, a significant concession to the originalist argument, since it suggests that no epistemological barrier exists to the articulation of an original-intent standard. Nevertheless, Levy insists that “Original intent is not a viable foundation for a jurisprudence of constitutional law” (p. 298). In addition to factors already mentioned, the main reason for this conclusion is the intellectual inadequacy of the judicial mind. Discussing the Supreme Court’s misuse of history to rationalize desired outcomes, he writes: “A court that frequently cannot get its facts right or even understand precedents cannot be trusted to expound a jurisprudence of original intent, which relies completely on history” (p. 310).
Levy's approach to constitutional interpretation, when it is not that of cynical legal realism, is guided by a Bill-of-Rights libertarianism based on the constitutional text which he believes was intended by the framers to be interpreted expansively in favor of the natural rights of individuals. In his own way, he employs a theory of original intent in arguing, for example, that the framers left crucial terms undefined so they could be given the widest possible interpretation, and that in the Ninth Amendment they put their "thumbs down on the 'rights' side of the scales that weight rights against powers" (p. 392).

Although written to demolish the idea of original-intent jurisprudence, this book actually shows the strength, durability, and widespread appeal of the concept to anyone who seriously attempts to interpret the American Constitution.

University of Maryland, College Park  
HERMAN BELZ


This volume of essays on the individual state ratification contests brings together historians, documentary editors, and political scientists. As a general introduction or overview, this collection provides a useful starting point for readers interested in understanding the dynamics of ratification. The introductory essay by the editors concisely summarizes the complex range of forces and ideas at work during this struggle. Indeed, the editors' willingness to concede that ratification cannot be explained in terms of any single generalization is both the great strength and most pronounced weakness of this volume. By focusing on individual state contests and allowing contributors substantial autonomy in setting their own intellectual agendas, the editors have missed an excellent opportunity to sharpen the focus of the contemporary scholarly debate on the Constitution.

Consider the problem of social class, a theme that has figured prominently in scholarly discussions of the Constitution since the Progressive era. While few students of ratification would wish to return to the outmoded categories of Charles Beard, one would hope that the efforts of the "new social history" would figure more prominently in an undertaking of this kind. The problem of social class received scant attention in the essays in this volume. Cecil Eubanks's essay on New York is a notable exception, and Eubanks correctly calls attention to Antifederalist fears that the new Constitution would favor
the interests of America’s natural aristocracy. Although this charge informed Antifederalist rhetoric in other states, the contributors to this volume have chosen to ignore this vital issue. Does this omission imply that social class was not a significant concern in other states? Had the editors set a common agenda, it might have been possible to arrive at an answer to this important question.

Although *Ratifying the Constitution* does not succeed in either reorienting or refocusing the scholarly debate over ratification, a number of individual contributions to this collection do enhance our understanding of particular issues in the ratification debate. Scholars will certainly wish to consult the thoughtful essays by Peter Onuf on Maryland and Lance Banning on Virginia. Onuf’s discussion of Maryland explores how Marylanders interpreted Montesquieu’s often-quoted dictum that republican government is only possible in a small republic in light of their own experiences in a small state during the Confederation period. Banning’s essay on Virginia demonstrates the important role of sectionalism in both Antifederalist and Federalist thought in the Old Dominion.

Readers of this journal are especially likely to be disappointed with the essay by George Graham, Jr., on Pennsylvania. Although Graham provides a nice narrative summary of the ratification struggle in Pennsylvania, he makes no attempt to incorporate the important work of Douglas Arnold or Owen Ireland. Nor does Graham take up the provocative implications of Gordon Wood’s suggestion that Pennsylvania Antifederalist William Findley embodies the proto-liberal qualities of Antifederalism. Pennsylvania might well have provided an ideal occasion to consider the relative importance of liberal and republican ideals in the ideological battle waged over the Constitution.

Wilson Carey McWilliams, who contributed an afterword to this collection, boasts on the dust jacket that this book “completes the debate over ratification.” Rather than mark a definitive account of ratification, this collection of essays confirms the need for further research and a new interpretive synthesis.

*Institute of Early American History and Culture* 

SAUL CORNELL


Generally seen by historians as in effect a dependency of Secretary of the Treasury Alexander Hamilton, the First Federal Congress was the most
important Congress in American history. Its comprehensive agenda breathed life into the Constitution, established precedent and constitutional interpretation which still guide us two hundred years later, and held the Union together when sectional division threatened disunion. Its legislative achievements include creation of the executive and judicial branches, adoption of the Bill of Rights and the first federal revenues, location of the capital city, and funding the federal and state Revolutionary war debt. Most significantly, it brought to conclusion the American Revolution. Even those who have studied its constitutional and legislative accomplishments have neglected its members, other than such luminaries as James Madison, Fisher Ames, and Rufus King. This is not the case with Margaret C.S. Christman. Her bicentennial exhibit on the First Federal Congress at the National Portrait Gallery included not only portraits but also manuscripts, printed documents, and artifacts belonging to members.

This magnificently illustrated catalogue tells the story of the First Congress's accomplishments but focuses primarily on the ninety-five individuals who composed it and the social life of the community they formed in New York and Philadelphia. Part one gives a state-by-state, and sometimes blow-by-blow, account of the first federal election. Part two is a delightfully written rendition of the work of the First Congress, session by session. Three matters are covered in particular detail: the creation of the executive departments, the petitions received by Congress, and the 1790 decision to leave New York for Philadelphia. Part three, the longest section, is the gem of the catalogue. It features portraits—in various forms—of fifty-four members of the body. Most of these portraits were in the exhibit. Some members are also represented by their wives and families. Colorful and appealing biographical sketches, emphasizing the personal and political life of the subject while in Congress, accompany the portraits. Christman's great regret is the absence of Senator William Maclay of Pennsylvania, whose diary provided spice for the exhibit and catalogue. Other members of the Pennsylvania delegation whose portraits appear are George Clymer, Thomas Hartley, Robert (and Mary) Morris, Frederick A. Muhlenberg, and Henry Wynkoop. How to relate the details necessary to understand the institutional achievement and at the same time make the participants and the environment in which they lived real is a formidable task for most. Not so for Christman whose prose bubbles with the thrill of being allowed such a private glimpse into the lives of the founders.

Major artists represented include Gilbert Stuart, Rembrandt and Charles Willson Peale, and John Trumbull. Less familiar artists include John Ramage, Robert Pine, James Sharples, and Saint-Memin. A wide variety of other items from the exhibit illustrate the catalogue. Among these are a page of Maclay's diary and Thomas Lloyd's shorthand notes on debates in the
House of Representatives, all three extant political cartoons protesting Congress’s removal to Philadelphia, and the Historical Society of Pennsylvania’s printed proposal from Ebenezer Hazard for “A Collection of State Papers.” It is signed by fifty-five members of Congress.

First Federal Congress Project
George Washington University

Kenneth R. Bowling


Any way you look at it, the historical record has to be sliced. Nobody can consume it all in one gulp or one lifetime of frantic gulping. Once having decided to cut the past into pieces that choke neither the researcher (our first priority) nor the potential reader, the historian then decides which way to chop. Now there’s the rub. No two (well, at least no three) of us would slice the past in precisely the same way, and each of us is more or less certain, at any given moment, that he/she knows the right way to hack.

With a reviewer’s cleaver firmly in mind, I proceed to my questions, which imply other ways that this project might have been done. Why publish only a selection of advertisements for runaway slaves? Why not include advertisements for runaway wives or other fugitives from the law? Indeed, why the exclusive focus on advertisements at all? Why not incorporate newspaper articles that address similar questions about race relations and racial identity? Why stop in 1790, when Pennsylvania’s gradual abolition law was just beginning to have the sort of effects that might prove interesting and traceable through the advertisements for fugitives from labor? Smith and Wojtowicz do not say. Instead, they opt for a short and general introductory essay, rather than a systematic analysis of the sources they gleaned and selected.

Just because a review can imagine other options is not to suggest that the one chosen is utterly defective. I would like to see the editors’ rationale spelled out in another way than the generic explanation that we would like to know more about the lives of black people in eighteenth-century America. Sure enough, but even considered in the best light, as the editors well know, the ads were written by whites and probably tell us more about white perceptions of blacks than about how blacks saw themselves.
Still, what the compilers have given us is raw historical material from a specific genre that has fascinated social historians going back at least to Gerald W. Mullin's path-breaking book, *Flight and Rebellion: Slave Resistance in Eighteenth-Century Virginia* (1972). They have provided grist for a distinctly Middle colony mill, since 75 percent of the absconded slaves sought in the advertisements ran from masters in New Jersey, Delaware, or Pennsylvania. Smith and Wojtowicz have selected 300 of the 1,324 runaway slave advertisements in the *Pennsylvania Gazette* from its initial date of publication in 1728 through 1790, choosing those that "offered the most varied, interesting, and extensive descriptions." They have supplemented these with a sampling of twenty-five ads for white servants (for comparison's sake), a glossary of terms appearing in the notices, indexes by subject and name, and a chronological listing of ads.

What does the researcher do with this sample? Quite a bit I should think. It is a good source for impressions and initial comparisons between the advertisements in this Philadelphia newspaper and those available from other regions. It is a good source for photocopying (in full compliance, of course, with copyright laws) some interesting primary sources to supplement undergraduate lectures and put a human face on a few of the least accessible persons from eighteenth-century America. I can also picture a research assignment for undergraduates who might take this volume and try to compare it in some specific sense to, for example, similar advertisements from a rural newspaper in the same region (e.g., Gary T. Hawbaker, *Runaways, Rascals, and Rogues: Missing Spouses, Servants, and Slaves*, volume I, *Lancaster Journal, 1794-1810* [1987], which is inclusive of its subject matter, not a sampling of ads.) The problem with the assignment as envisioned here (and one of the reasons that I would not do it with graduate students) is that the comparison would span both space and time, making meaningful comparisons somewhat elusive. Since it is a sampling, there are also significant problems using it for potentially publishable research. Still and all, Smith and Wojtowicz have provided a significant service, an interesting volume, and more data for us to chew and digest. On all these counts the volume is easy to swallow.

