

BOOK REVIEWS

Mastering Wartime: A Social History of Philadelphia during the Civil War. By J. MATTHEW GALLMAN. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990. xiv, 354p. Tables, illustrations, appendix, bibliographic essay, index. \$49.50.)

Despite serving as a manufacturing center and logistical focus for the huge Union army effort during the Civil War, Philadelphia adapted rather untraumatically, even comfortably, to its wartime roles, Matthew Gallman argues in his thorough study. The Philadelphia story was basically one of the "persistence of localism and voluntarism in the face of new challenges" (p. 10). Traditional economic and power structures proved highly adaptable. They survived the war in forms far more intact than transformed.

This is not a startling thesis, and to a degree Gallman is arguing with a straw man, as few historians have claimed that the Civil War visited a social revolution on the North as it did on the South. However, there have been lively, if more modest historical debates about the impact of the war on northern society, and here Gallman makes significant contributions to the testing of several theories. Among other issues, Gallman discusses the impact of conscription, the role of workers and of women in wartime, and the impact of the war on a local economy that had already begun the transformation into manufacturing before the war.

Conscription led to riots in many northern cities, New York in the summer of 1863 being the most notable example. Despite its large immigrant and artisan population and tensions created by the draft, Philadelphia escaped such a cataclysm. Gallman demonstrates that the Philadelphia police had already been modernized before the war, and that unlike New York, Philadelphia had a large military presence. In addition, he carefully analyzes the development of a publicly funded City Bounty Commission, which bought out most draftees. Coupled with the passive official attitude toward those draftees who fled the city, the bounty system meant that only 373 Philadelphia conscripts actually served in the army.

In an equally detailed way, Gallman discusses the impact of the war on workers. Manufacturing employment spread, and union activity was prompted, but workers gained little power. Indeed, their real wages declined by 20 percent. Especially exploited were the multitude of poor women sewing uniforms, whose paltry wages finally prompted President Abraham Lincoln to intervene on their behalf. Where middle-class women entered the public sphere, joining in new, if conventional, voluntary associations such

as refreshment saloons, reading rooms, and hospitals for soldiers, they served under male leadership, thus maintaining traditional subordination in new jobs.

Perhaps most revealing is Gallman's extensive use of R.G. Dun records, through which he is able to demonstrate convincingly that, unlike the experience of World War II, the Civil War boost given to manufacturing was not accompanied by centralization of contracts or the promotion of big business. Some businesses rose and some fell, but more for traditional reasons of capitalization, organization, and luck, than from direct wartime causes. Manufacturing continued to grow more by multiplication of small units than by consolidation.

The Union was an amazingly flexible and energetic economic and social engine by 1860, one that would produce both guns and butter during the war, enlist popular participation with significant strength, and give civil authorities sufficient means to keep the lid on most potential internal conflict. *Mastering Wartime* is a sturdy localized demonstration of that resilient society. This monograph has thirty-eight tables, very heavy annotation, and a rather flat prose style, which, along with the price, make it more appealing to the scholar than the general reader. The book's negative findings render it less than dramatic, but that set of conclusions is in itself significant. Although shattering in many ways for its participants, the Civil War was also comprehensible within the traditional explanatory devices and institutions of the day. The Union could win, and Gallman underlines some of the ways this proved possible.

Simon Fraser University

MICHAEL FELLMAN

The New York City Draft Riots: Their Significance for American Society and Politics in the Age of the Civil War. By IVER BERNSTEIN. (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990. ix, 363p. Illustrations, appendixes, maps, bibliographical essay, index. \$29.95.)

During the week of July 13, 1863, New Yorkers angered by the newly instituted military draft system took to the streets destroying draft offices and railroad and telegraph facilities and attacking Republican party officials and, most viciously, members of the city's African-American community. By week's end, more than one hundred people had lost their lives in the turmoil. The July 1863 draft riots in New York City normally receive brief mention in Civil War histories. As Iver Bernstein notes, the riots are characteristically treated as a "simple, one-dimensional episode of Irish Catholic ethnic hatred, white lower-class racism, Confederate or Copperhead sympathy, or resent-

ment of the poor to the inequities of the Conscription Act" (p. 6). Bernstein believes a wider purview is in order. He tries to show in his study that the roots of the riots lay in various political developments and tensions of the 1850s and that the insurrection shaped politics in New York City for a good decade to follow. Readers may ultimately find only loose connections drawn between the draft riots and political events before and after the war. The value of this book lies less in Bernstein's coverage and evaluation of the draft riots and more in the extremely insightful analysis he provides of urban politics in mid-nineteenth-century America.

Bernstein begins with a brief narrative of the five days of rioting. The slim surviving evidence points to different sets of actors. On the first day skilled workers closed shops and factories and rallied against the centralizing programs of the Republican party; they eschewed violence. During the second and third days, industrial workers and common day laborers successively joined the fray, and the protests turned ugly. Opinion among elites was divided. Some Democratic party spokesmen encouraged the outburst; others feared the ensuing anarchy. Republican party leaders called for the establishment of martial law and suppression of the insurrection. President Abraham Lincoln, sensitive to the delicate nature of the situation, ordered federal troops to the city to quell the disturbance under the command of a general allied with the Democratic party, but wisely did not declare martial law. The protest then dissolved, and the draft lottery was successfully conducted in August.

