BOOK REVIEWS

Nature Religion in America: From the Algonkian Indians to the New Age.

On first glance, Catherine Albanese’s Nature Religion in America might seem to cover familiar ground. Nature has been nearly synonymous with America and American religion since Henry Nash Smith’s Virgin Land assigned to American notions of land and nature almost religious and certainly luminous places in American antebellum thought. But Albanese goes far beyond Smith’s myths and symbols. She probes specifically religious implications of American concepts of nature with a cast of characters so frequently unique and with an analysis and narrative so compelling that anyone who liked Smith will be drawn to Albanese immediately and anyone who is younger and has not read him will want to read both.

Albanese’s message is both elegant and straightforward. She argues that a religion of nature has lurked about in America from before European colonization to the twentieth century and that this religion has intertwined ambivalently with Christianity until the late twentieth century, when the two became more distinct and often more hostile. Albanese establishes this argument with the kind of breadth that most readers will admire, though one suspects that Gore Vidal’s “academic squirrels” will find her running when they are walking. Whatever, this is a book that every historian of American religion ought to read because it unravels and explains movements central to America’s many sprawling and convoluted religious cultures.

Four chapters are particularly notable. The opening chapter on Indians and Puritans provides an extraordinarily lucid discussion of Native-American spirituality and its complex relationship to nature. The chapter on “Republican nature” offers a superb discussion of Enlightenment theorizing about nature; it reasserts the importance of Freemasonry in a historiography too long dominated by evangelicalism, and it explains with remarkable precision how post-Revolutionary debates created a uniquely American nature religion culminating in the powerful Davy Crockett myths. The chapter on transcendentalism explains its peculiarities and assesses its influence; the chapter also reestablishes the importance of Phineas Parkhurst Quimby in shaping Christian Science in an exposition that “orthodox” historians of the movement probably will not like. And the chapter on physical religion offers a superb explanation of healing metaphysics among dieticians like Sylvester
Graham, herbalists like Samuel Thomson, and the "chiropractor" D.D. Palmer. Albanese connects these movements to evolving American notions about nature, and she consistently explains their often peculiar theological concepts in ways that even expert readers will find helpful.

Readers suspicious that Albanese has stretched definitions to include movements for which religion is more metaphorical than substantial should pay special attention to the introduction, where Albanese makes a particularly strong case for functional approaches to religion. The narrative jumps too rapidly from chiropractic in the 1890s to the Bear Tribe Medicine Society in the 1980s and does not explain what happened to nature religion in between, but the chapter on the 1980s offers a superb analysis of movements that seldom get more than Time magazine superficiality, though they have drawn followings at least equaling those won by Jimmy Swaggart and Jim Bakker, who might deserve nothing more than superficiality.

In sum, this is an important book and one that also is well-written and terrifically enjoyable. It will make any reader think hard about the very substance of American religion precisely because it explains how, why, and to what effect Americans have long steered away from Calvinist shores, many textbooks to the contrary.

Yale University

Jon Butler


Perhaps it is the seemingly frivolous nature of courtship behavior that makes the subject so engaging. Certainly, it constitutes a common experience in human life. This type of behavior, in particular, stimulates a fascination with trying to penetrate the private lives of people who have lived in the past. The most intimate actions, those which reflect personal or private emotions, supply the best information for an individual's character, and reflect the larger values of a society.

Robert Bolling Woos Anne Miller provides one such account—one that displays personal feelings within the cultural context of the eighteenth century. The edited documents, all composed by Robert Bolling, include a journal describing the courtship of Bolling and Anne ("Nancy") Miller, which took place between January and September 1760, and poems associated with their relationship. This is supplemented by an introduction, excellent textual notes, and a comprehensive bibliographical index. In the journal,
"A Circumstantial Account of Certain Transactions, that once greatly interested the Writer . . . ," Bolling recorded his personal encounters with Nancy Miller. He seems to have recorded the affair at some date after she left Virginia in October 1760 and addressed it to "R.B." in London, perhaps referring to Robert Beverley, grandson of the historian of the same name. Lemay believes the "Appendix" was added to the manuscript sometime after 1766.

Clearly, no other scholar is more familiar with the writings of Robert Bolling, whose poems were frequently published in British magazines and colonial newspapers, than J.A. Leo Lemay. For Lemay, "A Circumstantial Account" provides "essential background for the poems"—a factual record of the courtship and a key to the character of the author. The poems, on the other hand, were not written to document the affair, but to express Bolling's emotions. After reading "A Circumstantial Account," however, one is left wondering if Bolling was not attempting to convey a much greater message than simply the facts surrounding his affair. Why did he compose such an account? Lemay never addresses this question.