*Rutgers University*  
THOMAS P. SLAUGHTER


It has become all too easy for historians to denounce Andrew Johnson. Once hailed as the defender of the Constitution and downtrodden white
southerners, he is now routinely indicted as a chief culprit in the collapse of Reconstruction. Even his few remaining defenders are not wont to claim too much for him other than the homily that he was a product of his time and place. But creating caricatures in the interest of scholarly moralizing does little to advance our understanding of someone whose life makes real the cherished myth of the self-made man who overcame improbable odds to become President of the United States. Whatever a biographer’s personal beliefs, he is obligated not to attack his subject for what he was or was not, but to help us understand who he was. This is especially important in the case of Johnson, who remains a bundle of paradoxes and contradictions to many historians. What, in short, made Andrew Johnson tick?

Hans L. Trefousse, whose earlier works include biographies of Benjamin F. Butler, Benjamin F. Wade, and Carl Schurz—three men whose early support of Johnson gave way to disillusionment and opposition—has accepted this formidable challenge. The result is the fullest study yet of Johnson’s life, tracing his emergence from humble origins to political power in the Volunteer State, his courageous opposition to secession, and his elevation to the highest office in the land in the aftermath of tragedy. Trefousse concludes that the Tennessee tailor’s “failure to outgrow his Jeffersonian-Jacksonian background” best explains the troubled course of his presidency, a “disaster” if measured by Trefousse’s standards. That it may have been disastrous to the nation there is no denying, but whether Johnson failed as president on his own terms is a more difficult question to answer. By making his own obstructionist behavior, not the status of the freedmen, the main concern of Reconstructionist policy, Johnson ensured both the triumph of his own prejudices for nearly another century and the laying of the constitutional foundations for court decisions and policies which would eventually overturn that triumph.

While Trefousse provides us with the most scholarly synthesis yet of Johnson’s entire life, it is disappointing to report that there is little new here, especially about Johnson’s presidency. The result is more reiteration than reassessment. Even Trefousse’s argument that Johnson was a prisoner of his past merely echoes previous work. Moreover, the essential Johnson eludes Trefousse’s grasp. To say that Johnson was a skilled politician, embraced racist beliefs, or canted about his adherence to constitutional principle—familiar arguments all—is not enough, for these characteristics are not woven into a coherent pattern of personality which is at the core of good biography. Johnson’s political skills were those of personal survival and advancement, not of constructive statesmanship—something Trefousse notes but does not explore. The bitter edge to his racism, an area analyzed most ably by David W. Bowen in his recent study Andrew Johnson and the Negro (1989), is best understood if one recalls Johnson’s belief that poor southern whites had been
deprived of an equal chance by slaves as well as masters. He would never approve legislation which would extend to the freedmen privileges and opportunities denied poor whites—like himself. Similarly, his espousal of constitutional principle merely justified his efforts to enhance his own power while curtailing that of Congress. All of this suggests that Johnson saw his whole world in terms of himself, as his repeated references to “my policy” and to himself as a latter-day martyr-savior make clear. Here was a man who defined triumph in terms of vindication, treated difference of opinion as a personal challenge, and proved unable to demonstrate the humility which both his predecessor and successor in the White House possessed. Why remains an interesting question. Perhaps Trefousse’s biography will challenge us to develop what it does not offer—a new understanding of Johnson. That will prove a difficult and demanding task.

Wofford College

Brooks D. Simpson


The period from the ratification of the Constitution to the Civil War was an era of remarkable economic growth as a young agricultural republic emerged into a major mercantile and manufacturing nation. This collection of essays on business and social history explores this growth from the vantage point of New York State and City, home of both an industrious work force and pioneering entrepreneurial leadership.

In an important essay, Janet Riesman describes the manner in which New Yorkers moved away from the classical republican distrust of monied institutions into a better understanding of the role of the market, labor, and capital. While there were longings to return to republican ideals during the suffering caused by the Panic of 1819, the growth of the economy and the desire for banking privileges by all sectors of the population and virtually every town and village led New York instead to institute the country’s first free banking law in 1832. This had a democratic impact on the state’s economy while monetary issues gave way to those of labor and capital.

In another significant contribution, Cathy Matson’s deft research unearths (and unmasksthe) various dealings of William Duer. Matson details Duer’s career, including trading with the enemy, taking large commissions for war
loans he negotiated, circumventing Congress in supplying French troops, and using insider information he received as Assistant Secretary of the Treasury to enrich himself. His career ended in spectacular failure after an unsuccessful attempt to corner the stock of the Bank of New York and then the Bank of the United States was thwarted by the Livingston family. Yet Duer was not the devil; he represented the extreme of a new ethos of mercantile self-interest that reasoned that inequality was in the interest of a body politic requiring financial risks and opportunity.

Richard Stott details the movements of capital and trade in and out of New York City as labor intensive industries remained while those requiring machinery and space fled the high real estate prices to a new industrial belt. Gregory Hunter analyzes the Manhattan Company as an incipient multi-unit corporation, able to handle—politically and economically—water supply, banking, and branch banking. L. Ray Gunn reveals how New York's reluctance to tax, combined with depression and low credit ratings, led the state away from active intervention in the economy and toward reliance on property taxation. Finally, Jerome Mushkat contributes a revisionist article arguing that Fernando Wood was a progressive New York mayor who attempted to regulate the excesses of capitalism, particularly in the areas of health, water supply, and mass transit.

Michael Bernstein discusses the social consequences of early American capitalism by exploring the alliance between radical Democracy and the Calhoun bid for the presidency based on a critique of capitalism. The championing of slave labor in comparison to the condition of northern labor and its pro-southern outlook reveals the weakness of this movement. Marybeth Hamilton (Arnold) studies the incidents of rape in New York City between 1790 and 1820, concluding that most complaints involved laboring class women who generally received sympathetic consideration only when they were in a helpless position. Women forced to work because of their economic position, a threat to the republic's sense of propriety, deserved less help from the law. Paul Gilje describes variations in strikes in the early national period according to season and economic condition, while noting that a changing economy that allowed more freedom to journeymen and apprentices also led to street gangs and street violence. Labor violence was common only among the unskilled laborers. Finally, Iver Bernstein provides a new interpretation of the 1863 New York Draft Riots, detailing how the early uprising, largely against the draft, involved both skilled and unskilled. The most destructive days of turmoil found new targets—wealth, Republicans, and blacks—as well as a more restricted class of rioter—industrial workers, common laborers, and Irish Catholics hoping to purge their trades and neighborhoods. This was a watershed event in the Republican party's loss of its labor component to an increasingly sympathetic Democratic machine.
The shift to a dynamic capitalist economy touched all aspects of American life, from republican ideals to personal ambitions to neighborhood relations to state and city financial policies. These valuable essays add much needed detail to our understanding of this process.

*Florida International University*  
Howard B. Rock


Despite the great wealth of information provided in the outburst of social history beginning in the late 1960s, the lives of working-class women have remained a relatively unexplored research area. Recent landmark works by feminist scholars—most notably Alice Kessler-Harris, Kathy Peiss, Christine Stansell, and Linda Gordon—have begun to probe the world of women in the working-class family dynamic, and such is the intention of S.J. Kleinberg in *The Shadow of the Mills*. Kleinberg centers her attention on those women who worked in the home while their husbands toiled in the Pittsburgh steel mills. Although they seldom drew wages, such women were an integral part of the Pittsburgh economy. "No women poured molten metal," Kleinberg writes, "but they were as necessary to industry as if they guided the flashing bars through the great rolls" (p. xvii). Their efforts in the household made possible their male counterparts' ability to work ten-, twelve-, or fifteen-hour stints, an availability which propelled the Steel City to its position as a major international industrial center.

With this concept as the overarching theme of her book, Kleinberg proceeds to analyze the manner in which urbanization and industrialization shaped familial, social, and economic roles in the developmental years of large-scale industrial capitalism. The termination date of 1907 coincides with the commissioning of the Pittsburgh Survey by the Russell Sage Foundation, the multi-volumed social analysis which, along with contemporary labor newspapers, comprises a considerable portion of Kleinberg's research data. Kleinberg contends that, contrary to other larger American cities which saw married women becoming a growing portion of the industrial labor force, Pittsburgh's economy, based predominantly on steel production, was remarkably hostile to women's presence as wage laborers. Since women were seldom employed in the steel industry, there were few opportunities for women's employment outside the home. As a result, and again in contrast to other
large cities where women were beginning to transcend the male-dominated family economy, in Pittsburgh, the patriarchal economy remained not only in place but actually intensified as the decades progressed.

While this argument makes several telling contributions, it is in many ways quite problematic. Even with an absence of opportunities for women in the steel industry, adult female labor force participation (according to Kleinberg’s own statistics) grew dramatically during the years she surveys, from roughly 25 to 33 percent. Nor did Pittsburgh lag behind other cities of similar population size and degrees of industrialization. Indeed, as Ileen DeVault’s recent study of Pittsburgh white-collar workers (“Sons and Daughters of Labor: Class and Clerical Work in Pittsburgh, 1870s-1910s” [Ph.D. diss., Yale, 1985]) reveals, employment for females in Pittsburgh may have actually been higher than the national average. Such considerations cast considerable doubt on Kleinberg’s assertion that life in Pittsburgh, dictated by the economy of the steel industry, “exaggerated gender roles for proletarian women” (p. 315).

Kleinberg’s emphasis on the manner in which urbanization and industrialization shaped the lives of Pittsburgh’s working-class families obscures the ways in which the lives of Pittsburgh’s working-class families shaped the processes of industrialization and urbanization in the Steel City. In The Shadow of the Mills, Pittsburgh’s families are incredibly passive entities; rarely do they act, more often they are acted upon. Considering Kleinberg’s objective to recapture the centrality of women to the Pittsburgh economy, she is too reticent on the conflicting ideologies of gender, class, and race which permeated the household economy. Feminist scholarship which deals with these topics, particularly Stansell’s City of Women (1986), is inexplicably absent from her citations. As a synthesis of the findings of the Pittsburgh Survey with the work of more recent historians who have focused largely on the Pittsburgh working-class life from the perspective of the male worker, The Shadow of the Mills is a useful work. But the female side of that world remains elusive. Like most who have come before her, Kleinberg takes us to the door of the working-class household, but she is unable to carry us over the threshold.