In the core of the book, Bernstein constructs a scaffolding of New York City politics in the 1850s. Skilled workers, wary of elites and politicians in general, forged an independent politics. Less skilled workers in immigrant wards became attached to the machinery of Tammany Hall. Bernstein implies that the Republican party would ultimately find few loyalties within working-class communities, thus setting the stage for the draft riots. Bernstein's analysis here makes light of Lincoln's republican appeal to laboring people. It also suffers from the lack of a neighborhood or street-level view of political activity or of actual voting.

His most in-depth treatment is reserved for New York's divided elites. In the 1850s, the Democratic party came to be dominated by a group of successful businessmen who espoused free trade, agricultural expansion, state's rights, and sympathy for the white poor; they were challenged internally by small proprietary and laboring interests who were more tied to the party's machinery. During the 1863 riots, the former were caught between urging protest against the Republicans, warning against martial law, and fearing greater disorder, while the latter petitioned for city government payments to workingmen who could not afford the commutation fees needed to escape the draft. An old-stock mercantile and professional elite as well as

a class of new industrialists comprised the leadership of the emerging Republican party. They championed high tariffs, industry, moral reform, and loyalty to the Union cause. While the patricians among them sponsored charity measures for blacks, the manufacturers engaged in paternalistic activities aimed at improving the character of the industrial work force.

For Bernstein, a divided elite made for a crisis of authority in the city, another underlying cause of the draft riots. Whether this should be seen as more critical than standard explanations for the violence is questionable, but Bernstein's layered analysis of antebellum urban politics is an important contribution to scholarship. Bernstein also argues that the draft riots paved the way for the ascendancy of Boss William Tweed. Tweed and Democratic party machine politicians stepped into the breach; they supported the Union cause and a vigorous war effort, oversaw prosecution of arrested rioters, but also pushed for local employment and relief measures that aided working people in the city. Bernstein sheds new light on the Tweed regime, but again the 1863 draft riots appear as a small part of a larger story.

University of Pennsylvania

WALTER LIGHT

We Need Men: The Union Draft in the Civil War. By JAMES W. GEARY.
(DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1991. xvii, 264p. Illustrations, tables, appendix, works cited, index. \$32.00.)

This political and administrative history covers all major legislation—including the militia draft of July 1862 and the crucial Enrollment Act of March 1863, which sanctioned a national conscription—and later amendments. The focus is on Congress's crafting of legislation and then its administration locally. The scope of the book is modest, but it covers its topic well.

Geary judiciously places the Union draft in context by noting that conscripted men represented only 5.54 percent of total Union forces. If substitutes hired by men held to service are added, the figure remains only 13.2 percent. Northern men of military age had less than a one-percent chance of being conscripted. Even then, three or four men whose names were called were immediately released for reasons of religious belief, hardship to the immediate family, or medical disability.

The research of scholars like Geary, who has previously published articles on this subject, is balancing the impression, held by those of us who were weaned on earlier studies of the draft riots, that conscription caused major dissension in the North. Geary notes that draft riots were localized and limited in duration. Usually, they did not challenge the concept of selective military service itself but protested either larger government policy or specific

local abuses. Some rioters were antagonized by emancipation, a recently declared war aim. In the Pennsylvania coal fields, workers resented provost marshals and owners colluding to draft labor union organizers. Recent immigrants objected to fighting for a country they barely knew.

Perhaps the tragedy is that the draft laws did not provoke more protest, at least of an intellectual kind. As the author points out, the principle of the right of the central state to take citizens for military service, by force if necessary, was accepted in the United States with scarcely a murmur about individual rights. Only in Pennsylvania did the state Supreme Court, in *Kneedler v. Lane*, rule that the Congress had exceeded its powers (by circumventing the states in approaching the citizen directly).

The right to hire a substitute or to commute service through a \$300 fee payment allayed potential antagonism. Geary argues convincingly that the commutation fee, though equivalent to 75 percent of a laborer's annual income, was not an undue hardship and did not make this "a rich man's war and a poor man's fight." By joining a commutation club whose entrance fee was as little as \$10, a man could pool resources and get the needed \$300 if he was called.

Why did buying your way out of service attain respectability in the North? This remains something of an enigma, but Geary offers the partial explanation that, by the summer of 1862, poor Union military performance and neglect by the government of its soldiers (as evidenced in late pay and poor living conditions) had taken the gilt off the idea of patriotism. High bounties were needed to bring recruits.

To read history is, in part, to be disillusioned. Sadly, we find that Massachusetts eagerly recruited black troops not only through an idealistic desire to help African Americans achieve their human rights (as finely evoked in the film *Glory*) but to fill local recruitment quotas without drafting the white operatives vital to the prosperity of the state's business-industrial complex.

The book is occasionally a little dry to read and would have benefited from more primary source quotations. But it is a sound addition to the history of the selective service system in America.

Northern Kentucky University

MICHAEL C.C. ADAMS

Another Civil War: Labor, Capital, and the State in the Anthracite Regions of Pennsylvania, 1840-1868. By GRACE PALLADINO. (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1990. xii, 195p. Maps, tables, bibliography, index. \$26.50.)

Traditional accounts of Pennsylvania during the Civil War indicate that conspiracies against the Union were afoot in the state. Especially in the

anthracite coal regions, goes the story, Negrophobic Irish miners, deluded by their Democratic party Copperhead leaders, gathered in secret societies to fight the draft. Such actions, the story continues, were precursors to the postwar Molly Maguires that presumably flourished amid Irish ethnic groups. The federal reaction to this treasonous activity was to station troops in the afflicted regions to support enrollment agents in the implementation of the Conscription Acts and supposedly prevent some sort of mass uprising. Palladino's findings support an explanation of Irish miners' actions in the Civil War coal fields that is considerably at variance with the traditional view. Her excellently researched, well-organized, and clearly written study provides a solid revision of the history of the Civil War on the home front as well as of the historiography of American labor.

