

## BOOK REVIEWS

*Rum Punch and Revolution: Taverngoing and Public Life in Eighteenth-Century Philadelphia.* By PETER THOMPSON. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999. 265p. Illustrations, notes, selected bibliography, index of tavernkeepers, petitioners for tavernkeepers, petitioners for tavern houses and public houses, index. Cloth, \$42.50; paper, \$18.50.)

Historians have long been exploring the social and cultural patterns of the British Atlantic world and their possible links to the American Revolution. With this book, Peter Thompson, Sidney Mayer Lecturer in Early American History at Oxford and a Fellow of St. Cross College, makes a valuable contribution to the discussion.

One major strand of investigation has been to explore conduct and attitudes in public arenas other than the formal institutions of church and state. Of these, taverns were crucial. As the author asserts, "Taverns were, I believe, the most enduring, most easily identifiable, and most contested body of public space in eighteenth century America" (p. 16). The choice of Philadelphia is also significant, given the city's pivotal role in the empire and the Revolution.

In essence, the central argument is that Philadelphia's tavern milieu reflected and reinforced the city's changing social and political ethos. Prior to the 1760s, "an ethnically and culturally diverse population and relatively fluid social hierarchy" shaped "a distinctive kind of sociability" (p. 3) in public houses which was "remarkably free of deference" and thereby encouraged "a political culture uncommonly open to the influence of laboring men" (p. 19). As the Revolution approached, more economic stratification, less social mobility, and rising political tension undermined the egalitarian, even majoritarian, atmosphere of the general tavern. By the end of the century, it was replaced with forms of sociability more restricted by social class and political opinion, a development that "ushered in the age of the saloon and hotel" (p. 185).

Within this general interpretive framework is an intriguing set of data and insights which both illustrate and give nuance to the central argument. For instance, the author argues that generally enforced maximum retail prices virtually guaranteed that a successful tavern served a wide variety of persons and had multiple uses for its facilities. Solid descriptions of tavern ownership and finances, their design as residences, and their locations, furniture, and typical services all point to their having been important public arenas for a highly diverse, egalitarian population.

Diversity, of course, often meant tension, even before the 1760s. As Thompson notes, "conflict and consensus were the hallmarks of tavern companies" (p. 77),

wherein varying rituals such as health-drinking, other toasts, and group singing were used to channel competitive urges into more civil, less obviously conflicted conduct. In his view, "the underlying source of friction" for Philadelphians involved "reconciling their notions of a hierarchy of social status" with tavern mores which "implied in theory, and often required in practice, an equality of esteem" (p. 83). During and after the Revolution, this tension was resolved by specialization.

Another important facet of the book is its comparative perspective. Good use is made of such valuable works as Thomas Brennan, *Public Drinking and Popular Culture in Eighteenth-Century Paris* (1988). Yet there is a tendency to draw too stark a contrast between this interpretation of Philadelphia's tavern milieu and that of Boston as described in David Conroy, *In Public Houses: Drink and the Revolution of Authority in Colonial Massachusetts* (1995). Certainly these two fine books are roughly parallel in subject, subtopics, and organization.

According to Thompson, they differ primarily over the extent to which eighteenth-century taverns should be seen as alternatives to or reflections of the dominant social and political ethos of their communities. Yet despite some obvious differences in point of view, both works in the end stress the interplay of egalitarian and hierarchical impulses and the taverns' vital role as arenas for evaluating and even shaping political performance. Many of the apparent differences are verbal, contextual (Boston, for example, was not as economically buoyant as Philadelphia for most of the century), or emphatic (for instance, Thompson provides evidence of "oppositional" attitudes around drinking mores but downplays their significance).

What tends to disappear in Thompson's analysis is an adequate sense of the near universality of tavern mores and related elements of traditional popular culture throughout the eighteenth-century Atlantic world. And, in my view, this ubiquitous repertoire of tavern mores both reflected and resisted "official" culture, depending on circumstance. It was, after all, the freedom and flexibility of the tavern that gave it its popularity.

Nonetheless, *Rum Punch and Revolution* is an excellent book, tightly organized, resting on sound research in primary sources, and thought provoking, not only about colonial urban society but also about the cultural implications of the American Revolution. Indeed, one of the ironies of the Revolution may be that it granted the liberty to avoid the traditionally egalitarian world of the tavern. As the author puts it, Philadelphians "abandoned as hopeless the search for a public space where they could express a sociability which was republican yet restrained, consensual and yet declaratory, and which afforded a means of privacy even in heterogeneous company" (p. 185).

*From Gloucester to Philadelphia in 1790: Observations, Anecdotes, and Thoughts from the 18th-Century Letters of Judith Sargent Murray.* Edited by BONNIE HURD SMITH. (Cambridge, Mass.: Judith Sargent Murray Society, 1999. 338p. Illustrations, maps, bibliography. \$17.95.)

One of eighteenth-century America's most prolific woman writers, Judith Sargent Murray left behind her letterbooks containing nearly two thousand letters she wrote between 1765 and 1818. For scholars interested in Murray as a writer, in early American cultural life, or in the Universalist movement in which her husband John Murray was a driving force, Murray's letters promise a wealth of new information. Until 1984, however, these letters remained in private hands. Located by Unitarian Universalist clergyman Gordon Gibson in 1984, the letterbooks are now in the possession of the Mississippi Department of Archives. (A Massachusetts resident most of her life, Murray died in her daughter's Mississippi home.) The current volume is the second to present a portion of this body of writings. The editor, Bonnie Hurd Smith, is the founder of the Judith Sargent Murray Society and a Murray descendant.