In the introduction, Lemay compares Bolling's journal favorably to other colonial American journals, citing as one example, William Byrd II's *History of the Dividing Line*. Curiously, there are striking similarities between the two manuscripts that indicate a distinctive, but unexplored, genre. Byrd used the expedition to run the dividing line between Virginia and North Carolina and the knowledge that he gained from his participation to comment on pressing political issues. Bolling used many similar literary devices within his account that suggest he, too, may have been addressing greater issues than the details of his love affair. Both manuscripts were written well after the events that they describe. Bolling's inclusion of a map of the area where the events in "A Circumstantial Account" took place served to heighten the factual nature of his essay. Evidence suggests that Byrd intended to have his account of the line accompanied by a map as well. Bolling took care to include passages from his own letters, and also those of others involved with the couple. Byrd included documents from both the Virginia and North Carolina commissioners in his journal. Where Bolling records the precise words used in conversations, Byrd records only what the conversation contained. Both Bolling and Byrd accentuated their journals with an appendix. Most importantly, both authors used as their primary device a subject about which they alone had the greatest insight, in order to establish their credibility. Firsthand, intimate knowledge was based on fact, not hearsay, and thus lent truth to the writing.

Both authors used the theme of virtue against evil. Bolling characterized himself as a person of "unshaken consistence" (Byrd used the pseudonym "Steddy" in one of his versions of the dividing line), and his emotions were
governed by such classical philosophers as Horace. In Bolling's journal, the villain was a merchant of Glasgow, James Johnson, the "artful, designing Scoundrel." Byrd mocked the inhabitants of North Carolina who were "slothful" and "lazy."

In his *History of theDividing Line*, Byrd was concerned with the ambivalence he perceived, both on the part of his fellow Virginians and in British colonial politics. There is no question that Bolling was frustrated by the ambivalent behavior of Nancy Miller. She continually professed her love for Bolling yet, just as often, withdrew her affections. She was torn between aligning herself with her father and moving to Britain, or staying in Virginia presumably to marry Bolling. He clearly sensed that he was not in control of his own destiny, and his frustration with the situation climaxed on "the to me famous [Tuesday] 16 of September." Bolling made the decision to follow Nancy Miller to Britain and thus sought her father's permission to marry her upon his arrival there in the spring. Her father refused, and Nancy followed suit, adding, "My Sentiments are not changed." What had changed were the circumstances. It is clear that Bolling viewed the circumstances as taking precedence over sentiment. Bolling was not the only subject of Miller's ambivalence, but "a Country, the Esteem of which she has so indiscreetly forfeited."

Not only does "A Circumstantial Account" provide insight into the emotions of one individual, and of courtship behavior in Virginia, but it expresses the greater fear of how circumstances can take precedence over sentiment, passion, and commitment. This journal was composed at the very time when the Virginia gentry found themselves increasingly dependent upon England for their life style. Clearly, by the 1760s they were beginning to feel controlled and betrayed.

This intriguing manuscript account and the accompanying poems and textual notes have been masterfully edited by Lemay. The biographical and geographical index is a valuable resource as well. But further analysis of "A Circumstantial Account" is needed. As Lemay states, "Bolling's courtship journal will be recognized as a minor classic of colonial American literature," but not simply for what it tells us about courtship in colonial Virginia.

*Colonial Williamsburg Foundation*  
*MARGARET BECK PRITCHARD*

*Guide to Records of the Court of Quarter Sessions, Chester County, Pennsylvania, 1681-1969.* Researched and compiled by LYNN ANN CATANASE. (West Chester: Chester County Historical Society, 1989. iii, 80p. Map, glossary, selected bibliography, index. $25.00.)

This guide, which describes the administrative and criminal records of the Chester County Court of Quarter Sessions from 1681-1969, is the product
of a two-year project funded by the "Records Program" of the National Historical Publications and Records Commission. It is also the second in a series of guides to appear on the court records of Chester County, one of Pennsylvania's original three counties. (For a review of the first publication, please see the PMHB 113 [July 1989], 477-78.) The records reported on are maintained by Chester County Archives and Records Services—a collaborative effort between the Chester County government and the Chester County Historical Society.

The Guide consists of five parts. The "Preface" is followed by a fully annotated "Introduction," which provides an administrative history of the Chester County Court of Quarter Sessions. In addition to detailing the functions of this court and how they may have changed over time, compiler Catanese informs readers that these court records "are representative of the records of the province and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania" (p. 6). In short, the records descriptions for the docket books and all supposedly apply for all of the early counties of Pennsylvania.

The fifty-four records series of the Court of the Quarter Sessions, which are described in section two, constitute the heart of the Guide. This section describes records of the Chester County Court of Quarter Sessions, Oyer and Terminer and General Jail Delivery, and the criminal files of the sheriff. Described are dockets and books, indexes to dockets, and books and papers. Each series description contains seven or eight items of information: a definition of the series, statements of the content, arrangement, access, and a section on missing records (gaps) and alternative sources of information. Within each section, criminal records are always listed before the administrative records of the court. Readers are reminded that in the late nineteenth century court officials sometimes created artificial records series, an arrangement that was unfortunately continued by the clerk of courts' office through the twentieth century.

Section three contains a "Glossary." It defines 150 legal terms frequently used in the records. This reviewer found the titles in the "Selected Annotated Bibliography" (section four) to be current. On the whole, the index meets the need.

All in all, this Guide is a worthy sequel to the Guide to Records of the Court of Common Pleas, Chester County, Pennsylvania 1681-1900. To be sure, this first guide served as a convenient backdrop, which the compiler Catanese could draw on for the early court history, glossary terms, and bibliographic citations. This reviewer can only hope that other counties in Pennsylvania will take some cues from Chester County in making their records more widely known to researchers.