Palladino approaches the resistance in the Pennsylvania coal fields during the Civil War as dual in nature. There was, to be sure, definite opposition to the Conscription Acts for a variety of reasons. But in the larger sense, the discontent and disorder that marked the area between 1861 and 1865, as before and after, was based on labor-management antagonism. According to Palladino, the Irish miners were not seeking to subvert the Union; rather, they were desperately striving to achieve a modicum of self-dignity and recognized worth as producers along with the coal-mine operators. The miners' efforts to organize into embryonic labor unions were opposed, both by the coal-mine operators, who bitterly fought against any curtailment of their authority, and by influential residents of the coal-mining region, who felt that worker combinations for mutual betterment destroyed the belief in the value of the individual able to improve his condition through solitary effort. The newspaper editorial writers, Whig and later Republican politicians, and corporate hangers-on took their cue less from *Das Kapital* than from *Atlas Shrugged*. The ostensible reason for the calling of federal troops into the area was to enforce the draft. The real reason, as the author clearly indicates, was to break the power of organized labor.

Palladino traces in masterful fashion the development of labor-management relations in the coal fields from the beginnings of the industry forward, when at least some credence could be paid to the idea of individual endeavor and enterprise. Very shortly in the history of the industry, however, corporate power arrived to lessen ruinous competition and to "rationalize" the coal fields. Over and over again, despite obvious monopolistic shaping of the anthracite mining operations, articulate residents continued to speak of a society in which the humble could become wealthy and in which each man through his own efforts could attain a competence. In this myopic view held by the media and the dominant Republican party, the only fly in the ointment of free enterprise was labor combination.

The author's emphasis on the continuing struggle between the workers and their bosses runs parallel with her recognition of genuine rank-and-file opposition to the Conscription Acts of 1862 and 1863. However, again in a real contribution to historical understanding, Palladino places this opposition into its true perspective. She points out, for instance, that open violence against the enrollment agents seeking to gather in draftees was primarily characteristic of rural areas inhabited by German farmers rather than Irish coal patches. The draftable miners tended to take advantage of the rugged mountainous region in which they lived and simply headed for the hills and disappeared. Palladino also stresses the incompetent, blundering implementation of the laws in which ineligible aliens were rounded up along with underage youths amid the protests of the populace. The Republican-dominated bureaucracy made sure that draft quotas in Democratic areas were higher than in nearby Republican strongholds—another discriminatory action that did not go unnoticed. The cry of a "rich man's war and a poor man's fight" was raised as well-off individuals hired substitutes to go to war while they remained at home reaping the benefits of wartime prosperity.

The coal miners were localized in their opposition. Although certainly susceptible, as was most of the contemporary white population, to Negro-baiting, the Irish miners were less concerned with the African American as a racial threat than with him as a labor competitor. Arguments alleging the hiring of African Americans as low-wage workers or as strikebreakers hit home with greater impact than those based on presumed cultural differences. What really concerned the Irish miners was their precarious condition of semi-servitude—a condition that they saw enforced, aided, and abetted by the federal authorities under the guise of wartime necessity. To these miners, the southern slaveholder may or may not have been the enemy. But the coal-mine operator and his minions were definitely not on the side of good and virtue. Their programs of action were shaped accordingly.

Thaddeus Stevens State School of Technology

NORMAN LEDERER

Forged in Battle: The Civil War Alliance of Black Soldiers and White Officers.

By JOSEPH GLATTHAAR. (New York and London: The Free Press, 1990. xiii, 370p. Illustrations, appendixes, bibliography, index. \$24.95.)

Joseph Glatthaar, author of a well-received work on General William Sherman's "March to the Sea," has now completed an examination of black soldiers and their white officers in the United States Colored Troops (USCT) during the Civil War. Like most recent studies of wartime race relations,

this one emphasizes the general assertiveness of blacks, the widespread racial prejudice among whites, and the resulting range of racial interactions. The book's contribution lies in its wealth of descriptive detail.

Glatthaar finds the typical officer characterized by much education, geographic mobility, ambition, prior military service, and dedication to the Union's cause. The USCT attracted some officers primarily because of their abolitionism and others mainly because of the opportunity for promotion. Blacks, mostly runaway slaves, either volunteered for service because of their hostility to slavery or were conscripted; they had no tangible incentives. Both groups carried baggage into the relationship: whites brought racial stereotypes, and blacks came with bad experiences of white domination. Both groups' goals, plus white society's tendency to scorn the regiments, usually brought officers and men closely together.

The author fully explores the army's institutional impact on the relationship. Military life demanded discipline, but both idealism and racial stereotypes made it more severe in these units. Ex-slaves reacted strongly against arbitrary punishment, and a disproportionate number of mutiny prosecutions resulted. When strict and fair, discipline prepared troops well for combat. Two eloquent chapters cover the USCT's excellent battle record. A contrasting chapter then follows on discrimination in pay, promotion opportunity, fatigue duty, equipment, and medical care for USCT.