The letters offered in the current volume will be of interest to both social and literary historians. Readers of *PMHB* will find special interest in this volume because the letters printed record Murray's trip to the Universalist convention, held in Philadelphia. The couple remained in Pennsylvania for nearly two months, from early June to late July 1790. In letters to family and friends at home in Massachusetts, Judith Sargent Murray recorded in detail her observations of people, places, institutions, and events in Philadelphia and its environs. The result is a delightful set of letters, both travel journal and family correspondence, and touching on Murray's views on politics, religion, and cultural trends.

Among the sites Murray toured were the medicinal springs at Harrongate, the Schuylkill gardens, the Moravian Academy at Bethlehem, Charles Willson Peale's museum, and the Philadelphia almshouse, hospital, and mental ward. Many prominent Philadelphians played host to the Murrays during their visit. The letters in this volume record Murray's meetings with Franklin's daughter Sarah Bache, who showed her Franklin's library, and Benjamin Rush, who highly praised John Murray's preaching, although he had refused to hear the clergyman preach twenty years earlier. Murray viewed John Trumbull's paintings, stargazed through David Rittenhouse's telescope, and met John Jay, who told her of his supposed near-death and out-of-body experiences. The Murrays attended the commencement ceremony at the University of Pennsylvania and the Fourth of July celebration. One letter details an evening Murray spent at the theater, where Royall Tyler's play, *The Contrast*, was the main attraction (she attended incognito and without her husband to avoid offending Philadelphia Universalists). This catalog of people, places, and events can only begin to touch on the interests of Murray's letters. The 1790 trip

also included a stay in New York, where the Murrays met the Washingtons and the Adamsses, among others. In addition to the letters describing the trip itself, notes of a more personal nature reveal social and biographical matters. In short, this selection of letters is likely to whet the reader's appetite for the rest of Murray's correspondence.

The manner in which the letters are presented is, unfortunately, less than ideal. Rather than providing footnotes to identify unfamiliar names and allusions, the editor gives introductory notes for each letter. These notes also summarize the content of each letter unnecessarily. Some of these introductory notes run nearly a page in length, and given the high interest of the letters themselves, it is regrettable that those pages were not employed in printing more of Murray's writing. This procedure seems to have been motivated by a desire to reach a general audience. That intention, of course, is laudable, but it is difficult not to wish for a more scholarly presentation.

Smith's biographical introduction makes use of other still unpublished letters to shed important light on Murray's life. We learn, for example, that Murray corresponded with the Maine novelist Sally Sayward Barrell Keating Wood about the propriety of "female politicians," that a cousin of Murray's publicly attacked her writing, and that she challenged at least one newspaper editor who credited John Murray with authorship of Murray's play. Clearly, there is much more to learn about Murray's life and writing career. More is promised; the present volume is labeled "Excerpts from the forthcoming book, *The Letters of Judith Sargent Murray*," which Smith says will include "edited transcriptions of all the letters" (p. 335). It seems, then, that planned obsolescence is to be the fate of the present volume, along with its predecessor, *Judith Sargent Murray: Her First 100 Letters* (1995). Publication of all of Murray's letters (with, it is to be hoped, minimal editing of the transcriptions) will certainly be a notable event. For now, however, this volume provides the best access to Murray's fascinating letters outside the archive. *From Gloucester to Philadelphia* will offer welcome insight for scholars interested in Murray and in 1790s Philadelphia.

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ANGELA VIETTO

*Beyond Philadelphia: The American Revolution in the Pennsylvania Hinterland.* Edited by JOHN B. FRANTZ and WILLIAM PENCAK. (University Park: Penn State University Press, 1998. xxv, 273p. Maps, notes, contributors, index. Cloth, \$55.00; paper, \$19.95.)

This collection of essays is offered as a necessary counterweight to the standard emphasis upon Philadelphia in studies of the American Revolution. No scholar of

the American Revolution in the Middle Colonies would contest that such a corrective is in order. The question, rather, is how well this volume fills the need. Happily, the answer is positive.

The nine essays are organized geographically, roughly following the sequence of settlement of a colony still less than a century old by the time of the imperial breach. The collection successfully skirts the usual pitfall of such organizational schemes, redundancy, gently reminding readers of patterns encountered in previous essays without unduly reiterating them. Likewise, in contrast to anthologies which seem to merely collect essays and then bracket them with an appropriate introduction and epilogue, this collection seems a crafted and coherent whole.

Rosemary S. Warden and Owen S. Ireland demonstrate that Chester and Bucks Counties, adjacent to Philadelphia, in major respects followed the city's course of response to the impending imperial crisis. In both counties, English Quakers had dominated local politics, but Quaker pacifism could not withstand growing popular pressure for armed resistance. The Revolution thus led to new leadership, drawn from ethnic and religious groups previously marginalized. This did not occur without struggle, and the region coped with a significant number of loyalists throughout the war. Recruitment and supplies for the army were obtained with difficulty. Although armies traversed the area repeatedly, rich agricultural resources allowed for a rapid economic recovery. Politically, however, the Revolution wrought a major change. Whereas before independence the counties near Philadelphia had benefited from Quaker dominance in Pennsylvania government, a more balanced distribution of provincial power followed.