Indiana University

John Borsos


Steven Erie’s study of machine politics in eight cities is a useful addition to the literature, but delivers a good deal less than it promises. The book’s
major contribution is not, as its author believes, theoretical and interpretational, but, rather, substantive. The book does not successfully argue for any significant changes in contemporary views of the subject.

Erie admirably tries to move beyond the single-city case-study approach of most studies of the political machine, with his comparative focus on eight cities. One gains something in this process, with insights into what seems to have been most general. But the trade-off can be a certain superficiality in understanding both the politicians and their clients, and that is the case with this book.

Erie feels that his main contribution is to offer a new theory of the machine’s rise, maintenance, and decline. The “Rainbow” of his title refers to the “rainbow theory” that urban politicians “worked to incorporate working-class immigrant groups” via rewards of jobs and services, and so on. One might say that he disproves the theory, except that it has really never existed, at least in so simple-minded a fashion. Erie is far from the first to recognize that the relationship between Irish politicians and ethnic voters was a practical one among mutually suspicious groups. No serious modern scholar suggests that Irish-American politicians were some sort of ideological do-gooders out to expand upward mobility in America.

Erie’s basic approach is quite traditional. Over and over, for example, he recognizes that the machine’s success was a function of the material aid and services that it provided to the urban working class. Likewise, he accepts traditional views of the effects of the New Deal in both supporting and weakening the machines. Some current historians tend to discount those factors, but even those of us who accept one or the other of them are also cognizant of the importance of sociocultural forces and rewards, which Erie tends to ignore.

The author does derive some useful generalizations from his inter-city focus. He clarifies the idea of the fiscal conservatism of most machines and suggests reasons why that was so often the case. And he explains the problem this fiscal approach created in meeting the needs of lower- and working-class voters. Moreover, Erie provides additional support for the argument that machine strength and staying-power were very much conditioned by the relationship between local politics, on the one hand, and state and national politics, on the other. Again, he insists on calling it “our theory of intergovernmental alliances,” which is a bit grand for an idea that is neither new nor really a theory—just one of the factors that influenced the careers of machines.

For a book that focuses on the Irish and their political clients, there is little deep study of either. One does not find here any real analysis of the tribal nature of the urban Irish, and of the role of Irish-Catholic-American culture in the behavior of Irish politicians. Even less consideration is given
to the subjects of machine politics—the people whose votes the machine politicians needed to survive. Erie has chosen not to look at the perceptions such groups had of the machine, either in a quantitative way or any other.

The result, overall, is a useful book that provides an overview of machine politics and some persuasive generalizations about how the machines worked, financed their activities, and changed over time from the late nineteenth century to the present. But, despite the author's promises, there is little new substance here and no meaningful new interpretations of Irish politicians or of machine politics.

Students of urban politics should read the book, and will find it worth their effort, but just barely.

California State University, Los Angeles	JOHN M. ALLSWANG


The authors of this book state that they intend to link oral histories of immigrant and second-generation Jews born early in this century with the history of their times. But the use of oral history is so flawed as to make the book useless for scholars, and the authors' limited knowledge of the Jewish immigrant background makes it of questionable value for even the general reader.

The Cowans attempt to combine the two generations, despite the fact that the immigrant and American-born generations had very different experiences and perceptions of their lives. By blending them together, the authors create an amalgam that neither enhances our understanding nor does justice to the uniqueness of each group's experiences. It also leads to unnecessary confusion. For example, the authors write that most Jews mistakenly believed their forebears lived in a shtetl, which the Cowans define as "tiny rural town[s] . . . —insular villages that had had nothing but Jewish residents from time immemorial." Few Jewish immigrants would have imagined towns composed completely of Jews, although possibly some of their American-born children might do so.

Although the Cowans discuss in great detail their interview technique, nowhere is there an indication of how many people they interviewed. The authors also created composite people, further diminishing the validity of their methods. For all we know, no more than a dozen people were involved, although more names were used. This weakness, combined with limited
background research, means that we have little sense of the legitimacy of some assertions—for example, that flappers were free sexually in the 1920s and that many young Jewish women shared this characteristic. It is impossible to accept such conclusions based upon scanty research and an unknown number of interviews.

Another major problem is an idiosyncratic use of the term “Yiddishkeit.” Scholars differ on the precise definition of this word, but all agree that it means the culture surrounding the use of Yiddish that was shared by most eastern European Jews. This generally included a respect for learning and concern for one’s fellow man. However, the Cowans continually allude to “the entrepreneurial culture of Yiddishkeit” and seem to define it as “buying and selling with skill” and willingness to take risks in the marketplace—a doubtful interpretation to say the least.

Further reading does not inspire more confidence. On one page we read that some Jews in eastern Europe had servants, and on another that most were poor. This impressionistic and anecdotal treatment, without any discussion of economic classes in Jewish society, creates a confusing picture of the Jews’ position. There are also numerous questionable assumptions: that almost all Jews who emigrated were and remained Orthodox; that by doing well at school, children had no choice but to reject their parents’ religious traditions; that parents still looked to rabbis for advice, while their children broke with tradition by refusing to do so (in this country, parents stopped consulting rabbis as well).

In general, the chapter headings of the book promise more than they deliver. A chapter on childbirth and child care, for example, discusses how American women were advised to raise their children. But apart from material on bottle nursing and strict feeding schedules, there is little on the way that attitudes of Jewish women about nurturing their children may have altered after emigration except for the dubious assertion that only those no longer “immersed in the culture of Yiddish welcomed new childrearing practices.” A chapter on health compares American medical care with eastern European folk beliefs like the evil eye, which immigrants from the urban areas of Poland or Russia might have found insulting.

Despite these problems, the oral history excerpts are interesting, and the chapters on changing sexual mores and child care have some useful information. One question at the end of the book on the meaning of symbolic remnants of religious tradition in the lives of acculturated immigrant children might have been pursued with profit.

Ramapo College of New Jersey

Sydney Stahl Weinberg

In What's A Coal Miner To Do? Keith Dix convincingly argues that despite earlier breakthroughs in mining technology, it was not until the development of mechanical loaders in the 1920s and early 1930s, coupled with the centralization of authority in the United Mine Workers under John L. Lewis and the increased involvement of the federal government in coal industry affairs during the New Deal, that the nature of coal mining and the relationship of miners to operators fundamentally changed.

Dix documents well the nature of a coal miner’s job in the hand-loading era: his autonomy at the face, and his subjugation to management above ground in the company house and the company store. When economic ills overtook the industry in the 1920s, mine operators began searching for ways to increase productivity by extending their authority in the pits. The mechanization of traditional hand-loading methods held out to operators the possibility of both increasing the physical output of mine workers and of reorganizing the labor process on a more supervised, factory-like basis. Dix provides an interesting discussion of mining technology and the development of the mine equipment business. But his major argument is that the development of technology was of little value to management until the resistance of the workers could be undermined. "Technology," Dix observes, "is not just a question of engineering feasibility, but rather a social process affected by personalities, institutions, and traditions" (p. vii). Dix documents the efforts of miners to block the introduction of loading machines and argues that, as long as local unions and pit committees were free to exercise independent power, such resistance could be successful. Dix captures well the contradictory needs miners had of their union: "When it came to wages and other economic considerations, they needed a strong national union that could speak for them with one voice; they needed union solidarity to prevent wage reductions that would follow from local bargaining as operators played one local against another. At the same time, it was important to maintain the control that they had through their local unions and pit committees in order to protect basic job rights and working conditions" (p. 137). On the issue of mechanization, John L. Lewis agreed with management and the government on the importance of modernizing the industry. As adverse economic conditions strengthened national headquarters at the expense of locals and districts, and as the national agreement became the governing document for the industry, Lewis agreed to contract clauses that undermined the workers’ ability to resist machinery. "Most of these changes," Dix con-
cludes, "involved a loss of rights and privileges . . . without a corresponding increase in other advantages except monetary ones" (p. 213).

Dix's basic thesis is well documented and convincing. What is less persuasive is his secondary argument that the nature of coal mining would have developed differently had local autonomy prevailed in the union, had the government nationalized the mines, and had Lewis not been in power. Such "what if?" arguments of "opportunities lost" are built as much on assumptions as documentary evidence. And when it comes to such debates, what's an historian to do?

Ohio State University

Warren R. Van Tine


In the 1960s, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers planned to dam the Delaware at Tocks Island. It met so much opposition that it had to abandon the project, leaving the Delaware one of the last undammed rivers in the United States. Richard C. Albert tells this story in his well-researched book.

The Delaware today supplies almost 10 percent of the U.S. population with water. It forms part of the state boundaries of New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware. On its way to the Atlantic, it flows by Trenton, Philadelphia, Wilmington, and smaller towns. Management of this river has been a concern since colonial times.

Albert begins his narrative with the colonial era, when the Delaware River's major use was commerce. In 1783 Pennsylvania and New Jersey agreed to forbid dams that might impede the free passage of ships and barges. In the next century and a half, none of the adjacent states could agree on projects to exploit the river for urban water needs and for hydroelectric power.

Then came the August 1955 flood that caused extensive property damage and the loss of a hundred lives. Flood control seemed a necessity. This meant the involvement of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, one of the nation's biggest dam-building agencies. Within seven years Congress would authorize a massive multi-reservoir plan, whose keystone would be a dam above Delaware Water Gap at Tocks Island that would create a huge thirty-seven-mile-long artificial lake. According to Albert, diversion of funds to the Vietnam War delayed construction, enabling the dam's opponents to publicize the
dam's environmental effects. By the 1970s, the Corps of Engineers was on the defensive. In 1983 construction was deferred until after the year 2000. What remained of the project was the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, a river-based park, which offers fishing, camping, canoeing, and tubing. These and other attractions have strengthened the constituency for a free-flowing river.

Albert wisely realizes that both sides made persuasive cases. Facts meant little. "The real argument was ideological. Either you believed that Tocks Island Dam was the long-awaited answer to the water needs of the Delaware River Basin, or you didn't. It was like religion." Nonetheless, Albert has a slight bias against the dam. He believes that the water-supply and flood-control benefits were not large enough to justify it. He pays more attention to the dam's opponents. Among them were Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas, who made a well-publicized trip to Sunfish Pond in 1967; Nancy Shukaitis, community activist and housewife; and "hippy" squatters, whom federal marshals ejected from housing condemned for the dam. By contrast, proponents do not emerge clearly. Aside from politicians and bureaucrats, few names are given. Occasional references to labor and construction interests are tantalizing. Although Albert writes much on the dam's ecological effects, his discussion of the dam's economic benefits is meager. There is also little appreciation of the broad support the dam had in the early 1960s. The eventual collapse of the project was due to an enormous shift in popular opinion.