The slow mustering out of USCT after the war often put them in the difficult job of occupying a defeated but still hostile and white-dominated South. When discharges finally arrived, some chose a career in the regular army. Many white officers and some black soldiers used military experience as a springboard for advancement in civilian life. Others had acquired physical or psychological problems that plagued them for the rest of their lives. White America's pervasive racism limited black gains and soon downplayed the USCT's role in the war. Twentieth-century historians would have to dig deeply to recover the story.

Glatthaar's more extensive research usually confirms and steps beyond the preceding work of Dudley Cornish, *The Sable Arm: Negro Troops in the Union Army, 1861-1865* (1956). Like Ira Berlin's edited collection of documents, *The Black Military Experience* (1982), Glatthaar's study updates the record and makes a few corrections. Cornish's book will remain useful for its broader context and chronological framework. Indeed, a chronological table alone would have greatly reduced the sense of timelessness that occasionally arises from Glatthaar's topical organization. Despite the use of good secondary sources, a few factual errors appear, like calling Lincoln a prewar abolitionist and labeling Ben Butler a prewar Republican. None of these, though, harms the larger analysis.

The book commendably aims for both the popular and the professional audiences. The writing flows well, makes effective use of humor, and moves at a leisurely pace. Bearing much resemblance to Leon Litwack's *Been in the Storm So Long: The Aftermath of Slavery* (1979), it paints a broad and realistic canvas. While it sometimes rambles, over-uses quotation, and awkwardly places subjects in the narrative flow, the best sections are powerful and exciting. Well-chosen illustrations support the text. Both scholars and lay readers will benefit from Glatthaar's efforts.

Thomas More College

JOHN CIMPRICH

America in 1857: A Nation on the Brink. By KENNETH M. STAMPP. (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990. ix, 388p. Illustrations, index. \$29.95.)

Kenneth M. Stampp is deservedly recognized as one of the leading scholars of the Middle Period of American history. His skills as a historian—his ability to recognize the key problems and issues of the past, to weave primary and secondary sources in a graceful narrative, and to balance historical hindsight with respect for the perceptions of contemporaries—are demonstrated again in this detailed and comprehensive examination of a pivotal year in the coming of the Civil War.

The events of 1857 illustrated the richness and complexity of a nation that was paradoxically on the brink of dissolution and on the verge of becoming a modern industrial society. A severe economic panic caused material suffering while religious revivals brought spiritual comfort to urban dwellers. Political corruption filled the halls of Congress and state legislatures while crime stalked the streets of eastern cities. Americans in 1857 witnessed the tantalizing murder trial of Emma Augusta Cunningham in New York and the brutal Mormon ambush of gentile travelers at Mountain Meadows in Utah. It was the sectional controversy over slavery, however, that occupied the center stage in public life. The new Democratic administration of James Buchanan brought optimistic prospects for settling the conflict between North and South. As the year progressed, these hopes unraveled as the slaveholding South reached the apex of its power and influence. The ill-fated Dred Scott decision denied blacks the right of citizenship and declared the Missouri Compromise unconstitutional. Buchanan's decision to support the proslavery Lecompton constitution raised southerners' hope for the contest over Kansas. Yet those southern victories proved to be Pyrrhic ones. The year ended with the Democratic party hopelessly divided and the nation drifting inexorably towards disunion.

Stamppp argues in particular that the Lecompton controversy was the turning point in the sectional conflict, the moment at which secession and the Civil War became inevitable. By most informed contemporary accounts, Kansas was destined to become a free state. Still, the proslavery minority in Kansas remained adamant. They pushed through the Lecompton constitution with no provision for ratification among the voters of Kansas. With strong southern pressure from his cabinet, Buchanan supported the Lecompton constitution. His decision caused an irreparable split in the Democratic party. Senator Stephen A. Douglas, politically committed to his doctrine of popular sovereignty, broke with the president. Northern Democrats faced the difficult choice of bowing to the proslavery demands of their party or facing the wrath of their increasingly antislavery constituents. While Lecompton was a curse to the Democrats, it was a blessing to the Republicans. It kept the Kansas issue alive, handing them an ideal campaign issue in their fight against the Slave Power.

America in 1857 is ultimately a book about the coming of the Civil War. By affirming that slavery was the fundamental cause of the sectional controversy, the book clearly supports the idea of an "irrepressible conflict." Yet elements of revisionism are evident here as well. Stamppp faults Buchanan for miscalculation and poor political leadership, considering his decision to support the Lecompton constitution "as one of the most tragic miscalculations any President has ever made" (p. 282). Southern proslavery extremists are also blamed for their aggressiveness and failure to appreciate the importance of party unity.

For the most part, Stamppp's explanation of the political events of 1857 breaks no new ground in Civil War historiography. He follows traditional lines of interpretation in placing the dissolution of the Union in the party system. Appropriately, he draws upon the works of other scholars. Several of his ideas, such as his belief in the strong antislavery commitment of the Republican party, were expressed in his earlier writings. Nonetheless, *America in 1857* is an important statement on the coming of the Civil War and stands as a tribute to Kenneth M. Stamppp's distinguished career as a historian of the Middle Period.

Denison University

MITCHELL SNAY

Miss You: The World War II Letters of Barbara Wooddall Taylor and Charles E. Taylor. By JUDY BARRETT LITOFF, DAVID C. SMITH, BARBARA WOODDALL TAYLOR, and CHARLES E. TAYLOR. (Athens and London: University of Georgia Press, 1990. xv, 358p. Index. \$24.95.)