Quakers had been less dominant in Pennsylvania's middle region, reducing the need for an internal challenge to established leaders. Berks, York, Cumberland, and Lancaster Counties, as well as the Lehigh Valley, also saw much less actual fighting. Instead, their distance from British-occupied Philadelphia enabled the counties to serve as safe havens. Pennsylvanians in these areas also struggled with standard wartime problems such as recruitment, inflation, and pockets of pacifism. Eugene R. Slaski discusses the Lehigh Valley's role in handling prisoners of war, organizing care for the sick and wounded, and serving as a reliable supply base for the patriot army. Karen Guenther describes similar activities in Berks County, despite an apparently greater number of pacifists and loyalists. Paul E. Doutrich paints a similar picture for York County, where the Second Continental Congress relocated when the British captured Philadelphia. Robert G. Crist emphasizes the prerevolutionary instability in more westerly Cumberland County, caused largely by provincial indifference to western conflict with neighboring Indians. Although the Cumberland region is revealed as a valuable supply base for the Continental troops, the essay is more descriptive than analytical and trails off before the war is ended.

The last set of essays explores the Revolution as experienced in Pennsylvania's more remote regions, where the main opponent was Britain's Native American

allies. In the Wyoming and Upper Juniata Valleys, the war for independence compounded longstanding violent conflicts. Frederick J. Stefon traces the Pennamite Wars (1769–1775) and shows how they shaped the revolutionary fighting in the Wyoming Valley. The conflict between Native American, Pennsylvanian, and Connecticut claimants culminated in 1778 with a bloody rout for the Yankees, but the dispute persisted until the Confederation Congress rejected Connecticut's claims in 1782. For the Upper Juniata Valley, Tim H. Blessing explains why a diverse population joined in support for the Revolution. As the previous essays demonstrate, local interests played a major role. The Upper Juniata's isolation from the politically dominant Philadelphia area required a high degree of self-reliance. Inhabitants responded to guerilla attack from Indians by building fortified settlements. Pennsylvania's westernmost counties are treated by Gregory Knouff. Wartime experience appears to have been similar to that depicted for the Upper Juniata, but this essay emphasizes the theme of racism in border warfare. Euro-American settlers adjacent to resistant native groups revealed an intense racism, much more virulent than that found in more protected settlement areas. Though interesting, this essay breaks little new interpretive ground and feels somewhat incongruent with the rest of the volume.

To the credit of the editors, the cumulative effect of this collection does more than simply balance "hot spots" such as Philadelphia. The collection offers a good reminder of the importance of local internal struggles, struggles which meant that support for the Revolution sometimes varied dramatically even across short distances. In short, it is difficult if not impossible to construct a "Pennsylvania experience." And what is true for Pennsylvania is probably true for other regions as well.

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ELLEN ESLINGER

*In Irons: Britain's Naval Supremacy and the American Revolutionary Economy.* By RICHARD BUEL JR. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998. xi, 397p. Appendix, abbreviations, notes, index. \$35.00.)

Based on impressive research in a wide variety of primary sources, this important book offers the best account we have of the American economy during the Revolutionary War. This subject has been neglected because the documentary record is fragmentary and is distinct from that of the periods before and after. Many statistical series and collections of business records simply stop in 1776; on the other hand, important sources of information, such as the papers of staff officers in the Continental Army, are only available for the war years.

Buel skillfully scrutinizes the evidence to present a picture of the revolutionary

economy that—although far from comprehensive—is more expansive than the title of his book suggests. He goes well beyond the immediate impact of the British naval blockade on maritime commerce. For example, one of Buel's most significant findings is that grain production declined sharply in the mid-Atlantic region during the war but started to revive in 1780 and 1781. This conclusion is based on a careful analysis of the records of the Philadelphia flour merchant Levi Hollingsworth, as well as the daybook and journal of Brandywine miller Thomas Lea and rent books from Livingston Manor in New York. Buel infers that the leading cause of this production shortfall was not a shortage of manpower but rather inadequate prices, owing to the success of the naval blockade. This and other evidence in the book indicates that farmers responded rationally and efficiently to complex market trends.

A recurrent theme of the book is that New England in general, and Boston in particular, fared better than Philadelphia during the war. Boston's occupation by the British ended early in the conflict, and the redcoats were more destructive in the mid-Atlantic states than in New England. The extensive, fog-bound shoreline of New England was far more difficult for the British to blockade than was the Delaware River. Buel notes that "[o]nly New England enjoyed direct commercial contact with France throughout the war" and Massachusetts was the "privateering capital of the revolutionary Confederation" (pp. 72, 116). He points out that "[d]uring 1780, its best year for privateering, Philadelphia received only 37 percent of the tonnage in captures that Boston directly benefited from during the same year, its third worst in the war" (p. 176). It is interesting that, despite its difficulties during the war, Philadelphia quickly regained its commercial stature in the 1780s.

*In Irons* provides persuasive evidence that the Revolution was the most disruptive war in American history and caused a major contraction in economic activity. Virtually every dimension of economic life—food production, the money supply, the size and design of vessels, patterns of international and inland trade, the operations of port towns—was violently altered by the war. These disruptions were sometimes compounded by misguided policies, such as the price regulation in Philadelphia in 1779, which caused farmers and millers to withhold their products from the market. One supplier told Levi Hollingsworth, "Your regulators or mob has put a Stop to my sending flour until I know whether its [*sic*] mine or theirs" (pp. 141–42).

As in other conflicts of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, turbulent wartime conditions forced merchants to be extremely flexible and resourceful. But in contrast to the Seven Years War and the wars of the French Revolution, the American Revolution created many more risks than lucrative speculative opportunities. Buel concludes that although a few merchants got rich during the war, they were very much the exception (p. 102).

*The Cousins' Wars: Religion, Politics, and the Triumph of Anglo-America.* By KEVIN PHILLIPS. (New York: Basic Books, 1999. 707p. Maps, illustrations, appendixes, notes, bibliography, index. \$32.50.)