These cavils aside, Albert has written a fine book. Although he discusses technical questions, his prose is readable. A past president of the New Jersey section of the American Water Resources Association and staff member of the Delaware River Basin Commission, he has conducted many interviews and consulted public records and newspapers. His conclusions deserve respect.

East Stroudsburg University

LAWRENCE SQUERI


In the past few years historians of suburbs have done a booming business; the now well-established suburban chronology runs from the country seats and summer retreats of nineteenth-century wealthy Americans and stretches to what Robert Fishman has labelled the contemporary "technoburb." There
is considerably less agreement on how best to understand the phenomena of suburbanization. Kenneth T. Jackson called the process of suburbanization "primarily a result of market forces and governmental policies," and now John R. Stilgoe posits a cultural explanation for the distinct pattern of American residential life.

To Stilgoe, suburbs represent an unbroken American dream—a dream constant from the first Puritan “errand into the wilderness.” This “come-outer tradition” he describes as “the unwillingness of many Americans to succeed in a difficult place, to improve unfavorable conditions rather than to flee them” (p. 7). Coupled with this desire to escape difficulty is an equally compelling and unchanging need to remake the landscape and place one’s individual mark upon it. The borderlands, those areas on the margin between the city and the rural agricultural regions, provide the space for both escape and re-creation.

Using such sources as rural periodicals, horticulture magazines, novels, diaries, women’s gift books, urban booster guides, real estate advertisements, and borderland and suburban newspapers, Stilgoe discovers a history of ideas about the borderland. But it is a curiously static history. To “read extensively in that literature,” he writes, “is to discover the unchanging nature of so many concerns—urban crime and political corruption, house design that encourages relaxation, the soothing balm of perennial planting, the fruits of commuting—and to realize that borderland landscape from the late eighteenth century until 1940 reflected deep, almost timeless issues.”

Stilgoe attributes much of borderland philosophy to women writers like Alice Cary and Susan Cooper who saw in this neither urban nor rural space a potential for creating a society which reconciled nature and industrialism. In the nineteenth century the suburban homes of well-off American families no longer served as the centers of production which colonial homes had been. Without a clear economic function, the work of suburban homemakers became centered on creating an emotional and aesthetic domestic experience. Borderland gardens of flowers and plants served little functional economic purpose, but were thought to rejuvenate those who toiled within them and those who viewed them.

Stilgoe is careful to point out that advocates of borderland life did not consider all suburbs as borderlands. Borderlands by definition belonged to the wealthy and upper-middle classes, for a large lot, curvilinear streets, and a significant distance from the city were all necessary attributes. Streetcar suburbs, for example, were denounced as “sham houses” for “poor people of moderate means.” And if the lesser suburbs threatened the borderland way of life, the planned communities of the early twentieth century which offered to extend the benefits of suburban life to those lower down on the economic ladder seemed positively un-American. Forest Hills Gardens in
Queens, a project of the Russell Sage Foundation, for example, had tight building restrictions, a homogeneous population, and no outdoor privacy. Stilgoe asserts that Americans disliked it, for it reminded them of company towns. Such planning efforts, he says, failed because the residents were given little opportunity to shape their own residential space. By contrast, he claims, the “borderlands shaped by speculators” succeeded in attracting adherents and absorbing change because speculators were “more in touch with American individualism than with German town planning and its ‘scientific principles’” (p. 238).

Stilgoe teaches his readers to look again at the importance of the visual landscape—the created view—for understanding the cultural process of suburbanization. Generations of suburban refugees learned “to deal with force apart from business, to know laws other than economic, to constantly relearn seasonal cycles, timelessness, and humility” (p. 302), Stilgoe reports. It is, however, ironic that those very Americans who have enjoyed this bucolic landscape are the same people who have benefited most from the successful commerce and industry of American cities. Sadly, this borderland critique of urban life has fostered escape from urban problems, rather than a search for solutions.

University of Cincinnati

ANDREA TUTTLE KORNBLUH


Intimate Matters surveys the behavioral and literary evidence on sexuality over the entire course of American history. Its strength and weaknesses in coverage generally reflect those of the secondary literature that has concentrated on materials provided by members of the educated, northern, Protestant middle classes. The authors attempt to include material from those outside of the better-documented mainstream, including Indians, blacks, and members of the working class. Some groups, especially immigrants, are too heterogeneous for their sexuality to be characterized, except in contrast to a stylized middle-class standard. As a survey of recent scholarship, the book is successful, but its schematic interpretation shares the common defects of humanistic writing on sexuality.

Humanistic scholars are not good at sex. The principal reasons for the failure of humanists to comprehend sexuality are their extreme stress on the cultural construction of reality, an emphasis that approaches a denial that any
reality exists independent of its perception, and a willingness to contemplate schemes of functional interpretation that would be peremptorily rejected as being too crude for most subjects. For humanists, there are no sexual facts, only discourses about sexuality.

In their introduction, D'Emilio and Freedman proclaim their adherence to relativism, and their interpretations are correspondingly functionalist. For example, they define sexuality in the era before 1800 in terms of the need to promote reproduction within marriage, but this definition does not specify deviance precisely. Bestiality, for example, was regarded as a more serious violation of norms than masturbation though reproductively each is equally barren. Nor does it capture the meaning of the language of sexual acts. "Have the use of her body," a phrase in early American court testimony concerning fornication, refers, in my reading, to a male understanding of coition rather than insemination. Finally, their specification misses a distinctive feature of contemporary religious norms, as Puritan writers stressed that marriage had purposes in addition to reproduction.

The contrasts provided by their framework of periodization exaggerate the element of change in American sexuality, minimizing both continuity in folk beliefs and the perdurable power of religion as an agency of control. Fortunately, their careful description of historical evidence and scholarly findings may be read independently of their interpretations, which are isolated mainly in the introduction and at the end of chapters. Stated flatly rather than argued systematically, their views need not distract the reader. For the best book ever written about sexuality in America, I still recommend Alfred Kinsey, et al., Sexual Behavior in the Human Female (1953), a study relentlessly biologic and factual on its surface but one sensitive to American religious and popular sentiments about sexuality.

University of Illinois at Chicago

DANIEL SCOTT SMITH


Creating the historiography of sexuality is a political enterprise. Those who write these histories deconstruct the concepts of the "biologically determined" and the "natural"; they describe the power relations such terminology conceals and they explicitly affirm the diverse pasts and potentials of sexual ideology and behavior. Kathy Peiss and Christina Simmons have gathered together a collection that expands our knowledge of the meanings
and importance of our sexual pasts, and acknowledges the political move-
ments that have made such historiography possible.

Passion and Power covers almost the whole span of American history,
although the twentieth century predominates, and it concludes with a section
on current sexual/political issues, including AIDS and pornography. The
authors make clear that sexuality is not an isolated experience, but one that
should be (and here, is) integrated into social and political history. Some of
the articles discuss sexual ideology—such as George Chauncey's "From
Sexual Inversion to Homosexuality: The Changing Medical Conceptualiza-
tion of Female 'Deviance,'" and John D'Emilio's "The Homosexual Men-
ace: The Politics of Sexuality in Cold War America"—while others focus
on sexual practice—such as Elizabeth Kennedy and Madeline Davis's "The
There are articles on both "problematic" or "deviant" aspects of sexuality—
race, venereal disease, homosexuality—and on "normative"—heterosexual,
marital—sexuality and the ideologies which created and supported it. Even
better, the authors consistently make clear the relationships between the
normative and the deviant, demonstrating that what are seen as self-evident
opposites—homosexuality and heterosexuality, prostitution and chastity—
are often defined by one another, and sometimes are indistinguishable.

These relationships are debated in historical journals and also, as Marybeth
Hamilton Arnold's study of rape in New York during the early republic
demonstrates, on the streets and in the courts. Arnold is responding to
feminist theorizing which universalizes women's experience of sexual assault,
and thereby removes it from historical context. Arnold draws a picture of
the crowded homes, workplaces, and streets which poor women inhabited,
where, because of their material circumstances, such women constantly had to
negotiate their own sexuality and the demands of the men they encountered.
Relying on legal records, Arnold argues that rape was the result of men acting
on the assumption that women (especially poor women) were brimming with
sexual passions which they denied only for the sake of appearance. When
women brought cases of assault to court, Arnold shows, these assumptions
and the newly important concepts of the republic combined against the
women, who were perceived to be threatening the freedom of (exclusively
male) "citizens." Arnold succeeds admirably in this blending of political,
legal, and social history, placing rape in all three contexts. She does not
demonstrate quite as satisfactorily what women's "stake in sex" (p. 37) was,
which may partly be due to her dependence on legal evidence. Kathy Peiss's
"'Charity Girls' and City Pleasures: Historical Notes on Working-Class
Sexuality, 1880-1920" is, for this reason, an excellent companion piece.
Peiss, reading between the lines of social welfare agency reports, convincingly
describes the way working women set their own sexual standards, using
social conventions to compensate for their own low pay. These women took advantage of being “treated” to social and sexual pleasures by men without being considered prostitutes, at least in their own milieu.

Christina Simmons’s “Modern Sexuality and the Myth of Victorian Repression” and Estelle Freedman’s “Uncontrolled Desires: The Response to the Sexual Psychopath, 1920-1960” are concerned with the creation of sexual norms. Simmons, using both popular novels and sexological tracts from the Progressive era, traces a shift in the popular conceptualization of heterosexuality. Modern writers created the idea of “Victorian repression” to describe a past when male sexuality was perceived to be threatening or burdensome to women; in so doing, they “rehabilitated male sexuality and cast women as villains if they refused to . . . support it” (p. 158). Freedman discusses the legal, political, and psychiatric creation of the sexual psychopath. She argues that “the creation of the psychopath as an extreme deviant figure helped Americans adjust to a sexual system in which nonprocreative acts were no longer considered abnormal” (p. 211). Both pieces demonstrate that new definitions of “moral,” “healthy” behavior are created out of discussions of the “sick” or “deviant,” and both suggest that this process is an important one for historians to examine.