One Woman's War: Letters Home from the Woman's Army Corps, 1944-1946. By ANNE BOSANKO GREEN. (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1989. xxiv, 308p. \$22.50.)

As we approach the fiftieth anniversary of the entry of the United States into World War II, interest in the years of that conflict has increased. In the planning stage are numerous meetings, papers, and exhibits having to do with the military, naval, and diplomatic events of the war. In addition to these traditional subjects, programs also will feature life on the home front and the experiences of women. Twenty-five years ago these last two topics would not have been included in any commemorative observation, but the expansion of social history and the development of women's history assure their inclusion in virtually all programs. Indeed, these two volumes of letters are timely publications.

Miss You is a series of letters between two young southerners, Charles and Barbara Taylor, who met and married under wartime conditions. They wrote each other almost every day from August 1941 to November 1945. It is not too unusual to preserve the letters sent home by a serviceman, but it is rare to have the letters written to him. With the assistance of the Taylors, Judy Barrett Litoff and David C. Smith skillfully edited this wartime correspondence that totaled some four-thousand typed pages.

The letters describe the experiences of two young people who were very much in love and hoped to hold their relationship together during the fears and uncertainties of wartime. Like thousands of other couples, Barbara and Charles conducted their courtship by mail, and when they did marry, they experienced a marriage on the move. Through their correspondence after Charles was sent overseas, they shared experiences of the home front and the western front. As the war drew to a close, they began to plan for the future.

The letters are divided into topics, each preceded by an introductory narrative that provides background and continuity. Those dealing with their whirlwind romance offer insight into the pattern of World War II courtship. After they were married, Barbara decided to quit her job in Atlanta and follow Charles as he was moved from camp to camp. It was during this period that their daughter was born.

During the fourteen months Charles was overseas, Barbara's letters were filled with her longing for Charles and her anxiety over his welfare. She often wrote about their briefly shared life that helped cement their marriage

ties. She would set aside a special time in the evening to be with her husband and have her nightly chat, writing him about her activities. Her letters showed how she and thousands of other women helped each other to cope during long separations.

Charles wrote nearly every day, filling his communications with daily minutiae—much like millions of other letters written by soldiers from the western front. As an officer of the Thirty-ninth Infantry Regiment, he experienced heavy fighting but avoided writing about the serious nature of combat. At the end of the war, the focus of their letters shifted to questions of whether Charles should apply for a commission in the regular army or whether he should go to college. They also were concerned about the changes each had experienced and how they would relate to each other after the long separation.

In *One Woman's War*, Anne Bosanko Green has published the weekly letters she wrote home to her family in Minneapolis while she was in the medical corps branch of the Women's Army Corps (WAC) from October 1944 to August 1946. Her mother had carefully preserved them neatly tied together in chronological order. Anne Bosanko's letters relate a story of travel, army practices, off-duty experiences, and boredom. Also included in the collection are excerpts from her parents' letters to her and a few letters she wrote to a childhood girlfriend.

Anne Bosanko's delightful letters to her family show her to have been an articulate, observant, good-natured young woman who had a clever way with words and an ability to express what she felt. Stationed in hospitals in widely separated areas—Texas, Louisiana, California, and Washington—she recounts everyday activities in the WAC performing women's jobs. She worked in a hospital treating wounded and injured soldiers; she was not under fire, did not deal with generals or admirals. Her spirited letters describe in vivid detail the experiences of the majority of women who served during the war—women who left their everyday lives, moved all around the United States, met new people, and learned new skills.

The major subjects of Bosanko's letters are her job, recreational activities, morale, and new acquaintances. After army life became a matter of routine, her off-duty activities became the focus of her correspondence. She was amazingly candid in writing to her parents about her love life and drinking parties. Such frankness did cause her mother to worry, so that she warned Anne against inappropriate behavior. Her father worried too, but restrained himself from preaching; instead, he joked with his daughter, calling her a variety of pet names. He also compared his World War I experiences with hers. These letters reveal the Bosanko family to have had an unusually close-knit, loving, accepting relationship. They also show how Bosanko's

morale fluctuated with the ups and downs of her working experience and her love life.

Miss You and *One Woman's War* provide a record that may not be repeated in future wars, since letter writing has become a lost art. The home front and wartime experiences may be communicated only by telephone and tapes in the future. It took courage for these three people to allow their series of privately written letters to be published. To the mature, experienced adults of a half century later, these letters doubtless will bring many smiles. The innocence of the writers also attracts us. Yet, by revealing the private concerns of a newly married couple and a WAC recruit, the letters also provide the personal dimensions of wartime rarely found in standard textbooks.

Jacksonville State University

MARY MARTHA THOMAS

Coming Out Under Fire: The History of Gay Men and Women in World War Two. By ALLAN BÉRUBÉ. (New York: The Free Press, 1990. xiii, 377p. Illustrations, note on sources, index. \$22.95.)

Allan Bérubé has written a very readable and accessible book that is nonetheless theoretically subtle and sophisticated. His book tells the story its title promises—that of lesbians and gay men in the military during World War II—and it also illuminates other threads in the history of gender and sexuality in the United States. The themes of the postwar insistence on strict gender roles, the ambivalent causes and effects of the development of gay identity, and the increasing authority of psychiatric thought over many aspects of Americans' lives are all solidly linked to Bérubé's main topic, the experiences of gay G.I.s.