Kevin Phillips has produced an ambitious book, a study of war and revolution in the making of an Anglo-American mentality over a period of nearly two and a half centuries. "From the seventeenth century," he writes, "the English speaking peoples on both continents defined themselves by wars that upheld, at least for awhile, a guiding political culture of Calvinistic Protestantism, commercially adept . . . [and] militantly expansionist" (p. xv). "The great formative events in the rise of England and then America . . . were wars—bitter, fratricidal wars—accompanied by Puritan and abolitionist sermons and battle hymns and principally fought to change the shape of internal politics, liberty, and religion" (p. xiii). Victorious in three wars—the English Civil War, the American Revolution, and the U.S. Civil War, Anglo-Americans of Calvinist persuasion came to see themselves as God's Chosen People with a manifest destiny to dominate the western world.

A "bold synthesis" to be sure. And it all started several years ago when Phillips initially began researching a far more narrow topic, General Burgoyne's surrender to American forces at Saratoga in 1777. Could the battle, he asked, have had a different outcome? Was it a near miss for the British, a defeat that could have been avoided if British continental strategy had been tougher? Was American support of the war confined to local pockets or was it widespread; was it strong enough to carry the Revolution if American forces had actually lost at Saratoga? In other words, if British strategy had been stronger and American revolutionary forces weaker, could Saratoga have ended the war, returned the colonies to the English fold, and rewritten the history of the Atlantic world?

From these initial questions Phillips, a journalist known mainly for his books and articles on twentieth-century American politics, moved to a second stage where he looked at the Revolution as a civil war in English-speaking North America that divided people in the British Isles as well. Finally, he began to see relationships and similarities between the Revolution and the civil wars in seventeenth-century England and nineteenth-century America: in all of them the winners were commercial, expansionist, Calvinistic.

The strength of the book is less in the argument itself (which, in fact, is not as novel as the author assumes) than in the variety of angles from which the thesis is explored and developed. Phillips sees the complexity of the questions he raises and develops three lines of argument, "sub-focuses" as he calls them, to advance his thesis.

First, he discusses at length the international context of each war. (His introduction says he will concentrate on the international support for the American



Revolution but in fact he covers the international significance of each of his three contests, and makes a convincing case that North Atlantic peoples divided over each one.) Second, he gives evidence for the persistence of wartime issues in English and American electoral politics long after the actual fighting had stopped. Third, he argues that after the treaty of 1783 the English-speaking world divided into two distinctive political cultures, both retaining elements of the Calvinistic commercial ethic, but with the Americans tending toward egalitarian democracy while the British became "smug, conservative but economically innovative" (p. xvii).

The "sub-focuses," developed richly as they are, are a great strength of the book. But they also present the author (and the reader) with problems. Each subordinate topic seems to have further "sub-focuses" of its own. In addition, the author's honest efforts to deal with groups that do not neatly fit his descriptions of "rebels" or "conservatives" (the Scots Irish and southern rebels in the Revolution, for example; neither group fits Phillips's "Puritanical" mold, but both were active on the patriot side) produce further diversions. It becomes increasingly difficult to follow every by-way the author follows in a very long book with over six hundred pages of text. As a good writer, Phillips is aware that his subordinate points are hard to keep straight, but his solution somewhat compounds the difficulty. He states and restates his thesis for clarity, but as he does so the tenor of the book begins to shift from the inquiring to the polemical.

One strength of the book is the variety of printed sources that Phillips uses, cited in a thirteen-page bibliography. In addition to monographic studies, he also includes sources like voting returns, local histories, church data, settlement patterns, and useful maps derived from them. But the impressive bibliography becomes somewhat less so when it is broken down into the immense number of subjects, time periods, and geographical areas covered by the book. The sheer mastery of even the best-known books on such a variety of topics was a feat in itself, but of necessity the author had to read rather selectively, relying on classics and omitting some books which might have changed some of his interpretations.

In sum then, this book really does deserve the kudos on the dust jacket. It is "provocative," "bold," "relevant to American politics," challengingly ambitious. But who should be its readers? Its length, complexity of organization, and attempt to grapple with awkward facts that make the argument untidy may work against a popular audience. But the familiarity and indeed the questionableness of some of the book's arguments and its sources may work against a strong scholarly reception. I hope it does not fall between two audiences, because it is well worth a reader's efforts.

*David Zeisberger: A Life Among the Indians.* By EARL P. OLMSTEAD. (Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 1997. xxiv, 442p. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$39.00.)

David Zeisberger spent more than sixty-five years as a Moravian missionary among the Indians of the northeastern United States. A dedicated man, he never wavered from his duty to bring Christianity and salvation to the Indians. He was remarkably successful in this endeavor, counting his converts in the hundreds. Many of his converts were equally devoted to their new faith, deterred by neither war nor massacre. With his faith and his respect for the Indians, Zeisberger was able to create a blended community of Moravian Indians in Ohio, a community where the members never stopped being Indians and where all were welcome.

Earl Olmstead has tackled the daunting task of recounting Zeisberger's early efforts. From a young age Zeisberger's linguistic talent enabled him to gain fluency in many Indian languages. With his ability to speak well in their native tongue, he earned the respect of most Indians. Beginning in the 1740s, Zeisberger served as a missionary to a variety of Indian communities, culminating in his forty-one-year enterprise among the Delawares of Ohio. Living in Ohio from 1768 until his death in 1808, Zeisberger and his converts survived a variety of disasters, including the Revolutionary War and the massacre of ninety converts by the American militia in 1782.