*Oberlin College*  
ROLAND M. BAUMANN

Most students of Pennsylvania Quakerism have been pleasantly surprised to discover the abundance of Quaker records that have survived from even the seventeenth century. If they examined those records before 1975, they were likely to have been surprised at the former location of most of them, at Friends Bookstore in Philadelphia. Until 1989, the only guide to the amount and location of the records of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting was the 1941 Inventory of Church Archives: Society of Friends in Pennsylvania. It is now outdated and superseded. In 1975 Philadelphia Yearly Meeting moved almost all of its records to the more secure and hospitable precincts of Haverford and Swarthmore Colleges. In 1985 it commissioned a new survey and guide to the records. After five years of dogged labor by compiler Jack Eckert, the staffs of Haverford and Swarthmore libraries, and others, the work is now finished.

Unlike the old guide, the new one does not include vignettes of meetings and meetinghouses, while it necessarily provides the genealogy of meetings and the organizational information that a researcher needs to understand the Quaker church. The old guide omitted exceedingly interesting records, mostly from Yearly Meeting committees, which are in the new.

The Guide begins with a nineteen-page introduction that is essential reading for the novice—such as the Quaker usage regarding dates or the guidelines for including and excluding meetings from the rubric of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. A glossary at the end of the volume supplements the information in the introduction. The following 246 pages list the records of all the subordinate meetings—quarterly, monthly, and preparative—in the Yearly Meeting, arranged alphabetically. The records are categorized into vital records (births, deaths, marriages, removals), and secondly, minutes of men's, women's, and ministers' and elders' meetings. The Guide indicates the nature of the records, whether originals, microfilm copies, or both, together with their locations. Omitted from the Guide were financial and property records, church school records, manumissions, and some miscellaneous records. The final section of the Guide describes and lists the records of Yearly Meeting per se and of its many committees. Here one will find invaluable materials for the study of African-American and Native-American history, pacifism and the peace movement, foreign missions, and other topics. The editors thoughtfully concluded the Guide with a gazetteer of other Quaker yearly meetings, their depositories, and their addresses.
This reader, with an eye for mostly the pre-1800 records, discovered a few errors. The most obvious is the omission of all Exeter Monthly Meeting records before 1956. In the introduction, the editors remark that while Quaker men and women held separate meetings until the nineteenth century, the decisions reached by the women's meetings had to be ratified by the men's. That is true except for all the monthly meetings in Bucks Quarterly Meeting. A researcher should be forewarned that in that quarter, he or she must read the women's minutes, because the men's meetings ratified and recorded little or nothing from the women's.

Also, this guide would be more useful had the editors included the few monthly meetings that originated within Philadelphia Yearly Meeting but were later spun off to other yearly meetings. And whereas more is better and whereas the editors report that the published Guide contains less information than remains in their computerized data base, they might consider how all of their information could be produced in some kind of electronic medium for computer retrieval. But, withal, this guide is a windfall to historians and an essential point of departure for anyone investigating the Quaker past for the first time. Quaker history has been and plainly continues to be well served by its stewards.

University of Arizona

JACK D. MARIETTA

Charles Thomson: A Patriot's Pursuit. By BOYD STANLEY SCHLENTHER.
(Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1990. 325p. Illustrations, bibliography, index. $45.00.)

Charles Thomson, the subject of Boyd Schlenther's biography, played a supporting but important role in the dramatic events of the Revolution and the new republic. Thomson first achieved notice when he cooperated with Israel Pemberton and the "Quaker Establishment" by serving as a clerk to Teedyuscung, the noted Delaware chieftain, during the later 1750s. He next surfaced for the public when he broke with Benjamin Franklin, his former mentor, and joined with John Dickinson to oppose the Stamp Act. A decade later he achieved his greatest notoriety as a supposedly "radical" leader who, again with Dickinson, helped lead the resistance forces during the spring and autumn of 1774. These services led to his appointment as Secretary of Congress, and despite, or perhaps because of, his growing alliance with more conservative Pennsylvanians, he retained that position during the war and Confederation period. Then he spent a lengthy retirement preparing a translation of the Septuagint into English and potting about in politics until his death in August 1824.
It is difficult to write a good biography of such a secondary personality. The outstanding example, Jacob Cooke's biography of Tench Coxe, was possible because Coxe retained such a massive quantity of records and because Cooke has such a vast knowledge of early American politics. In this instance Schlenther has done an excellent job of placing Thomson in perspective but has unfortunately had much less to work with. Thomson destroyed most of his papers. The author sadly notes that his subject was "a maddening man who attempted to cover his tracks."