Bérubé consistently pays attention to the multiplicity of these experiences. He discusses officers and enlisted men, African Americans and Caucasians, men and women, and men who concealed their sexuality in order to enlist and those who revealed it in the hopes of being rejected. Although African Americans are not nearly as fully discussed as whites, Bérubé is careful always to remind the reader that no one (usually white) experience is necessarily "representative" or "typical."

Bérubé argues convincingly that, particularly in the 1940s, the military was not an isolated world, nor does he use it simply as a case study. Because of the enormous numbers of Americans who participated in the war effort, the military was a social force even for civilians. Families were separated, cities grew enormously, and enlisted men and women on leave filled the public spaces of parks, theaters, and bars. Gay soldiers established themselves in these places, as well as YMCAs, bathhouses, and hotels, creating the basis

for a postwar gay culture more public than ever before. On duty, gay soldiers were the subject of ever-increasing regulation and scrutiny, which heightened general awareness of homosexuality and of gay people as a class.

Much of this attention was brought by those in the fields of psychiatry and psychology, who, Bérubé argues, saw wartime mobilization as an opportunity to solidify their own professional positions and to undertake systematic research on the large "sample" that the draft provided. Many Army psychologists were proponents of liberalizing military regulations to take gay soldiers out of the purview of the military judicial code, which charged, tried, and imprisoned men for sodomy, and instead to consider them medically, to be treated and discharged. Their efforts were largely successful, but the results were often harsher than they had intended. Under the new system, gay soldiers (many of whom were never accused of acts defined as criminal) were denied the due process of the Universal Code of Military Justice and administratively given dishonorable discharges. Greater numbers of men were thus identified and stigmatized as gay than had ever been brought up on charges.

Bérubé's account is full of these ironies, such as drag shows (most notably "This Is the Army") sponsored by the homophobic armed forces. They are brought out fully because of Bérubé's reliance on a Foucauldian analysis that stresses the ambivalent power of discourse. Thus, the largest irony is that the military's obsession with ridding its ranks of gay soldiers (regardless of their ability to perform their duties) was instrumental in the creation of a new minority, identified as such, and willing to fight for its rights in the armed forces and the wider society.

This book is a valuable addition to many fields. Both graduates and undergraduates will find it readable and thought-provoking. Other historians should take note of the rich field the war years and the military provide for the study of gender and sexuality. (One question deserving consideration is the appeal of those drag shows to heterosexual audiences and performers.) *Coming Out Under Fire* is a wonderful example of community history, important not only to the gay and lesbian community, but also to historians of World War II, of gender and sexuality, and of social history generally.

San Francisco, CA

ELIZABETH A. SMITH

An American Ordeal: The Antiwar Movement of the Vietnam Era. By CHARLES DEBENEDETTI, with CHARLES CHATFIELD. (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1990. xvi, 495p. Illustrations, list of abbreviations, bibliography, index. Cloth, \$49.50; paper, \$16.95.)

In 1963 many Americans were shocked by the sight of Vietnamese Buddhists immolating themselves with gasoline in protest against the South

Vietnamese government: such fervor seemed the strange product of an alien culture and sensibility. But only two years later, as *An American Ordeal* recounts, two young Americans—Quaker Norman Morrison and Roman Catholic Roger LaPorte—also burned themselves to death, in protest against the American government's escalation of military action in Vietnam. These actions and many of the other events described here demonstrate that the passions generated by Vietnam did indeed "bring the war home," as one of the leftist slogans of the time had it, creating what was widely described as the greatest American crisis since the Civil War.

We have several histories of the 1960s, of the Vietnam War itself, and of the dissent—particularly radical student dissent—of that era. But *An American Ordeal* is the first thoroughly professional treatment of the American antiwar movement from the late 1950s to the mid-1970s. Researched and drafted by peace historian Charles DeBenedetti, the book was completed by his colleague Charles Chatfield after DeBenedetti was struck down by a brain tumor at age forty-four. The rough edges of this collaboration are only occasionally visible. The book's richness of detail and thorough immersion in its subject are likely to make it the standard account for a long time to come.

Apart from its wealth of information about the movement, *An American Ordeal* deserves attention primarily for its careful, balanced interpretations. DeBenedetti's historical perspectives ought to be underscored especially because they differ in important respects from the general American memory of anti-Vietnam War protest, especially as reflected in the media.

First, as the subtitle is intended to emphasize, the "anti-Vietnam War" movement grew initially out of the older, smaller American peace movement that had grown up in the 1950s, focused primarily on the danger of nuclear war. That earlier peace movement included small groups of committed pacifists centered around the Fellowship of Reconciliation, the War Resisters League, the Catholic Worker movement, and the American Friends Service Committee. However, it drew most of its support from liberal citizens in sober organizations like SANE and the United World Federalists. As the Vietnam War escalated, these activists turned rather reluctantly from their larger peace concerns to address the immediate crisis.

But even as the movement gained new adherents and public attention, it was plagued by fundamental differences over politics, ideas, and tactics. DeBenedetti shows that increasingly serious splits among various pacifist, radical, and liberal factions divided the movement almost more than hostility to government policy united them. While pacifists were the most committed and liberals had the largest numbers, the vocal New Left factions held the political initiative, especially from 1966 to 1969, even though their commitment to "peace" was increasingly tenuous. Indeed, for many radicals,

the attempt to transform American society in "revolutionary" ways became far more important than ending the war in Vietnam.