The biggest problem with Passion and Power is that only one article focuses on African-American sexuality. Jessie M. Rodrique’s “The Black Community and the Birth Control Movement” argues that, contrary to standard demographic hypotheses, black Americans of all classes both wanted to and did use contraceptives; they asserted control over their reproduction despite the racism and eugenic ideologies endemic to the birth control movement. Rodrique’s study suggests that sexuality and race is an area that needs much more attention. Overall, however, Peiss, Simmons, and their contributors have done a wonderful job, and the result is a book full of new directions and ideas for historians.

University of Pennsylvania

ELIZABETH A. SMITH


The definitions for what constitutes folk art are many and varied as scholars in folklore, American studies, and art history try to unravel the complexities of cultural expression inherent in man-made objects. In Plain Painters: Making Sense of American Folk Art John Michael Vlach separates a
body of paintings out of the traditional folk art canon and constructs a new
category for study, that of the plain painting. In doing so, he seeks to "restore
to the painters of plain pictures a basis for evaluating their lives and their
works fairly and accurately, in addition to clarifying the limits of American
dfolk art." Vlach's book represents a provocative new idea in the rich scholarly
discourse of folk art analysis, but he accomplishes neither of his goals. In
fact, by stridently insisting that some artists are failed academicians, he
becomes punitive rather than fair; indeed, his categorization impedes an
understanding of American folk art.

Vlach includes in his book a wide range of artists from the Freake Limner
of early New England, to Edward Hicks, to Grandma Moses. He defines
plain paintings not as a type of folk art, but rather as "a common garden
variety" of fine art. He contends that the works he discusses are "like fine
art but simpler, less ostentatious . . . plain version[s] of what potentially
could have been quite elaborate or complex under different circumstances."
Faulty perspective and anatomy, lack of contrast, and an overall two-dimen-
sionality distinguish the pictures in his category.

One principal weakness of Vlach's argument is his failure to explore fully
the circumstances under which the pictures were painted. He cites artistic
intention as a crucial factor in understanding paintings, but the discovery of
what an artist meant to paint is an elusive issue reaching far beyond the
questions of competency and training upon which Vlach focuses. Many of
the paintings he calls plain are portraits, yet he fails to consider patrons'
choices or community expectations as possible determining factors in the
final outcome of the works. He further limits his perspective by barely
considering recent works in folklore and material culture studies and fre-
quently using out-of-date scholarship to support his points.

In his study, "Plain Portraits in America 1760-1860" (in Folk Art and Art
Worlds, edited by John Michael Vlach and Simon J. Bronner), Charles
Bergengren argues that plain portraits contain "different features which
simultaneously resonate to both folk and elite attitudes." Using much of the
same pictorial evidence chosen by Vlach, such as the works of Joseph Whiting
Stock, Bergengren proposes the existence of a plain aesthetic rooted in the
egalitarian values of nineteenth-century New Englanders. He acknowledges
a marriage in plain paintings of traditional communal influences with new
ideas gained through formal training. Bergengren's view is more comprehen-
sive and places the paintings in a sociocultural context that is crucial to their
understanding. For Bergengren, both plain and academic paintings can be
folk art, and each tradition influences the other.

The question is not whether Vlach or Bergengren are right or wrong, but
rather which point of view offers a deeper understanding of the artifactual
evidence. Vlach's too-rigid assignation of the plain category based primarily
on artists' abilities to imitate academic works obscures other cultural influences and invites unproductive value judgments as to whether the paintings are good art or bad art. Plain paintings are complex because their student must consider both the traditional and the innovative impulses they embody. Removing them from the realm of folk art does not clarify them, nor does it make the folk artifacts left behind easier to study.

Vlach does the paintings an injustice in removing them from their historical contexts and placing them within an ahistorical category of plain painting. Many folklorists—such as Kenneth Ames in Beyond Necessity: Art in the Folk Tradition and Henry Glassie in his recent book, The Spirit of Folk Art—now question why the imposition of the categories of fine and folk are necessary in artifact study. While Vlach's book enters into the debate, his overly simplistic model obscures more than it reveals.

University of Pennsylvania

DEBORAH I. PROSSER

The Real Thing: Imitation and Authenticity in American Culture, 1880-1940.
By MILES ORVELL. (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1989. xxvi, 382p. Illustrations, bibliography, index. $37.50.)

What do Henry James and the Coca-Cola Company have in common? As Miles Orvell points out, both sought to present the “real thing” to the public. James used the phrase to title one of his short stories; Coca-Cola executives used it as the slogan for an advertising campaign. But what is the “real thing” and how is it to be represented? Why do some people prefer to copy reality and others strive to create it? These are knotty questions which defy simple answers, and Orvell assaults them with considerable confidence and verve. The resulting argument is constantly stimulating, frequently convincing, and only occasionally exasperating.

The Real Thing describes how Americans between 1880 and 1940 debated the merits of what Orvell labels imitation and authenticity. Captivated by the power of new technologies to replicate things and to manufacture illusions, nineteenth-century Americans, especially those jostling for position in the amorphous middle-class, came to worship the facsimile. They “saw the machine as an agent for democratizing luxury and diffusing high culture through imitations” (p. xvi). But by the turn of the new century, a reaction had set in. Younger writers, artists, and designers struggled to transcend mere imitation and create authentic works of art and design functional products that were themselves the “real thing.” The tension between imita-
tion and authenticity, Orvell concludes, has since become the primary dynamic of American civilization.

Orvell’s richly textured analysis suffers when summarized so briefly. Indeed, the book’s breadth of coverage is perhaps its most impressive attribute. In describing the dialectic between competing categories of cultural experience, he draws illuminating examples from literature, photography, architecture, and the flotsam of popular culture (surprisingly, there is little mention of painting). Among his diverse cast of characters are Walt Whitman, Henry James, William Dean Howells, Frank Norris, John Dos Passos, James Agee, William Carlos Williams, Lewis Mumford, Van Wyck Brooks, Marianne Moore, Wallace Stevens, Alfred Stieglitz, Margaret Bourke-White, Walker Evans, Gustav Stickley, and Frank Lloyd Wright.

Perhaps Orvell’s best example of how articulate Americans resolved the tension between imitation and authenticity is Walt Whitman. The author of *Leaves of Grass*, he contends, served as the pathfinder for “the peculiarly modern apprehension of reality” (p. 6). Unlike Bryant, Longfellow, and Emerson, Whitman disdained transcendental reverie in favor of the accuracy of the camera eye and the authenticity of a new poetic form. Instead of prolonged meditation, he engaged in the kind of intimate study of particulars made possible by the invention of photography. Whitman scoffed at poets who consciously sought to idealize reality: “In these Leaves,” he claimed, “everything is literally photographed.” Yet Whitman did more than simply catalog the discrete particulars of American life. In the multiple editions of *Leaves of Grass* he invented a new approach to poetry that served to encompass the energies and diversity of a new urban-industrial culture. Such a synthesis of literal representation and artistic imagination provided an inspiration and model for those who would later strive for authentic expression of the “real thing.”

As the first in a new series of American culture studies edited by Alan Trachtenberg, *The Real Thing* displays the strengths and weaknesses of the American studies approach. Orvell, Professor of English and American Studies at Temple University, draws acute insights from diverse arts and other cultural sources in tracing the dialogue between imitative and authentic values, and he is especially good at providing succinct summaries of texts and individual artistic perspectives.

But Orvell is so agile in handling complex issues and material that at times he seems slapdash: he makes too many sweeping generalizations—the bane of American studies scholarship. Too often he airily claims that “nineteenth-century Americans” believed this or that without providing the ballast of empirical evidence. He also fails to distinguish between a desire to imitate cultural forms from the past and a desire to mirror social practices
in the present. Both may be imitative, but their motives are quite different—as are resulting works.

Most exasperating is Orvell's failure to stitch together the various strands of his argument with the stiffening thread of sustained historical analysis. *The Real Thing* never adequately explains the causes generating either the popular appeal of imitation or the artistic rebellion in favor of authenticity. Like so many other American studies scholars, Orvell focuses too much attention on the transforming role of technology at the expense of other causal factors. Echoing Walter Benjamin, he quite rightly portrays photography "as an important catalyst in the whole shift from a culture of replication to a culture of authenticity" (p. 102). And he alludes to the impact of the cinema and newspaper as well as the burgeoning consumer culture. But there is too little discussion of the role played by the muscular new scientific temperament, philosophical pragmatism, and the era's turbulent social and political developments. And nothing is said about the cultural effects of the Civil War and World War I. Too often Orvell refers to a causal influence without demonstrating its direct effects on a particular cultural form or angle of vision. Thus, for all of his adept handling of texts and artists, Orvell falls short of his expressed objective to provide a truly "integrative history."

But if its causal analysis is uneven, *The Real Thing* is stippled with descriptive insights that will reward any reader interested in the continuing debate between copying and creating the "real thing." Indeed, Orvell's ironic closing meditations upon our own "postmodern" sensibility, with its disdain for the very notion of authenticity, are alone reason enough to read this engaging book.

*Davidson College*

**DAVID E. SHI**


In one extraordinary volume, Karal Ann Marling has accomplished a feat heretofore unequaled in the pages of extensive Washingtoniana. In the publications produced during Washington's lifetime as well as in the thousands after his death one hundred ninety-one years ago, authors generally have eulogized, immortalized, humanized, domesticated, and, indeed, debunked the great military hero and first president. Recently, exhibitions and relevant examinations of Washington's image, life, military accomplishments, and political career have served to document a continuing interest
and fascination with America's first and perhaps finest hero. Conspicuously missing, however, has been a broad cultural view of Washington—an explanation of how Americans have used his image and persona in celebrations dealing with the nation’s history and in the conduct of their own lives. Until recently, scholars of American history and American art history have traditionally separated their disciplines while hardly recognizing the now obvious interplay. Today it is accepted that cultural changes in American society have had to occur in order for the image of Washington to have changed from that of the counterpart of the eulogized Christ or Moses at his death to the almost completely domesticated and humanized model citizen that he became during the Colonial Revival. Thus, the appearance of Marling's book is refreshing for those of us who have been striving for just such an understanding.