Despite the lack of personal material that would have enabled Schlenther to do much more, he has succeeded admirably by placing all the bits and pieces concerning Thomson in a well-organized context. This accomplishment adds to our understanding of several key periods in the history of the Commonwealth and nation. I especially appreciated the detailed and lucid treatment he gave to Thomson's complex activities in dealing with the Friends and Indians during the French and Indian War. I also would have been interested in his response to the argument concerning the same period developed by Francis Jennings in his *Empire of Fortune*, which probably appeared too late to be considered. Schlenther shows a considerable ability in explaining in an extremely clear fashion the complexities of Pennsylvania politics during the mid 1760s and also gives us a clear narrative of the complex events in Philadelphia and Pennsylvania between 1774 and 1776. He also presents a detailed and concise treatment of the reasons for Thomson's loss of his congressional position in 1789. Much else, unfortunately, remains shadowy. Schlenther is simply too good a scholar to claim too much for his subject, and Thomson's failure to publish and indeed his destruction of most of his personal papers means that his biographer cannot shed a great deal of additional light on the period of his lengthy and important service as Secretary of the Continental and Confederation Congresses. One can always criticize the author of a biography for not bringing his subject to life, but those who attempt this usually fail, and Schlenther has written a solid, dependable work that can be referred to with considerable confidence. The book is nicely produced with good documentation and a solid bibliography. The University of Delaware Press should be given credit for taking the chance of publishing the second biography of Thomson in eleven years. Schlenther's work is much stronger than J. Edwin Hendricks's *Thomson*, which appeared in 1979. One hopes that Schlenther's next project will give him more scope for his obvious talent.

*University of Pittsburgh*  
*Van Beck Hall*

This biography of bookseller Nicholas Dufief is a limited edition of only three hundred copies, which may well be exhausted by the time this review appears. Published by The Philobiblion Club, it is the first in a projected series on Philadelphia-area libraries, bookselling, and publishing. This is a field of rich potential.

Nicholas Dufief was a fugitive from the French Revolution, arriving in the New World in 1793 at the age of sixteen. He started at first, as did so many of his refugee countrymen, as an instructor of the French language. He developed his own style of teaching by conversation and by ear, and by phrases rather than individual words. In 1804 he published a text on language teaching, Nature Displayed, in which he modestly described his system as a "new and infallible method" to learn two languages "in the shortest time possible, deduced from an analysis of the human mind." He followed this in 1810 with a French-English dictionary in three stout volumes.

At almost the same time, he embarked on a parallel career as a bookseller. In 1799 he offered for sale "an assortment of some of the best of French writers." His book-selling vocation was given a dramatic impetus in 1801 by the acquisition of the bulk of Benjamin Franklin's library.

The disposal of the Franklin library (described in 1787 as "the largest and by far the best, private library in America") was perhaps the most noteworthy event of Dufief's book-selling career, and it is remarkable that he could have undertaken this so early both in his life and in his profession. It is also quite surprising that Americans of the new republic received this sale with such indifference. Congress was urged unsuccessfully to "rescue the books of one of the founders of the American Republic," "the immortal Franklin, a Saint much greater than any in the calendar of the most devoted," since "these books belong in a national library, being in large part on the politics, the legislation and the affairs of America." The plea was in vain, although President Thomas Jefferson urged the purchase of at least a few on the list that he had "ventured to mark with a pencil." Books, it seems, excite only the bibliophiles, and Dufief fared no better with the disposal of the library of William Byrd of "Westover," the second great collection to come into his hands.

Madeleine Stern devotes much of this biography to Dufief's handling of these major sales, and also to his long association and correspondence with Thomas Jefferson, his most important client. Jefferson had shared Dufief's interest in language, and he was himself one of the great book collectors of the day.
Jefferson never allowed his busy political career and the demands of presidential office to interrupt his lifetime devotion to books. The demands he made upon Dufief to find particular books revealed Jefferson's wide range of interests and his own scholarly knowledge, as it similarly did to Dufief in his assiduous efforts to satisfy this client. Stern wisely resists the easy temptation of quoting too extensively from the Jefferson-Dufief correspondence, and ably extracts short passages to open a window into the scholarly minds and advanced views of both parties.

A reviewer can always find a few little points to improve a book. It would have been nice to have an illustrated page or two from Dufief's one extant sales catalogue to see how he described his wares. Perhaps there could have been an abbreviated summary of its contents in an appendix. The name of Fulwar Skipwith, Consul to France, 1790-1791, is incorrectly rendered as "Skipworth." An index would have been helpful, even if not required in so short a work. These are minor matters, however, that do not detract at all from the overall sound quality of this work.

The biography is, of course, one that will appeal most particularly to the specialized interests of the bibliophile. Stern's clarity of style and ease of writing, however, make it agreeably readable to students of the early republic or readers interested in Jefferson, Franklin, or local Philadelphia history. This biography is well-recommended, and it is hoped Philadelphia-area libraries, historical collections, and colleges will add a copy to their shelves.

Radnor, PA

Nicholas Sellers


This third volume in the irregular series from the Center for Palladian Studies in America contains three of the papers presented at a 1984 conference in Philadelphia that was loosely organized around the influence of architecture books in America from the mid-eighteenth through the early twentieth centuries. The opening essay by Charles E. Peterson focuses on the life and career of master builder and proto-architect Robert Smith (1722-1777). Smith arrived in Philadelphia from his native Scotland in the mid-eighteenth century in time to help launch “Architecture, with a capital A” in the rapidly expanding city— that is, architecture based on classical principles as transmitted by pattern books based on the works of the sixteenth-century Italian, Andrea Palladio. Peterson has devoted nearly forty years to
reconstructing and publicizing Smith's life and career. (There is no body of surviving papers or drawings.) All that work is here drawn together with some new and important discoveries.