But contrary to the image forged by the government and held by most of the public, the movement in general remained overwhelmingly peaceful and nonviolent, more in the spirit of Martin Luther King than Mark Rudd. For every act of violence, even against property, there were a hundred nonviolent petitions, marches, and sit-ins. Nevertheless, the ideological and political fracturing of the movement, and its inability to suppress or escape association with its violent and counter-cultural element, continually undermined its effectiveness and discredited it with the great mass of the American public. In fact, as the book emphasizes, it was an abiding paradox that the antiwar *movement*—almost entirely middle-class and educated in character—was never able to enlist even the great majority of antiwar *sentiment*, which existed primarily among lower middle-class or minority groups who opposed the war but were also patriotic and vehemently opposed to the counter-culture.

Despite its deep unpopularity in the country (polls continually showed that the only thing more unpopular than the Vietnam War was the anti-Vietnam War movement), the movement, DeBenedetti also convincingly argues, did have considerable political impact. Even though it was never able to "stop the war" as it wanted, the movement continually challenged the government's policy and exposed its inherent weaknesses to public view. Combined with the military futility that was the inevitable consequence of the Johnson and Nixon administrations' political folly, the domestic opposition played an important role in defining the directions and limits of the war policy at every stage after the initial escalation.

An American Ordeal also emphasizes, as histories of the "New Left" by Kirkpatrick Sale, James Miller, and Todd Gitlin do not, the important role played by religious organizations and leaders in the dissenting movements of the 1960s. While there were of course many nonreligious or antireligious forces in the peace movement, it also contained powerful currents of religious feeling—represented by such leaders as A.J. Muste, Martin Luther King, Jr., William Sloane Coffin, the Berrigans, Dorothy Day, and that former seminarian, Eugene McCarthy. This sensibility sometimes caused self-righteous moralism in the movement, but it also enabled it to draw on more than simply political commitments. If only because this dimension has been largely ignored in most discussions of the period's dissent, DeBenedetti's perspective represents a valuable corrective.

The concluding judgments of the volume are somber and even tragic in tone. The antiwar movement was "the largest ever domestic opposition to a warring government in the history of modern industrial society." But for most of those who participated, the movement brought more despair than satisfaction. Besides its horrendous cost to the Vietnamese, the Vietnam War

exacted a terrible toll on all of American society, including those who understood themselves to be most deeply committed to "peace." Whatever their moral or political outlooks, and no matter how far out of step with their fellow citizens, the peace movement was a quintessentially American phenomenon. This book shows that its history belongs to the history of the country.

Valparaiso University

MEL PIEHL

The Reading Railroad: History of a Coal Age Empire. Volume I: The Nineteenth Century. By JAMES L. HOLTON. (Laurys Station: Garrigues House, 1989. xvi, 356p. Maps, illustrations, diagrams, appendixes, bibliography, index. \$57.00.)

The Reading Railroad is both an ambitious effort and a remarkable achievement. Foremost, it is to date the only comprehensive biography of the Pennsylvania and Reading Railroad, one of the most complex railroad conglomerates to develop during the American industrial age. It documents how the Reading was transformed from a small, horse-drawn feeder line to the Schuylkill Canal in 1831, to the nation's premier freight hauler by 1855, and ultimately to one of the country's major coal producers and transporters in the 1870s. This volume follows the Reading through the depression years of the 1890s, culminating with the construction of the grand Reading Terminal in Philadelphia.

Holton describes in some detail how the Reading moved grudgingly through the various developmental stages of organizational and financial transition that marked many large nineteenth-century corporations, particularly America's railroads. The standard framework for analyzing "pre-modern" corporations was developed by Alfred Chandler in his pioneering work *The Visible Hand* (1977), much of which was based on his exhaustive treatment of the Pennsylvania Railroad. James Holton has now provided us with an elaborate historical narrative of the Reading, one of the Pennsy's major competitors.

Much is revealed in Holton's narrative. The Reading was never the product of bold business vision, but rather developed in almost serendipitous fashion. Granted, the Reading had its share of inventive genius, from the original route design of Moncure Robinson to the heavy engine designs of James Millholland. But like many companies of the mid-nineteenth century, its fate was directed by technological forces it did not control. As a result,

the Reading engaged in heady and often unwise acquisitions (of canal systems, railroad feeder lines, and coal lands) and was always one step ahead of its bondholders and other creditors whose investments were continuously sought to finance its surges of capital expansion.

By the 1870s, the Reading, despite its huge capital assets, was a false empire, a "swollen conglomerate" always on the brink of financial collapse. Although it survived the aftershocks of the Panic of 1873, it succumbed to drops in the price of anthracite, labor unrest, and pressure from competing lines and fell into bankruptcy in 1881 and again in 1884. The Reading was brought out of receivership the second time in 1886 by the formation of a New York-based syndicate headed by J.P. Morgan, but in the process lost its original Philadelphia base. The Reading's slide back into receivership in early 1893 was seen by many as a precipitating event for the major panic of that year.

Holton's narrative includes extensive coverage of several correlated topics that have not received adequate treatment in other sources. Of particular interest to industry and transportation historians would be his description of the development of the early canal system in eastern Pennsylvania and how the earliest feeder railroad lines evolved to serve it. Equally compelling is his accounting of the Reading's decision in 1870 to absorb coal operations in the Schuylkill Valley (an ill-advised move that added significantly to its insolvency for the next thirty years) rather than dealing with unpredictable independent operators and the more militant activities of the Molly Maguires. Of greatest interest to railroad historians, Holton devotes an entire chapter to mapping out the origin and history of each of the smaller lines that ultimately made up the Reading system. And the book contains a large number of stunning historical photographs to illustrate the text.