While Olmstead does a creditable job of relating the first sixty-one years of Zeisberger's life, there is little new in his narrative. Olmstead does not significantly add to the information presented in Edmund de Schweinitz's classic biography *The Life and Times of David Zeisberger*; he does not address the critical questions concerning Zeisberger's mission. The converts, many of whom were very important leaders in their societies, receive a superficial presentation, and no attempt is made to understand their motives for converting to Moravian Christianity nor the consequences of their actions. The structure of the mission and its similarity or contrast to Delaware society likewise receive little attention.

Zeisberger's Delaware mission was a critical player in the events in Ohio during the explosive late eighteenth century. Caught between the dueling British and Americans, both of whom desired the Ohio country for their own profit, the Delawares faced a continual battle to maintain their political independence, social integrity, and cultural dignity. Zeisberger was an important figure, counseling powerful Delaware leaders, assisting Delaware chiefs in their communications with the British and the Americans and providing a peaceful alternative to the increasing specter of war. Olmstead leaves largely unanswered how the missionaries, Zeisberger and his assistants, achieved this delicate balance. In addition, he does not address Zeisberger's use of his powerful converts, such as the chief Glikkhan (baptized Isaac), to navigate a peaceful path through these difficult waters.

Zeisberger left hundreds of pages of diaries, telling the story of the mission and of his converts' lives. Most of these diaries have been translated from the German and are available on microfilm. His private letters are also in this microfilm collection. Rich in detailed narrative and exposition, Zeisberger's diaries are a treasure trove of information and insight for any historian willing to look closely at the story. The lives of the converts are significantly present, as are their actions to insure their peaceful future. Historians who delve into these documents and examine them carefully will be able to enlighten us on a distinctive and important person and his mission to the Delawares, as well as American Moravian and missionary history. Zeisberger was a remarkable man who created an equally remarkable community, a community which successfully combined Delaware and Moravian practices and beliefs. Such a study would benefit us all.

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MAIA CONRAD

*Contact Points: American Frontiers from the Mohawk Valley to the Mississippi.* Edited by ANDREW R. L. CAYTON and FREDRIKA J. TEUTE. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press for the Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture, 1998. 383p. Maps, illustrations, contributors, bibliography, index. Cloth, \$49.95; paper, \$18.95.)

This collection of essays on early American frontiers is a product of a 1994 conference entitled "Crucibles of Cultures: North American Frontiers, 1750–1820," cosponsored by the Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture, the Historic New Orleans Collection, and the Newberry Library. As editors Andrew R. L. Cayton and Fredrika J. Teute explain in the introduction, the contributors share a revisionist definition of "frontier" best summarized in Leonard Thompson's and Howard Lamar's words as a "territory or zone of interpenetration between two previously distinct societies" (p. 5). Collectively, they apply many of the themes and insights that have reshaped the history of the trans-Mississippi West in the past twenty years to the late colonial and early national periods, questioning Turnerian assumptions about the frontier's influence on early American society.

The essays are arranged chronologically in the volume, but shared approaches and methodologies also make it possible to group them thematically. Jane Merritt, Claudio Saunt, and Lucy Eldersveld Murphy examine European-Indian interaction through the lens of gender. Merritt describes the use and abuse of gendered kinship metaphors in eighteenth-century diplomatic speech; Saunt explains how European trade and missionary work affected gender roles within the Creek nation and contributed to the split between traditionalists and assimilationists within that nation; and Murphy examines how gendered work patterns affected the potential

for intercultural cooperation in the fur-trading and mining towns of the western Great Lakes. Another set of essays by William B. Hart, Gregory Evans Dowd, John Mack Faragher, and Jill Lepore examines the significance of emerging notions of race on European-Indian relations. Hart describes the mutability of racial identities on the pre-Revolutionary Mohawk frontier, where free blacks could assume characteristics associated with Indians or Europeans and serve as cultural go-betweens. Faragher, in his essay on the Lower Missouri Valley, and Lepore, in her essay on the memory of King Philip's War, describe how Jacksonian Americans used racial categorization to justify Indian removal. In his essay, Dowd provides an intellectual link between the racial mutability of Hart's colonial Mohawk frontier and the racism of Faragher's and Lepore's Jacksonian America; he attributes the deterioration of the British-Cherokee alliance in part to British racial attitudes that demanded subordination from Indians who insisted on being treated as equals. James Merrell, Stephen Aron, Elizabeth Perkins, and Andrew R. L. Cayton address the differing cultural values that Europeans and Indians attached to the landscape, natural resources, and diplomatic rituals. While they deal with different regions—Merrell with Pennsylvania, Aron and Perkins with Kentucky, and Cayton with Ohio—together they describe how multiethnic frontiers gave way to settler societies that divided their inhabitants along class lines and rejected native notions of property, land use, and gender power.

Whether explicitly or implicitly, all of the authors in this collection are commenting on the influence that Richard White's *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650–1815*, has had on early American frontier studies since its publication in 1991. As Cayton and Teute note, that work provided a new metaphor for describing the European-Indian encounter that has proven remarkably appealing to historians. The essays in this volume more often than not emphasize the erosion of that middle ground after 1750, as Anglo-American notions of race caused the cultural gap between Europeans and Indians to grow rather than decrease. Dowd puts it succinctly in describing the fate of the British-Cherokee alliance: "increasing familiarity bred less love than disaffection," resulting in "a misalliance between partners who came to know each other too well" (p. 116). The result is a much darker assessment of the early American frontier than Frederick Jackson Turner would have liked, in which the intercultural exchange and flexibility of the colonial era gave way to racist attitudes that would poison European-Indian relations in the nineteenth century.