In piecing together Smith's early life and training in Scotland, Peterson documents that the Edinburgh guild of carpenters required apprentices to demonstrate their skills by passing an examination that included drawing the classical orders "after Palladio." This discovery provides an essential link in our understanding of the training of young carpenter-builders, and it helps to explain the transmission of academic detailing to America in the years prior to the American Revolution. Already trained to think in terms of the orders, builders would be receptive to such books as Isaac Ware's translation of Palladio's *Four Books of Architecture* (London, 1738) and Colen Campbell's *Vitruvius Britannicus* (London, 1731), both of which were on the shelves of the Library Company in Philadelphia when Smith arrived in the city.

In the second essay, Richard Guy Wilson traces the reappearance of Palladio in the American architectural vocabulary ("Palladio Redux") during the latter years of the nineteenth century. Wilson associates a post-Jeffersonian hiatus in Palladian influence with changing fashion and the domination of American art and architecture by England, a "hegemony" that would be challenged in the 1860s. "From the later 1870s onwards," he writes, "a substantial reorientation took place as American artists increasingly followed the lead of those trained at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris." Reacting to high Victorian architects such as Philadelphia's own Frank Furness—whose individualistic, muscular, and bombastic style came to be seen as lacking in taste—architects trained or influenced by the Ecole increasingly called for "more refined, more academic, less intuitive, and more classical" buildings. In the new classicism of the American Renaissance, firms such as McKim, Mead & White drew inspiration from the Palladianism of Renaissance Italy and from a parallel rediscovery of the Palladian work of early American master builders like Robert Smith.

The third essay, by antiquarian bookseller Charles B. Wood, III, focuses mainly on American architectural books. It constitutes a useful, roughly chronological, review of the history of architectural publishing in America and the changing nature of the architectural book as physical object: format, binding, and reproduction techniques. Wood's essay particularly complements Peterson's. Both authors mention briefly the first book of architecture published in America—a reprint of Abraham Swan, *The British Architect* (Philadelphia, 1775)—yet both fail to point out that of the 187 "encouragers" who subscribed in advance to this project, most listed themselves as carpenters or master builders, few as gentlemen. This fact supports both Peterson's contention that books of architecture were owned and consulted by Philadelphia's builders and Wood's point that, from the first, architectural
books published in America prior to the end of the nineteenth century were not destined for the paneled libraries of gentlemen amateur architects. Most books of architecture published in America prove on close examination to be practical manuals intended for the artisan-builder.

Tracing the history of "building by the book" in America also confirms Richard Guy Wilson's thesis. Only in the era of the American Renaissance do we see the reappearance of prestige publications of the Vitruvius Britannicus type: limited, lavish editions such as Mr. Vanderbilt's House and Collection (New York, 1883-1884) intended for client rather than architect. If read together, each of these essays strengthens the others while encouraging an appreciation of the little-studied field of architectural publishing in America.

The Athenaeum of Philadelphia

ROGER W. MOSS


Historians' interpretations of the Confederation period have always conditioned our understanding of the Constitutional Convention and the ensuing debate between the Federalists and Antifederalists over its ratification. In 1888 John Fiske called the years preceding the Convention "The Critical Period" and praised the Constitution—that "Iliad, or Parthenon, or Fifth Symphony, of statesmanship"—for rescuing the nation from its drift toward anarchy. In 1950 Merrill Jensen, denying that the period was critical, extolled the virtues of the Confederation government and denounced the movement for constitutional reform as an attempt by the Founding Fathers to strangle the nascent democratic revolution in its cradle. In 1965 Gordon S. Wood managed to combine the two diametrically opposite interpretations by arguing that although there was no truth to the reality of a critical period, contemporaries believed there was a crisis resulting from the licentiousness of the state legislatures that threatened Americans' republican vision of the meaning of the Revolution. Consequently, Wood argued, the Founders devised the Constitution in a desperate effort to preserve elite rule using the fiction of popular sovereignty to advocate ratification.

Cathy D. Matson and Peter S. Onuf revise older interpretations of the Confederation period and subsequent ratification of the Constitution by emphasizing nationalism and economic interests. Echoing Fiske, they find the 1780s ripe with imminent anarchy, caused by state particularism and sectional conflict. Contra Jensen and Wood, however, the authors contend that the Federalists were less concerned with thwarting the Revolution's
democratic gains or preserving elite rule than with justifying the newly discovered virtues of federalism with a more positive conception of the national interest than the Antifederalists had. According to Matson and Onuf, “the genius of the Federalists was to link ratification of the Constitution with the rapid development of the national economy” (p. 2), thus appealing to urban nationalists as well as “to the great mass of ‘middling’ Americans” (p. 8). Such an interpretation manages simultaneously to congratulate the Federalists for their rhetorical cleverness, establish the primacy of Federalists’ economic motives without the taint of personal profit, and implicitly condemn them for laying the foundation for American corporate imperialism.