As Americans approached the celebration of the centennial of independence in 1876, they were searching for their own traditions. A look back at the life, home, habits, and possessions of the venerated first hero, George Washington, was intended to reassure the nation of both the authenticity and importance of their own history. Marling suggests this was "a bond of blood between a gracious past and a problematic present," which, if we can risk taking words out of context, she also aptly describes as "an illusion of kinship between the 1770s and the 1870s" thereby providing a continuing history of a new but well-formed nation. Events, literature, illustrations, movies, and other aspects of American culture are thoroughly investigated and provide extensive documentation for ideas related to the presentation and incorporation of Washington's image into American daily life.

Nevertheless, as Marling explores Washington's importance in American culture, she continually emphasizes the negative. For example, rather than focusing on the positive contributions of the Sons of Revolution, an organization of Revolutionary war descendants formed in 1876 to broaden participation in preserving America's heritage, she emphasizes their "rigid" and restrictive qualifications for membership. This is also the case with regard to her discussion of the Daughters of the American Revolution, the sister organization to the Sons, where she states that "the Washington name covered a multitude of social sins," since a Washington descendant, regardless of occupation, would be highly regarded as a member of the organization. On the other hand, for other descendants of Revolutionary war soldiers, membership remained highly exclusive, and a denial of high office could occur because of one's lowly occupation. Thus, the patriotic and positive contributions of the Daughters of the American Revolution are submerged.

Other writers may have glossed over some of the rather grim realities of American life in attempts to preserve illusions of glory, patriotism, and pride. Marling provides an alternative view, and perhaps we need to see the other
side, although a better balance might have been preferable. Nevertheless, Marling's accumulation and presentation of an incredible wealth of material has provided both scholars of American cultural history and the public generally with a most comprehensive compilation of the disparate bits and pieces of Washington lore and the popular culture of America.

Fraunces Tavern Museum

BARBARA J. MITNICK


It is high time that a historian analyzed the role of the Antiquities Act of 1906 as a tool for historic preservation. To attain this goal, Hal Rothman has built successfully on the early researches of Ronald F. Lee, and has made good use of the most important single primary source on the subject, Record Group 79 in the National Archives. The story is replete with heroes and villains (or at least obstructionists). He gives excellent characterizations of several of the principal players in the story, most notably Edgar L. Hewett and Frank Pinkley. There also is reasonable coverage of the ideas of such Park Service leaders as Horace M. Albright and Stephen Mather.

Rothman claims a great deal for his subject. Without hesitation he describes the Antiquities Act as "the most important piece of preservation legislation ever enacted by the United States government." He proves that the Act gave the President of the United States and the Department of the Interior great flexibility in handling preservation crises that developed on federal lands. Many of the national monuments eventually became national parks, and there is no question that major sites might well have been lost without the great discretionary powers given to the chief executive in 1906.

But the reader must realize that in building his case Rothman keeps a rather narrow focus. On page 59 we finally discover that one of the severe limitations of the Antiquities Act was the fact that it only applied to sites on federal lands. The author chooses not to include the Historic Sites Act of 1935 or the Historic Preservation Act of 1966—the only possible legislative competitors that could weaken his thesis. The book needs the added dimension of a comparison of the early development of National Historic Sites in the years just before World War II with the story of the National Monuments.

Rothman is especially strong in his treatment of the use of the Antiquities Act in the freewheeling 1920s when Frank Pinkley was czar of the Southwestern Monuments. The well-researched account is colorful and helps to
support the idea that the Interior Department needed flexibility in dealing
with the archaeological and natural treasures of the Southwest. Rothman's
history has some imbalance. For example, the account of the development
of the George Washington Birthplace and of Colonial National Monument
is too brief in comparison to the extensive coverage given to Herbert Kahler's
role as the first National Park Service superintendent at Fort Marion (Castillo
de San Marcos) in St. Augustine, Florida.

After the depression era the Antiquities Act became a tool for conservationists who got the ear of each lame-duck president. Over and over outgoing
chief executives used the powers specified in the act to save important areas
within the federal lands that might have been open to development. After
all, as the author points out, the Antiquities Act often became a tool for by-
passing Congress. In addition, the wording of the law is so general that
scientific, scenic, and historic areas all could be saved.

As long as it is clear that Preserving Different Pasts covers an important
part of a much larger story, the reader will gain a great deal from reading
Rothman's account of the National Monuments. It is fascinating to watch
the officials of the National Park Service respond to changing national
priorities, particularly in the years following World War I when improved
roads made it possible to visit sites that had once been really remote. The
author presents a judicious view of the debates over the fate of our public
lands, and the story of the Antiquities Act is an excellent focus.

Principia College

CHARLES B. HOSMER, JR.

Black Musical Theatre: From Coontown to Dreamgirls. By ALLEN WOLL.
xiv, 301p. Illustrations, selected bibliography, index. $29.95.)

In the volume at hand, Allen Woll provides a historical chronology of
African-American musical theater—the staged performances of revues and
book musicals in which blacks participated prominently—beginning with the
black minstrel performers of the mid-1850s and concluding with the spate
of black musicals, both on and Off-Broadway, of the mid-1980s. In addition
to detailing the story of black participation in this singularly American
contribution to world theater history, Woll also undertakes analyses of major
individual shows, documenting his commentary with substantial bits of dia-
logue and/or song lyrics as well as the critical reception accorded each
production. He also attempts to place the most significant developments in
black musical theater within the broader context of American social and cultural history.

A brief review of this detailed account can only suggest certain dominant themes that would appear to be most salient. First among these is the reality that each black musical production was and is a commercial enterprise dependent upon production capital—an enterprise that had to compete commercially in a market dominated by whites. Consequently, blacks had to offer products that appealed to white audiences. More often than not, this meant that black playwrights, lyricists, composers, and performers had to offer images of black culture that comported with the comfortable stereotypes long familiar to whites. As a result, even such germinal productions as the Sissle and Black *Shuffle Along* of 1921 featured overtones of the old minstrel image: the “comedy of malapropisms and black chicanery” in Woll’s words (p. 78). Such would be the case until at least the mid-twentieth century.

A second dominant theme: despite the relative commercial success of the black musical in the 1920s, the institutional racism that pervaded the American theatrical establishment dictated that white production and direction would dominate black theater. Normally, blacks appeared only as performers, and often enough performers of essentially white material (as in the Gershwin/Heywood *Porgy and Bess* of 1935). Whites thus controlled the images of blacks presented on the “black” stage, and only rarely evoked authentic black culture. As Langston Hughes observed in 1953, “White Americans control commercial entertainment for white Americans” (p. 234). Hughes was determined to remedy the situation, and to a degree succeeded with such gospel-based shows as *Black Nativity*. But white domination persisted despite occasional efforts to represent the actual black experience on the musical stage, in shows intended for black audiences. The dictates of market realities and white racial attitudes remained all-powerful. In a very real sense, they still do. Even the most successful of black musicals in the 1980s—the 1981 Michael Bennett production of *Dreamgirls*, for example—are “black” only insofar as performance is concerned. In *Dreamgirls*, whites contributed the entire “creative contingent”—production and direction, book and music (p. 274).

On balance, Woll has provided a provocative yet evenhanded account. The weaknesses of the book are perhaps inherent in the format he has chosen, as well as in the limitations of his sources. The chronological organization, while expedient and useful, can become a bit tedious. The social-historical analysis could have been considerably expanded, as could the content analysis of major scripts and song lyrics. Perhaps most unfortunate is the lack of any serious consideration of the *music* of the black musical theater: the part of the tradition that is most essentially African-American. There is no treatment of the blues, gospel, jazz, or swing—the forms that most influenced black
musical productions and, indeed, all of American musical theater. Nor is there any substantive analysis of dance and the contributions of black performers to this second major dimension of the musical stage. Nonetheless, the Woll book represents a major contribution to the growing literature of the African-American performing arts as well as a notable commentary on American racial and cultural dynamics.

University of Southwestern Louisiana

JAMES H. DORMON


Americans in the 1930s had an apparently unquenchable thirst for information about themselves, and the seemingly endless stream of documentary inquiries undertaken during the depression could not slake it. A gnawing fear underlay virtually all of these self-examinations—namely, that the economic catastrophe of those years would permanently alter the American character and culture, and for the worse. Thus, these reports veered more toward the jeremiad than the disinterested reportage they were nominally commissioned to be.

In 1933 and 1934 Harry Hopkins, confidant of President Roosevelt and the New Deal’s director of relief activities, hired sixteen investigators, mostly journalists, to scour the country and send him reports of their findings. These investigators were to talk with the jobless themselves, to visit their communities and homes for an on-the-spot candid assessment of the depression’s consequences. Their reports were to provide an intimate “human” supplement to the statistical and administrative data Hopkins routinely received. During most of the First New Deal, Hopkins’s reporters fanned out across the nation, to mining towns and industrial cities, to the Great Plains and the deep South, and filed more than one-hundred lengthy reports. John F. Bauman and Thomas H. Coode have retrieved these heretofore largely unexamined accounts and made them the basis for In the Eye of the Great Depression.

The authors’ hope is that an examination of these documents will lend “fresh meaning to the agony of the Great Depression.” That ambition is not entirely realized, largely because Bauman and Coode have not found a satisfactory theoretical or even organizational scheme in which to assess this body of material. They suggest early on that the conflict between civilization
and culture identified as a key 1930s dualism by Warren Susman provides a way of unifying these disparate reports by several hands, but this promising suggestion is barely if at all pursued in the body of the book. Instead, the book’s chapters are dogged recapitulations of the reporters’ observations, arranged in some cases geographically and in others thematically. When the authors do attempt to provide a richer theoretical framework—as in their preface to “The South” chapter, with its lengthy discussion of the conflict between gloomy analysts of the tragic South such as Wilbur J. Cash and more optimistic “service intellectuals such as Howard W. Odum”—it seems merely eccentric and unconnected with the book’s other chapters.

The major value of Bauman’s and Coode’s study—beyond its making known this previously neglected body of material—is its firm identification of what the authors correctly call “the dark side of the New Deal.” Hopkins’s reporters, “progressives” all, regarded the most wretched groups in the 1930s—blacks, Hispanics, other ethnics, the poorest class of whites—as not only beyond redemption but also as substantial threats to the future welfare of American culture. Their supposedly documentary reports to Hopkins were thus laced with bigoted disdain for the depression’s greatest victims and often insinuated that draconian measures would be needed to neutralize their threat. It would have been useful had Bauman and Coode examined further the larger context of the New Deal’s responses to these egregiously disadvantaged groups in the light of the racism and classism of Hopkins’s “progressives.”