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TIMOTHY J. SHANNON

*Letters of Delegates to Congress: 1774–1789. Volume 25: March 1, 1788–July 25, 1789. With Supplement, 1774–1787.* Edited by PAUL H. SMITH and RONALD M. GEPHART. (Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, 1998. xxx, 843p. Illustrations, appendix, index. \$56.00.)

Twenty-eight years of work begun under the advisement of the “Library of Congress American Revolution Bicentennial Program,” consisting of John R. Alden, Julian P. Boyd, Lyman H. Butterfield, Merrill Jensen, Cecilia M. Kenyon, and Richard B. Morris, has reached fruition with the publication of the twenty-fifth volume of *Letters of Delegates to Congress*. Editors Paul H. Smith and Ronald M. Gephart have concluded the series with advice from program consultants Jack P. Greene, Aubrey C. Land, Edmund S. Morgan, and George C. Rogers Jr. This volume traces the last days of the Confederation Congress, March to October, 1788, and follows the transition of power in 1789 from the Articles of Confederation to the U.S. Constitution, from the loose Confederacy to the national Republic, from delegates to representatives and senators, and last, of course, from Secretary of Congress Charles Thomson to the first president of the United States, George Washington. Moreover, this volume is especially important because of its 233-page supplement which adds recently collected materials to fill the gaps from earlier volumes covering the years 1774–87.

The current volume, like its predecessors, contains the chronologically arranged congressional correspondence to and from delegates collected from a wide variety of manuscript collections. This much is expected. What is not expected is the editors’ extraordinary attention to detail in their copious footnotes. One example will suffice. In an April 19, 1788, letter to Delegate John Sullivan, Delegate Nicholas Gilman reported that New York City had recently experienced a riot that had disturbed the city for two days, during which the famous Baron Friedrich Steuben and Governor John Jay suffered wounds. “Mr. Jay was very badly wounded in the forehead but will probably recover—the Poor old Baron has got two black Eyes without the least consolation, as he execrates his own conduct for being in the action.” Jay, Steuben, and the New York Militia were attempting to disarm a vigilante mob. The mob was breaking into a city jail to dispense some rough justice to a group of “young Surgeons” who “had made a practice for several months past of digging up the dead for the purpose of anatomical dissection” (pp. 60–61). Three of the rioters were less fortunate than the governor, and fell dead when the militia fired into the crowd. The editors explain the “Surgeon’s Riot” or the “Doctor’s Mob” not only with a reference to an appropriate article on the subject, but by reprinting an eye-witness letter by William Heth to Edmund Randolph (*Calendar of Virginia State Papers*) in its entirety, some 850 words, all in a note. Good editing entails steering scholars toward the closer inspection of subjects about which they may have had no prior knowledge.

In addition to the correspondence from March 1788 to July 1789, and the supplement covering 1774–87, this volume contains an appendix listing monthly attendance of each state's delegation from January to August 1788; a four-page chronology of Congress for March 1788–July 1789; a list of delegates to Congress from each state for the same period; and a number of illustrations, including the portraits of several delegates: Benjamin Contee, Cyrus Griffin, Abraham Baldwin, Thomas Tudor Tucker, John Brown, John Armstrong Jr., Jeremiah Wadsworth, Theodore Sedgwick, Jonathan Dayton, Peleg Arnold, and Samuel A. Otis. Finally, the volume contains a thorough index of more than sixty pages. *Letters of Delegates to Congress* is a fine example of how to edit a collection of correspondence, and of course, is a must for any research library.

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PAUL DOUGLAS NEWMAN

*A Signal Victory: The Lake Erie Campaign, 1812–1813.* By David Curtis Skaggs and Gerard T. Altoff. (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1997. x, 244p. Illustrations, maps, glossary, bibliographic essay, notes, index. \$34.95.)

David Skaggs, professor of history at Bowling Green State University, and Gerard Altoff, chief park ranger at Perry's Victory and International Peace Memorial, contend that the purpose of this collaborative effort was foremost to provide an updated scholarly examination of the battle. The authors sought also to "reassess the Lake Erie campaign in its strategic and tactical dimensions using a greater variety of sources and a less nationalistic viewpoint than previously presented" (p. ix). Lastly, they strove to "incorporate the experiences of individuals from all sides and various levels of society who contributed to the outcome" (p. ix). Skaggs and Altoff lead the reader from the strategic origins of the famous engagement off Put-in-Bay to the after-action conflict of the Perry-Elliott Controversy with a combination of well-written prose and penetrating analysis.

The authors begin this work by describing the strategic situation before the battle. Comparing Canada's strategic arena "to a gigantic tree—its roots were the North Atlantic, its trunk the St. Lawrence River, and its branches the rivers and lakes that drained into that waterway" (p. 8), Skaggs and Altoff criticize the Americans for attempting to chop off some of the branches instead of annihilating the trunk. After both belligerents decided upon a direct confrontation on the lake, all activity centered on constructing combat vessels for the peculiar specializations required for lake duty. During the discussion of fleet building, the authors believe "Perry's greatest achievement may not have been his tactical victory on September 10, but the construction victory achieved during mid-summer 1813" (p. 73).