It is difficult, however, to have any confidence in Matson’s and Onuf’s interpretation because of their cavalier disregard for chronology. Events in 1784 are used to explain developments in 1781 (pp. 40-41), Jacksonian suffrage standards are projected back to the 1780s (p. 94), and Constitutional delegates are portrayed as replying to speeches that would occur one week in the future (p. 105). More importantly, a close scrutiny of Matson’s and Onuf’s evidence reveals that the vast majority of the writings cited to support their thesis was produced either in the winter of 1787 or the early 1790s—i.e., before or after the Convention and ratification debate. When these spurious citations are eliminated, there is little evidence to support the authors’ major premise that the Federalists linked the ratification of the Constitution to national economic development.

But let us allow for the sake of argument that Matson and Onuf provided evidence that supported their thesis. Does it follow that the Constitution was ratified because of the Federalists’ rhetoric? The debates inside the state ratifying conventions provide the only means of testing the effectiveness of Federalist oratory. Matson and Onuf conspicuously avoid this approach. Had they examined these debates, they would have discovered that the Federalists’ arguments were shaped more by particular local circumstances and the need to counter Antifederalist opposition than by any positive vision of national economic development. Conversely, in the real world of politics, when the Federalists vastly outnumbered their opponents, as in Maryland, they refused even to debate.

Because Matson and Onuf fail to provide evidence for their thesis and ignore the context of the ratification process, A Union of Interests is an unreliable guide to understanding Federalist thought or the making of the Constitution.

Pacific Lutheran University

E. WAYNE CARP

This study discusses the experiences of and attitudes toward old age of 160 women over the course of a half-century in American history. Diaries, journals, letters, and autobiographies of grandmothers or women over age sixty provide the primary evidence for this inquiry. Nearly all of these materials were written by women from Massachusetts and Pennsylvania. Additionally, works by social historians, psychologists, and feminist theorists provide context and guide the interpretations.

In her introduction, Premo notes that other historians had warned her about the paucity of materials for this kind of inquiry in the period of the early republic. While the publication of this book indicates that these admonitions were exaggerated, Winter Friends is more adequate as an explication of the psychological dimension of cultural norms than as social history. Premo frequently follows an account of two or three instances with the admission that the examples may not be typical. Thinness of evidence also leads to a number of trivially certain generalizations—e.g., "Not all grandmothers were equally comfortable with the heralding of domesticity" (p. 92).

The conclusion usefully summarizes Premo's diffuse discussion of older women under six headings: (1) relationships with family and friends were central to women's well-being; (2) the maternal role conditioned them to an "organic" orientation to life; (3) their domestic role allowed them to adjust to old age more easily than was possible for men; (4) women's ties to others were ones of interdependency rather than dependency; (5) they sought to conserve and transmit traditions of the past; and (6) spiritual awareness provided the greatest source of psychological support for aging women.

Much of what Premo concludes about the experience and attitudes of older women in the early republic is not particularly distinctive. For example, the value older women accorded to their connections to family and friends is not peculiar to that era. Both religion and domesticity were central features of older women's lives before and after. Although the American Revolution had a negative impact on most types of traditional authority, including that associated with age, still, older women largely remained outside of the transformation in world view consequent to the Revolution. As personal experience, old age may be more a part of the human condition than of short intervals in the evolution of specific societies.

The history of deeply rooted phenomena, such as the roles and attitudes related to gender and age, requires a longer time perspective to capture
change effectively. Indeed, Premo implicitly recognizes as much in her use of contemporary feminist psychology. *Winter Friends* provides a first sketch of its subject for a limited period in American history.

*University of Illinois at Chicago*  
**DANIEL SCOTT SMITH**

*Joshua Leavitt: Evangelical Abolitionist.* By HUGH DAVIS. (Baton Rouge and London: Louisiana State University Press, 1990. xiv, 328p. Bibliography, index. $35.00.)

Whether touring the Northeast as Liberty party organizer or sweating over the defection of his evangelical subscribers, newspaper editor Joshua Leavitt never found his variety of abolitionism easy. Hugh Davis offers a substantial image of this moderate abolitionist, one of those reformers who populated the space between radical “come-outers” like Garrison and the mildly abolitionist churchmen who subordinated antislavery activities to revivalism.

Davis interprets Leavitt’s life in the broad context of the institutions with which he was affiliated: the Congregational and Presbyterian churches, Yale University, the New York and American Anti-Slavery Societies, and the Liberty party. Leavitt emerges as an evangelical Christian doggedly working out a pragmatic course to end slavery. Because that course included political activism, Leavitt suffered criticism from both radical and church-centered abolitionists. Leavitt’s abolitionism was part of a broader millennial vision that also included temperance, manual labor, and moral reform movements. While enthusiasm for the Anti-Corn Law Leaguers and penny-postage advocates placed Leavitt in the mainstream of transatlantic reform movements, his religious commitments kept him in the middle of denominational quarrels concerning the modification of Calvinism. An advocate of Finney’s new measures, Leavitt developed a reputation as an able and enthusiastic supporter of revivals.