Bauman’s and Coode’s study would have profited as well from a fuller cultural context than they have given it. Their brief and merely recapitulative “Conclusion” could usefully have examined, for comparative purposes, some of the numerous documentary undertakings of the 1930s which resembled those Hopkins commissioned. Did that other great governmental documentary enterprise, the RA/FSA photo project, have a “dark side” similar to that of Hopkins’s reporters? How did the Lynds’s conclusions in Middletown in Transition about the depression’s effects compare? What enabled James Agee and Walker Evans in Let Us Now Praise Famous Men to avoid the excesses of bigotry which characterized Hopkins’s reporters? Addressing contextual questions such as these would have enhanced In the Eye of the Great Depression’s contribution to cultural studies of the 1930s.

University of Iowa

JOHN RAEBURN
The American Age: United States Foreign Policy at Home and Abroad since 1750.
By WALTER LAFEBER. (New York and London: W.W. Norton &
$25.00.)

With this book Walter LaFeber has accomplished the historian's equivalent of "the hat trick." The American Age is at one and the same time an excellent text for a college course in U.S. diplomatic history, an extended analytical essay evaluating the global expansion of American power and influence, and a work of scholarship that will interest as well as instruct that elusive if oft-cited individual, the general reader.

There are many features that set this book apart from other surveys of U.S. diplomatic history. One would be its chronological emphasis. LaFeber offers in his first six chapters a concise analysis of diplomatic developments from the 1750s to the 1890s crucial to establishing the goals and power base of modern U.S. foreign policy, but three-quarters of his study is devoted to the years 1896-1988. Throughout there is a concerted and successful effort to describe the domestic sources of U.S. foreign policy and its expanding ambitions. Indeed, one of the most original characteristics of LaFeber's narrative is the determination to relate U.S. diplomatic history to concurrent developments in American society. This is done not only by means of statistical tables but by biographical vignettes and apt quotations drawn from American literature and film. LaFeber's wedding of diplomatic and social history helps sustain a consistent balance between description and interpretation. All of the major events of the nation's diplomatic past find their place in the narrative, but they achieve connection through the author's readiness to place them in a broad interpretive context that emphasizes the inspirations of American territorial and commercial expansion and its consequences at home and abroad. The result is a blend of fact and theory unusual in a historical overview of U.S. foreign policy. While the chief theme of that overview is America's evolution to a position of global dominance, LaFeber makes a notable contribution in his analysis of the relative decline of U.S. economic and diplomatic power over the past two decades.

Two other major themes are analyzed with equal persuasiveness. One is the close relationship between the expansion of U.S. influence abroad and the development of presidential power at home and the constitutional conflicts that have accompanied that development. The second is the continuing effort of U.S. administrations from Woodrow Wilson to Ronald Reagan to seek an orderly world in the American image and the frustration of that objective as the result of social revolutions and resurgent nationalism in Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East. LaFeber relates that frustration to the seemingly immutable bond between the economic and strategic self-
interest of the United States and its determination to make the world "safe for democracy."

LaFeber's forthright critique of the conduct of United States diplomacy will surely inspire disagreement on particular points of emphasis and judgment. This reviewer, for example, remains unconvinced that "foreign-policy issues were a central cause of the Civil War" (p. 137); that William McKinley had a master-plan that encompassed "the Cuban and Asian crises" in 1898 (p. 189); or that Wilson's Fourteen Points address was "specially shaped to answer Lenin's demands for revolution" (p. 291). But it will be a bold critic who will deny that LaFeber's general interpretation is characterized by a praiseworthy balance.

The American Age offers not only LaFeber's well-known thesis respecting the importance of "the surplus," but, more importantly, it offers an example of how the nation's economic diplomacy can provide a useful analytical context for understanding the objectives of U.S. foreign policy in the twentieth century. LaFeber demonstrates as well the possibility of analyzing the origins and evolution of the Cold War in an even-handed way that refuses to ignore Russian contributions when discussing those of Harry Truman.

Blending narrative explanation and personal critique, LaFeber has produced what is quite possibly the best survey to date of the history of U.S. foreign policy. His knowledge of the literature of the field and current research is formidable, as indicated by the voluminous endnotes; he writes with verve and stylistic grace; and he has been well-served by his publishers who have allowed him to embellish his text with well-chosen illustrations and forty-eight maps.

Professor Walter LaFeber of Cornell University deserves the gratitude of "students in course," scholars of diplomatic history, and the general reader.

Lafayette College

RICHARD E. WELCH, JR.


The American Legion is often caricatured as a cross between harmless conventioners engaged in the pursuit of victimless crime and a reactionary fraternity systematically attempting to destroy free thought and civil rights in this nation. William Pencak's absorbing study should do much to dispel much of the emotional rhetoric that has surrounded this organization. Drawing heavily upon primary material from both the Legion and its detractors,
he presents a scholarly, well-reasoned, and highly informative study of the Legion from its founding to the eve of World War II. In the process, he discusses the Legion's composition and membership, its political and social activities, and the reasons for its political power in the interwar period. The result is an outstanding pioneer treatment in a field largely ignored by both military and social historians.

The Legion was formed in 1919 by American Expeditionary Force veterans to serve the dual function of maintaining fraternal bonds and securing veterans' economic and social benefits. Having engaged in the "War to End All Wars," they wanted to honor those who had fallen and maintain the camaraderie and spirit of sacrifice they had found in the service. However, Pencak argues that the Legion was also a child of the nationalist and Progressive movements and of the crusading spirit which characterized American intervention in World War I. Upon their return, veterans found the United States apparently threatened by organized labor and socialism. The Legion's skirmishing with radicals and labor activists culminated in the infamous clash with the Industrial Workers of the World in Centralia, Washington. Thereafter, individual Legion posts continued to harass speakers and union representatives, campaign to insure patriotic ceremonies in classrooms, and censor offending textbooks. The Legion's Americanism section under Homer Chaillaux championed a federal investigation of "un-American" activities which eventually resulted in the establishment of a congressional committee. On a more positive note, the Legion engaged in numerous philanthropic activities, fought for educational and medical benefits for veterans, and fostered close ties to local communities through the establishment of American Legion baseball and school essay contests.

Throughout this book, Pencak stresses both the Legion's devotion to "Americanism" and its hostility to "un-American" activities. In a well-reasoned and informative analysis, he demolishes the accusation that the pre-World War II Legion was fascist or reactionary. Instead, he places the Legion firmly in the conservative mainstream. The Legion's ideology was based on the belief that the individual's personal freedom derives from his membership in the community and carries with it an obligation of military service should the community be endangered. Thus, personal freedom and civil rights do not extend to an individual who by his actions or words threatens to damage or weaken the community. Pencak demonstrates that the postwar Legion was relatively evenhanded in attacking any group that met its definition of subversive. Although most famous for their persecution of Communists, industrial unions, and the American Civil Liberties Union, Legionnaires also harassed Nazis and in many towns were the first, and only, association to stand up to the Ku Klux Klan.
This book will be valuable to all students of interwar American society and American political thought. Pencak's careful study of the society's internal workings and its strong local and community character may serve as a model for later scholars facing the problem of institutional analysis. Most praiseworthy of all is the author's fair, honest, and impartial treatment of the Legion's strengths and failings. His treatment of controversial individuals such as Chaillaux and such incidents as the Centralia killings are dispassionate and informed. Pencak has written an excellent historical work that deserves a wide audience.

Texas A&M University

Brian McAllister Linn


This is a valuable contribution to the recorded annals of the U.S. airline industry, for it is a story that previously has been told in tantalizing dribbles, mostly in long-forgotten newspaper features. All American Aviation (AAA) eventually evolved into one of the most successful, efficiently run air carriers in the world—now known as USAir.

All American began modestly, but in a unique way, as a mail carrier. Its tiny Stinsons picked up mail bags without landing at the scores of small communities it served. The authors have done a superb job of describing this innovative system, developed by an inventor named Lytle S. Adams and brought to fruition by the enthusiasm and financial support of wealthy Richard C. du Pont.

The technique was daring and today seems starkly anachronistic. AAA's planes would make low, frequently dangerous approaches to the airport and catch the mail bag, suspended between two poles, on a hood at the end of a cable attached to the aircraft's belly. It required skilled flying, but it paid off by bringing airmail service to small communities isolated from the nation's main airways. After World War II, All American moved into passenger service, thus planting the seeds that grew into huge USAir.

One of the most fascinating aspects of this account is the little-known fact that the mail pickup system led to the development of towed, troop-carrying gliders in WWII. Equally interesting is the revelation that Lytle and du Pont envisioned towed gliders playing an important role in postwar civil air transportation. Imagine, if you will, a DC-3 hauling a pair of big, twenty-
passenger gliders out of Pittsburgh, dropping one off at Altoona and the 
other at Harrisburg before proceeding to Philadelphia, its final destination 
point. A total of some sixty passengers, two-thirds of them riding in aircraft 
that burned no fuel whatsoever—this was a visionary dream of low-cost air 
travel that mostly for technical reasons never became reality, but nevertheless 
makes for an intriguing, exciting story.

The importance of this work in filling a large, hitherto untold gap in 
aviation history outweighs its flaws. And there are flaws. The book jacket's 
expected hyperbole describes Airway to Everywhere as a story that "will appeal 
to lay readers." This has to be questioned, for its main drawback is a curiously 
lifeless style, an unfortunate weakness in what essentially is a dramatic story.

The history of any airline is the story of people—not merely the generals 
but the rank-and-file troops. Airway to Everywhere sadly lacks this human 
element. It has few anecdotes and virtually no humor (and every carrier is 
replete with such stories), and suffers from a total absence of dialogue (and 
I don't mean manufactured dialogue, but dialogue obtained from interviewed 
sources). The overall effect is a book that too often reads like a corporate 
annual report.