With both fleets built and manned, the British and Americans outfitted their vessels and began practicing fleet tactical maneuvers. Drilling not only created an esprit de corps amongst the American and British crews, but, according to Skaggs and Altoff, led to the "emotional effect . . . of working together in rhythm to create obedient, reliable, and effective sailors and marines" (p. 105). Manned and drilled, the opposing forces sailed into battle on September 10, 1813. After graphically describing the preliminaries to combat—such as the strewing of sand about the deck to soak up blood—and the grisly nature of a naval engagement fought at close quarters with nowhere to hide, the authors present, as best possible from the sources, a detailed account of the battle. The focus then shifts to the immediate and also lasting effects of the action on Lake Erie.

This monograph provides new insight into the events surrounding the famous naval battle on Lake Erie during America's second conflict with Great Britain. While this is a superb work, two problems exist. First, the authors assure the reader in their preface that both the American and British perspectives will be presented. Although this is attempted, the text falls short of providing a balanced account, with the bulk of the information focusing on the American perspective. The subsequent fault resides in their research. Despite near-exhaustive research, the authors do not include several vital microfilm collections from Record Group 45 at the National Archives. Regardless of these discrepancies, *A Signal Victory* will become the standard work on the Lake Erie campaign for the future.

*Lubbock Christian University*

R. BLAKE DUNNAVENT

*The Burning of Washington: The British Invasion of 1814.* By ANTHONY S. PITCH. (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1998. xv, 301 pp. Illustrations, notes, selected bibliography, index. \$32.95.)

The Chesapeake Campaign of 1814 reflects the entire War of 1812. It opened with the ignominious brushing aside of American defenders and the burning of the nation's capital, but closed with the heroic repulse of the British attack on Baltimore that occasioned the composition of the "Star Spangled Banner." Pitch devotes two-thirds of the book to the march on Washington and the occupation of the city. Chapters on the war in 1812 and 1813, the battle at North Point, bombardment of Fort McHenry and writing of the national anthem, and an epilogue on the Battle of New Orleans complete the work.

Pitch has mined congressional and British military records, contemporary newspapers, diaries, and correspondence to extract anecdotes that give the reader a sense of the experiences of individual participants. Pitch has also walked the ground he describes and visited sections of the Capitol and White House usually closed to

the public. His ability to communicate to the reader what he has observed make this fascinating reading. Better than any previous author Pitch conveys a sense of the chaos that engulfed Washington: the mad rush to evacuate the city once its capture became inevitable, the frantic search by clerks for wagons to move records and equipment, the reluctance of the commandant of the Washington Navy Yard to burn supplies and a nearly completed ship, and the cowering by residents unable to flee before the British marched into the city. The destruction of the Capitol building is described in ghastly detail, but perhaps saddest are Pitch's accounts of "local residents running gleefully wild in an orgy of theft" at the Navy Yard, President's House, and Capitol (p. 134).

In the limited coverage allocated to the September 1814 campaign for Baltimore, both the British attackers and American defenders appear far more noble than had either group during operations in and around Washington the previous month. Pitch's approach is influenced by his background as a journalist and a Washington tour guide. Narrative and descriptive rather than analytical, *The Burning of Washington* contains virtually nothing on the strategic setting or the consequences of the Chesapeake campaign. Historians will look in vain for references to recent works by Donald Hickey and J. C. A. Stagg upon which Pitch could have drawn for such context. Perhaps a desire to render his story even more readable led to anachronisms such as calling the bombs lofted at Fort McHenry "shells" and references to "top-secret" orders, and to such dramatic, but inaccurate statements as, "Oliver Hazard Perry . . . penciled a message on the back of an envelope" (pp. 17-18). Though annoying to specialists, such solecisms are not likely to bother Pitch's intended audience and only detract marginally from his work.

Pitch has accomplished much. He has produced a graphic account of one of the most important campaigns in what contemporary Americans considered a second war for independence from Great Britain. Operations around Baltimore have received more comprehensive treatment in Joseph A. Whithorne's *Battle for Baltimore, 1814* (1997), but Pitch's account of the fall of Washington, the surrender of Alexandria, and the panic and chaos that permeated both cities is far more complete than in any previous work. *The Burning of Washington* will clearly replace Walter Lord's *Dawn's Early Light* (1972) as the standard popular history of the entire campaign.

Texas A&M University

JAMES C. BRADFORD

*Cause for Alarm: The Volunteer Fire Department in the Nineteenth-Century City.* By AMY S. GREENBERG. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998. x, 233p. Illustrations, appendix, notes, bibliography, index. \$35.00.)



Early on in *Cause for Alarm*, Amy S. Greenberg promises the reader a history of the antebellum fire department "from the inside out" (p. 8). This opening statement challenges recent students of nineteenth-century firefighting for employing inappropriate categories in their analyses. Taking issue with important recent work done by labor historians, Greenberg flatly rejects the idea that the volunteer fire company was an early site of class formation; instead, she argues that the culture of firemen must be examined as an intensely masculine realm. Greenberg not only writes a convincing new history of antebellum fire companies but further emphasizes the gendered foundations of public life in the American city.

*Cause for Alarm* is so successful that any urban historian aspiring to work "from the inside out" must confront issues of gender. Greenberg takes on a generation of antebellum urban history writing when she declares that "gender, and not class, is the key" to understanding volunteer firefighting. Chapter 2—"Manly Boys and Chaste Fire Engines"—is a masterful exploration of the fire department and its gendered ideology and iconography. Greenberg brings a cultural historian's perspective to bear on Currier and Ives's illustrations and firemen's fictional narratives. *Cause for Alarm* is built throughout on a wide range of evidence; Greenberg masterfully weaves together the demographic and the cultural, the political and the aesthetic.