Davis argues that Leavitt’s newspaper editing and organizing for the Liberty party were his most notable achievements. Leavitt never abandoned editing, but by 1840 he had decided that “moral suasion” alone was an inadequate tactic and began advocating political activism. Leavitt developed skills as a congressional lobbyist and as a speaker for the Liberty party. Managing editorial and political duties simultaneously, Leavitt worked to convince his evangelical audience that their faith required political activism on behalf of the slave.

Initially, Leavitt turned to journalism because, more than law or the ministry, editing the New York *Evangelist* (and later the *Emancipator* and the *Independent*) offered a substantial salary and a public platform for spread-
ing his evangelical and antislavery ideas. Along with this editing, Leavitt usually worked for a reform society, first the American Seaman's Friend Society, then the American Anti-Slavery Society, and later the schismatic Massachusetts Abolition Society. Although his later activities on behalf of the Liberty party might seem like a secular approach, these political and religious interests were inextricably intertwined. For Leavitt, as for most abolitionists, there was no clear separation of religion and politics; both his editing and political writing were facets of his Christianity. While his Congregational roots meant that Leavitt's evangelical beliefs developed first, Leavitt, Davis argues, more quickly and thoroughly than other evangelicals incorporated immediate emancipation into his notions of Christian duty.

The question of abolitionist motivation remains a puzzle. Davis's suggestion that Leavitt based his commitment to abolitionism on the "moral absolutism" (p. 91) of evangelicalism is not satisfying. Is this the same moral perfectionism other scholars have found motivating non-evangelical abolitionists like W.L. Garrison and Nathaniel P. Rogers? Because Leavitt so frequently differed from his colleagues on appropriate abolitionist tactics, the suggestion that Leavitt's close ties with colleagues in benevolent work helped keep his reform commitments alive is equally unconvincing. In fact, Davis provides evidence that Leavitt maintained his activism despite disagreements with colleagues over finances, the place of women in reform, and the role of politics in ending slavery. By default this leaves the old status anxiety and social control explanations for reform commitment; indeed, Davis provides ample evidence that Leavitt worried a great deal, both about his own economic status (always marginal) and the unruly crowds of hard-drinking, urban poor.

Despite this enigma concerning motivation, Davis has provided a well-crafted introduction, not just to the life of Joshua Leavitt, but to the religious, political, and economic issues confronted by evangelical abolitionists—people caught between the non-resistance position of radical abolitionists and the imperative of evangelicalism for Christian abolitionists. Drawing extensively from both secondary and primary sources, Davis provides enough information about the theological and institutional tensions undermining evangelical unity for readers to understand how unusual was Leavitt's "moderate" and continued demand for an end to slavery, whether through moral or political tactics.

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DEBORAH BINGHAM VAN BROEKHOVEN

This excellent study complements a recent erudite and entertaining work by Margaret Hindle Hazen and Robert M. Hazen, The Music Men: An Illustrated History of Brass Bands in America, 1800-1920 (1987). With the Hazens' book fully digested—Kenneth Kreitner consulted extensively with them while preparing this work—the author concentrates on a remarkably brief era, 1896 through 1901, and considerably less space than the whole state of Pennsylvania. Indeed, in the early chapters Kreitner seems to be telling only the history of brass bands in Honesdale, Pennsylvania, his hometown where he himself has been band director in recent years. But before the book is over, we find that all the bands in Wayne County, in the northeast corner of the state, receive as full and fair a treatment as surviving records will permit.

Honesdale became the most populated town in its county because of its strategic position at the end of a "gravity" or "stationary engine" railroad and at the head of a canal. By this route coal from Carbondale, Pennsylvania, found its way over the Moosic mountain range, down the canal, and eventually into New York waterways. In 1900 Honesdale had about 5,000 residents; Hawley, at the other end of the canal, had 2,000. No other town in the county had as many as 500; most of Wayne County's 30,000 inhabitants still lived on farms.

The years 1896-1901 saw many changes in the town's economy and the operation of three distinct bands. The Honesdale Band, more than a generation old, gave way around 1899 to Lawyer's Band, named after shoe-cutter and cornetist Edwin Lawyer, its leader. In 1900 Lawyer left town and his band faded, but almost immediately the new Maple City Band rose to take its place. Also active during these years in Wayne County were the Equinunk Band, the Lake Como Band, the Pleasant Mount Band, and the Hawley Band. The Equinunk Band sprouted and flourished under a Methodist parson with an Italian name, and wilted away when the reverend bandleader moved on.

The mostly young men who played in these bands wore military-style uniforms, following a long-established European and American tradition. The bands numbered from under ten to more than twenty players, performing on brass instruments, usually valves, assisted by a bass drum and cymbals. Slide trombones sometimes appeared in Wayne County bands, and by 1900 audiences could occasionally hear a clarinet.

From the Honesdale newspapers, Kreitner has reconstructed the activities of these many bands; besides the patriotic holidays on which one expects
parades with martial music, bands performed at a variety of social outings sponsored by the many voluntary associations of the town and region, and further entertained their neighbors with outdoor concerts in the summer and indoor ones in the winter. Occasionally, bands would travel onto the turf of neighboring ensembles, or meet in a resort for a friendly contest or dual concert. Indoors or out, band music was invariably attended by food and drink.