As one might expect from such an ambitious enterprise, *The Reading Railroad* is not without its problems. Lamentably, the Reading's corporate history is discussed with little reference to broader market, business, technological, or political forces that largely dictated its market position. One also might have wished for more analysis of the competing markets and technologies of canal systems and early railroads. Most distressing, however, is the sheer inconvenience the reader faces in plowing through the book itself. The chapters are sometimes disconnected, as the author pauses to digress into detailed biographies of individuals or technical descriptions of engines. Elaborate explanation of canal and railroad rights-of-way between critical coal fields, cities, or ports, particularly in the early period, is offered without benefit of one decent map. Photographs of key personalities, bridges, terminals, or equipment are often located chapters behind the text's discussion of them.

Nonetheless, Holton has compiled a comprehensive and sometimes breathtaking history of the Reading that will, one hopes, spawn increased scholarly interest in its many facets.

University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown

JAMES R. ALEXANDER

Technology in America: A Brief History. By ALAN I. MARCUS and HOWARD P. SEGAL. (San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich Publishers, 1989. xii, 380p. Illustrations, index. Paper, \$10.00.)

The history of technology is a relatively new and thriving subdiscipline—its principal organization, the Society for the History of Technology, was not founded until 1958. Accordingly, the natural trend has been toward the production of narrowly focused monographs rather than synthetic, broad-gauged surveys. True, the early pioneers of the history of technology such as Lewis Mumford, Abbott Payson Usher, Sigfried Giedion, and others did produce a series of sweeping overviews beginning in the late 1920s. The plethora of case studies and monographs accumulated over the past three or four decades, however, obliges historians of technology to develop new syntheses that incorporate this stock of knowledge as well as new methodological approaches adapted from anthropology, business and economic history, social history, and sociology. Furthermore, the founding of “science, technology, and society” programs in numerous colleges and universities has increased the need for synthetic works that can be used as textbooks.

Technology in America: A Brief History is one of the first attempts in recent years to create a comprehensive undergraduate text covering the history of technology in the United States from the colonial period to the present. One might fairly ask of such an endeavor: how well does it represent the literature of the field, and how effectively does it communicate to a student audience? Unfortunately, *Technology in America* falls short in both departments.

One looks nearly in vain for sustained treatment of the “big questions” and themes that have dominated recent scholarship: technological change, the nature of technological knowledge and creativity, technology transfer, the science-technology relationship, and the less trendy, but still vital issue of the social impact of technology. Important topics such as the American system of manufacture and military influence on technology are likewise given short shrift. Instead, the authors discuss American technology in terms of a succession of social and cultural themes that they believe have dominated different eras: mercantilism (1607-1800), democratic individualism (1800-1830s), the crusade for unity and a distinctive American character (1830s-1870s), the construction of static, hierarchical systems (1870s-1920s), and

the emergence of flexible, dynamic systems (1920s-present). While I applaud the effort to ground the history of technology in American history, the authors' application of these loosely defined conceptual tools often seems strained and confusing. What is explained, for example, by the assertion (p. 93) that "daguerreotypes and collodion photography took America by storm because they satisfied a national desire to record and measure character"? Likewise, the concept of technological systems pioneered by Thomas P. Hughes has been indiscriminately inflated to encompass everything from class warfare to organized baseball. The work of other leading historians of technology—Brooke Hindle, for instance—is noticeably absent from both the text and the end-of-chapter bibliographies.

Technology in America probably will not kindle much excitement among students. On the one hand, the treatment of social and cultural themes is sometimes quite abstract (e.g., the discussion of "categories" on pp. 133-34). At the other extreme, the explanations of tanning, hog-slaughtering, and other technologies are recounted in loving but usually pointless detail. While the illustrations are an attractive and useful supplement to the text, out of more than ninety pictures there is only *one* image of an inventor or engineer (a photo of a computer pioneer shaking hands with one of the authors). Granted that the profession is trying to get away from the "heroic inventor" approach; nevertheless, the authors have gone to the opposite extreme and produced a rather lifeless impression of technological history that is lacking in human interest.

This reviewer found a few factual errors in the book. For instance, the Germans did not boycott their own chemical exports to the U.S. during World War I (pp. 249-50) except very briefly at the beginning of the war; it was the British Navy that interdicted German dyes and other products, thus prompting the formation of the American synthetic organic chemical industry.

In conclusion, *Technology in America* is less a synthesis than a compendium arranged according to idiosyncratic themes. Teachers who want a "Plato-to-Nato" treatment of American technology may find the book of some value, but they should use it selectively and with caution.

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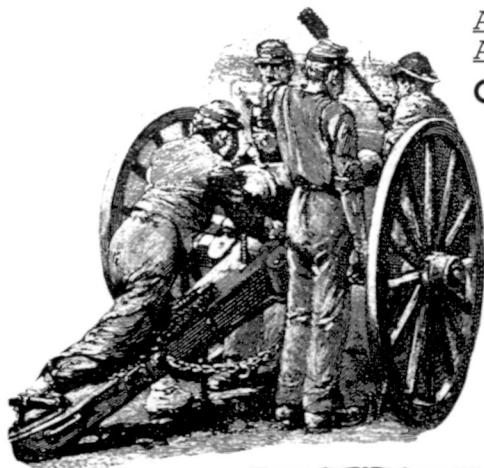
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