It is, in fact, a book that occasionally is difficult to read, what with 
numerous paragraphs running more than thirty lines of print. Lewis and 
Trimble, both college professors, have done an admirable job of research. 
Perhaps that is the problem, for Airway to Everywhere has the tone of a 
master's thesis, scholarly and thorough yet devoid of the sparkle that brings 
history to life. The same basic flaw hurt the 1979 history of Delta that W. 
David Lewis co-authored. The All American account is an even worse 
offender, concentrating as it does on the stars and giving almost no attention 
to the supporting players.

Airway to Everywhere is, nevertheless, an important work. The airline 
industry today has become a system of mass transportation, its historical 
ancestors almost forgotten along with the pioneers whose vision made it all 
happen. Books like this bring into sharp perspective just how far commercial 
aviation has progressed in so short a time. The years between All American's 
birth and the USAir of today are a mere heartbeat in history.

Tucson, AZ 

ROBERT J. SERLING

The Life of Herbert Hoover: The Humanitarian, 1914-1917. By GEORGE H. 
xi, 497p. Illustrations, bibliographical note, index. $25.00.)

In this second installment of his multivolume biography of Herbert Hoo- 
ver, George Nash focuses on the three-year period when "the engineer"
began the "second of his remarkable series of careers, that of an international-ally acclaimed humanitarian" (p. ix). The period, Nash says, was a time of transition when Hoover moved from private to public pursuits and can be studied at close range as he did so. It was also a period during which Hoover's life became thoroughly intertwined with that of an institution, the Commission for Relief in Belgium (CRB), which in recent years has been largely forgotten yet was clearly significant in shaping future expectations concerning American responsibilities abroad. For these reasons, Nash believes, the period deserves the detailed reconstruction that this volume provides.

Nash begins with an account of Hoover's role in rescuing war-stranded American travelers. He also intersperses at various points some interesting new information about Hoover's personal life, business affairs, and career aspirations. But his central story concerns the achievements and tribulations of the CRB and its energetic and resourceful founder and director. By the end of the volume, the CRB has emerged as one of the world's great success stories, an agency that assembled and efficiently administered the resources needed to keep over nine million people in Belgium and northern France alive. Yet, as Nash tells the story, it was also a hotbed of political intrigue, personal ambition, and diplomatic rivalry, an agency that seemed always in "crisis" as its director took on the British, German, and Belgian governments, the Comité National in occupied Belgium, and a variety of rival relief schemes and rebellious subordinates. That it survived was in part due to the timing of its establishment and the diverse interests that it served. But also playing a key role, Nash concludes, were Hoover's organizational, administrative, negotiating, and public relations talents, his dogged determination, and his success in coping with one crisis situation after another.

As in Nash's first volume, the Hoover that emerges in this one is neither the villain of progressive history nor the saint of its conservative rival. Although in important respects a masterful and heroic figure, he was also, as Nash brings out, blunt and demanding, frequently insensitive and manipulative, and at times contradictory and deceitful. While craving an image of selflessness and occasionally rearranging the record to support one, he clearly yearned for and took pleasure in the exercise of power. And even as he cultivated an aura of apolitical efficiency and expertise, he also recognized the need to create and maintain a political base and stood ready to counter the scheming of his foes with intrigues of his own. In addition, Nash confirms the findings of David Burner and other scholars concerning the unreliability of Hoover's Memoirs; and by making use of Tracy Kittredge's unpublished history of the CRB (a work that Hoover tried but failed to have destroyed), he provides a candid account of Hoover's feud with Belgium's Emile Franc-
qui, a quarrel that nearly wrecked the relief venture but about which Hoover had almost nothing to say in his Memoirs and other autobiographical writings.

Like his first volume, too, Nash's second is thoroughly researched, thoughtfully constructed, judiciously balanced, gracefully written, and generally successful in making potentially burdensome detail rich and fascinating. One wishes, to be sure, that it had a larger interpretive dimension, that it made a greater effort, in particular, to connect the CRB work with Hoover's earlier managerial experiences and with the ideology of the "American system" that would shape his subsequent career. But what Nash offers is still excellent history, indicating as the first volume did, that a truly distinguished and eminently reliable biography is in the making.

University of Iowa

ELLIS W. HAWLEY


For almost thirty years William Green presided over the American Federation of Labor (AFL), the nation's largest organization of trade unions. During this time American workers encountered the momentous events of the 1920s, the Great Depression, the New Deal, World War II, and the Cold War. Notwithstanding these upheavals, Green's latest biographer, Craig Phelan, is hard-pressed to delineate any one area in which Green assumed a leadership role and helped to accomplish some concrete gains for America's toilers. No important policy, activity, or principle can be attributed directly to William Green's stewardship of the AFL.

Make no mistake. This is a competently researched and critically written study. Phelan renders a yeoman performance in elucidating clearly the experiences that molded Green's personality and character and in examining carefully his ideas and actions during a long labor union career. On the whole, the author's assessment of Green's life is sympathetic, fair, and balanced. In the end, however, Green can only be considered a weak, stubborn, impotent failure. While this conclusion is simple enough, the more difficult question is why Green failed so miserably, particularly when even his critics conceded that he was decent, honest and hardworking, admired by his townspeople in Conshocton, Ohio, and popular with his fellow coal miners in the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA). Not without some talent and ability, Green's years as a miner and his tough early union career should have given him the requisite training and perspective to lead workers during the
convulsions of the mid-twentieth century. Unfortunately, the higher he rose in labor's ranks, the more conservative and intransigent he became.

In 1886, at age sixteen, Green entered the coal mines in Ohio's Hocking Valley and remained there for twenty years. In his early twenties he began a union career that would lead to the presidency, first of his local union and then of UMWA District 6 (encompassing Ohio and part of West Virginia). In 1913 he was appointed by UMWA president John White to be national secretary-treasurer, and that same year was selected to be an AFL vice-president and member of the powerful Executive Council. Finally, in 1924, with the death of Samuel Gompers, Green was chosen to be AFL president as part of a compromise engineered by the craft union power brokers on the Executive Council. Phelan appropriately places Green's rise to union leadership and his subsequent tenure as AFL chief within the context of the times, objectively analyzing Green's motives, thinking, and actions. But while successfully giving Green his day in court, the author fails ultimately to vindicate (as the book jacket implies) someone who steadfastly refused to alter his Christian moralist approach to the relationship between labor and capital, in spite of overwhelming and sustained evidence that such an approach was not only unworkable but harmful to the very people that Green claimed to champion. To insist, as Phelan does, that Green was a captive of an outmoded philosophy and strategy does not explain why he would not abandon that which had failed time and time again.

William Green occupied a key position within the twentieth-century labor movement during years in which American workers experienced tragic defeats and noble triumphs. He had a rare opportunity to play a starring role in these struggles but chose rather to sit as a spectator on the sidelines while others "carried the ball" for working men and women.

Rider College

JOE GOWASKIE
THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY
OF PENNSYLVANIA

Harrison M Wright, Chairman
Vice Chairmen

George W Connell
S Robert Teitelman
Secretary, David W Maxey

Term Ending 1990
Carol S Baldridge
Muriel Berman
W Richard Gordon
Edward D Griffith
Stanley N Katz
Frank E Reed
F Joseph Stokes, Jr
James A Unruh

Term Ending 1991
Drew G Faust
Carol E Hefner
Frank P Louchheim
Charles W Soltis
William G Warden, III

Term Ending 1992
Stanley Abelsohn
Gerald T Brawner
Jack Friedland
Ragan Henry
Julia Leisenring
George Ross
Marie R Williams

Bertram L O'Neill, Emeritus
Caroline Robbins, Emerita

William Webb, Counsel

President, Susan Stitt

Founded in 1824, The Historical Society of Pennsylvania has long been a center of research in Pennsylvania and American History. It has accumulated an important historical collection, chiefly through contributions of family, political, and business manuscripts, as well as letters, diaries, newspapers, magazines, maps, prints, paintings, photographs, and rare books. Additional contributions of such a nature are urgently solicited for preservation by the Society where they may be consulted by scholars.

Membership: There are various classes of membership—individual, $35.00, family/joint, $50.00, patron, $125.00, contributor, $250.00, connoisseurs' circle, $500.00, benefactor, $1,000.00. Membership benefits include invitations to lectures and exhibit openings, receipt of the newsletter, The Pennsylvania Correspondent, and a subscription to The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography. (Individual membership without publications and student memberships are also available.) For additional membership information please call the Society, (215) 732-6201.

Hours: The Society is open to the public Wednesday, 1 p.m. to 9 p.m.; Tuesday, Thursday, Friday, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. For exhibition hours please call the above number.
PALLADIAN STUDIES IN AMERICA

BUILDING BY THE BOOK 3
Edited by Mario Di Valmarana

This third volume of Palladian Studies in America, based on papers presented at the Center for Palladian Studies' meeting in Philadelphia, is a collection of essays examining the Palladian influence on building in Philadelphia during the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries.

February $27.50
Photograph:
The Pennsylvania State House. Courtesy of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania

Now In Paperback

JAMES MADISON
A Biography
By Ralph Ketcham

"Madison's personality comes alive in these pages, his strengths and weaknesses of mind and character clearly outlined. . . . This is an excellent biography."
—American Historical Review
May $17.95

JAMES MONROE
The Quest for National Identity
By Harry Ammon

"At last we have a biography that does full justice to James Monroe, who has often been undervalued by historians."
—Dumas Malone
March $18.95

THE PAPERS OF GEORGE WASHINGTON
COLONIAL SERIES
Volume Seven
January 1761-June 1767
Edited by W. W. Abbot and Dorothy Twohig

Volume seven of the Colonial Series presents the surviving correspondence of the adult Washington in the 1760s, after the young colonel left the Virginia regiment to go with his new wife to Mount Vernon and before he, as the squire of Mount Vernon, became deeply involved in the Revolutionary politics of the 1770s.

July $45.00

Robert Bolling Woos Anne Miller
Love and Courtship in Colonial Virginia, 1760
Edited by J. A. Leo Lemay

"Providing the single most illuminating documents on colonial American courtship practices as well as extraordinary insight into the behavior and values of the colonial Virginia elite, this volume has been carefully edited. The editor's excellent introduction does justice to these superb materials."
—Jack P. Greene, Andrew W. Mellon Professor in the Humanities, Department of History, The John Hopkins University
June $22.95

Available From the
UNIVERSITY PRESS OF VIRGINIA
BOX 3608 UNIVERISTY STATION
CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA 22903-0608
(804)924-3469