Kreitner has dug around in census returns as well as newspapers to identify the Honesdale bandsmen. He also has reconstructed much of the musical life of the area, giving detailed attention to instrumental ensembles whose functions were most like those of brass bands—namely, dance bands (often called orchestras, whether they had strings in them or not) and “real” orchestras containing strings, winds, and brass. Although he mentions the German Mannerchor, church music, and domestic piano playing, Kreitner does not have much to say about them. He does have a lot to say about the development or evolution of band instruments, and enough about repertory and arrangements to enable anyone with sufficient time and ambition to reconstruct a Wayne County band program from the turn of the century.

The “figures” mentioned in our headnote include some delightful old photographs of the bands; in one of them the Maple City Band welcomes the first railroad to come all the way into Honesdale. There is a nice engraving of Honesdale around 1890, and an undated, but clearly more recent street map. For those who read band music (it seems to require the ability to transpose several lines simultaneously), three pages of the full score of E.F. Scholl’s “Lehigh Valley March” (1897) appear in quite legible print on six pages of the book; all one has to do is turn the book sideways to see the ingenious means by which the composer made a rousing piece playable by amateurs. Most abundant are programs of the music performed by bands at their more formal concerts, generous excerpts from newspaper accounts of their performances, and informed discussions of what bands meant to the communities that supported them.

Besides its obvious value for the study of music in American life, this book reminds one of much that is ignored or forgotten in our textbooks of United States history. Industrialization was by no means restricted to grim and grimy mill towns, and the majority of Americans in 1900 still lived primarily on farms or in smallish towns and cities. Such communities were not only strung out across the South and West; in the “original thirteen states” they still had a vitality and charm that we have largely and regretfully forgotten—until we read a book like Kenneth Kreitner’s, which is both a model of thorough empirical scholarship and a labor of love.

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ROBERT MCCOLLEY

It is fitting that John Duffy, a senior scholar whose previous work includes histories of American medicine and of public health in New York City, should now contribute this much-needed treatise on the general history of public health in this country. Its narrative skillfully woven around four themes that Duffy identifies as having characterized American public health throughout its history, The Sanitarians sketches significant developments in an eminently readable style. This book will be useful both as an undergraduate textbook and as a means for other interested people independently to introduce themselves to this field.

The Sanitarians is a very good book, but it fails its nonspecialist readers in some important ways. Among the factors that have determined public health practice, Duffy claims, "the first and foremost . . . has been prevailing medical concepts." This assertion is debatable; but particularly because Duffy feels so strongly about it, readers of this book deserve to learn more about those medical concepts. Instead, the filth theory of disease is dismissed as simply erroneous (though useful, since it inspired a range of sanitary measures), and the newer germ theory is presented as a correct scientific paradigm that emerged full-grown from the heads of great scientists.

Duffy's presentist and progressive approach to public health history is evidently connected to a passionate concern for social justice, and in this regard, he should be praised for aligning himself with and documenting the claims of the best in the American liberal tradition. Duffy does not hesitate to name those who have stood in the way of improved health at various times in history: businesses for considering profits above environmental quality, the wealthy for allowing inner cities to rot as long as their neighborhoods were well served by sanitation services, or the Reagan administration for consistently cutting funds for health services.

On the other hand, neither does Duffy trust the poor to look out for themselves. Whenever he describes a conflict, progress and scientific truth are almost always on the side of the elite class of physicians or some other disinterested upper-class group. Duffy therefore shows little sympathy for the typical lower middle-class medical practitioners of the 1890s who resisted registering tuberculosis cases out of fear that they would stigmatize their patients and thus lose their business, and he shows no sympathy for working-class immigrants who feared smallpox vaccination. Even now, it is not clear that early registration efforts were of direct help in the struggle against tuberculosis; and if, in retrospect, we can see that the success of vaccination programs was a victory for public health, we must still try to understand
why this was not evident to everyone at the time. There were arguments worthy of consideration on both sides.

Readers of this journal should also be aware that Duffy is highly selective in using and citing the secondary literature. He thus draws on neither of the two dissertations on public health in Philadelphia that were completed during the eighties, nor does he cite Michael McCarthy’s well-received recent monograph on typhoid fever in nineteenth-century Philadelphia.

Duffy displays his compassion and his broad understanding of health policy in the final chapters of The Sanitarians, where he describes the accelerating fragmentation of public health authority that has occurred over the past forty years. What had been considered municipal or state responsibilities are now scattered on all levels of government, and on each level, there is no single agency answerable for all matters relating to health. At the same time, health-related government activity overlaps increasingly with social welfare functions. With health indicators among Americans—and especially the poor among us—scandalously bad, Duffy concludes the book by returning to a question he poses on the first page. At the start, in order to define the scope of this work, he rhetorically asks just what “public health” means. At the end, he leaves the reader sharing his concern that, as an urgent matter of public policy, the realm of public health must be broadened and its scope more clearly defined.

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Edward T. Mormon
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