Greenberg seeks to get at national patterns of urbanization by looking at three very different antebellum cities: Baltimore, Saint Louis, and San Francisco. Greenberg builds on Mary P. Ryan's recent multicentric histories and helps us better understand the experiences of mid-nineteenth-century urban life. Yet, one wonders at her selection of these particular cities beyond the fact that they are not New York and Philadelphia. Greenberg's chosen subjects would all seem to share a nineteenth-century experience of ongoing racial struggle, yet we are left with an analysis that posits gender and class as the only two possible lenses for viewing antebellum firefighting. Race surely had something to do with the rise and fall of volunteer fire companies in mid-century Baltimore, Saint Louis, and San Francisco.

While Greenberg successfully explains the decline of the volunteer tradition in the majority of her chapters, her account is considerably weaker early on when she explores the tradition's peak in the 1830s and 1840s. *Cause for Alarm* falls back on a rather overpowering form of republican ideology to explain the popular appeal of volunteer firefighting in the early antebellum years. Greenberg's later precise readings of the complexities of 1850s political culture are more convincing than her initial discussion of the mythic, agonal culture of previous decades. *Cause for Alarm* advances a number of important arguments in 165 pages, with each chapter narrating an important aspect of the history of antebellum fire departments. In her attempt to unify the various cultural, social, and political strands of her narrative, however, Greenberg tends to repeat her larger argument in each chapter. This

repetition eventually works to distract the reader from Greenberg's usually striking prose.

As a whole, however, Greenberg's work, especially her analysis of the fall of volunteer firefighting, demands that historians of the American city in the nineteenth century pay more serious attention to the role played by gender in ordering public life. This history is largely about the struggle over various forms of citizenship in the antebellum city; all those involved in the struggle employed gendered languages and ideologies. Firemen—whether middle-class or manual workers—claimed their place in public life primarily as men. This cultural history of firefighting matters because it recognizes that to get at the “inside” of antebellum urban life, one must begin with the public history of gender.

*Boston College*

DAVID QUIGLEY

*The Children's Civil War.* By JAMES MARTEN. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998. xi, 353p. Illustrations, bibliography, index. \$34.95.)

I turned seven a few weeks before Pearl Harbor. I vividly remember the anger my uncle displayed in response to that event, perhaps my initial awareness that a war was on. I also recall not quite comprehending the pique displayed by some older children in our small country school toward a boy who had chalked swastikas on his rubber boots. My brothers, cousins, and I threw ourselves into the war with ardor when it came to collecting tin foil, fat, and newspapers, buying stamps toward the purchase of war bonds, spotting and identifying aircraft, and—at least in my case—fantasizing heroic deeds, most notable of which was assassinating Hitler. I felt guilty that I could not serve, a viewpoint I tried to convey after the war to a cousin who had flown in the South Pacific; he was baffled. I, too, was bewildered when a distraught friend of my parents read me the letter she had received from a sergeant who witnessed the death of his lieutenant, her husband.

Whether my wartime experience made me an angrier person, more guilt-ridden or inclined to violence, I simply cannot say. James Marten suggests that we might tap into the Civil War by reviving memories of World War II; both conflicts challenged children in similar—if not precisely the same—ways. He believes that children all over the United States and the Confederate States dreamt of getting into the action. A few of them were able to become observers of battles, but most were confined to mimicking the responses of their elders, most often through play.

And this, of course, points to the problem of writing about children; we are almost entirely dependent upon the word of adults, if any evidence survives. As Marten points out, the absence and loss of fathers, the dangers brought by invading armies, the economic pressures, the stress placed on worried, busy mothers, and the

fear for their own lives or the lives of loved ones all no doubt took a heavy psychological toll on children. Unfortunately for historians, few Civil War-era children or parents recorded these kinds of reactions, although hints of psychological casualties appear in some contemporary sources. Hints is the defining word here; Marten discovers almost nothing of substance. Perhaps that rare historian with sophisticated psychological skills would be more successful.

Consequently, the questions that most interest us are not answered, and our experience from World War II proves of little or no aid. Children's literature, including schoolbooks, reflected the war, as did toys and panoramas, not to mention letters written home by lonely, loving, and sometimes instructive fathers. All of these adult creations are thoroughly explored and well described by Marten, one-third of whose book is footnotes and bibliography. He also considers autobiographies and memoirs, but adults of the postwar era shed little light on their wartime childhoods. No doubt children were politicized by the war, as Marten claims with some evidence, and surely mothers were distracted, thus depriving northern and southern children of their attention and guidance and good cheer. One of the saddest aspects of childhood, and one which Marten must be commended for noticing, is the harsh treatment of African American children, not only by resentful slaveowners but also by insensitive soldiers from both sides.

Judged as an anecdotal account, *The Childrens Civil War* offers interesting and occasionally provocative stories. The absence of a psychological methodology, not to mention a description of childhood before and after the war, bars it from being an analysis of its subject.

*San Francisco State University*

JOSEPH E. ILLICK

*Writing the Civil War: The Quest to Understand.* Edited by JAMES M. MCPHERSON and WILLIAM J. COOPER JR. (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1998. 356p. Notes, contributors, index. \$29.95.)

This book consists of thirteen essays, including the editors' introduction. The contributions are somewhat uneven, but all are competently done and show wide acquaintance with the appropriate literature. It is difficult to give an adequate review of this sort of work, and one has to be content with a rough sketch of the contents.

The editors point out that historians have gone beyond the traditional military history of the Civil War to study other important topics, including the relation of the fighting men to civilians, roles played by slaves and women, and functioning of the governments. Nevertheless, editors and essayists agree that important gaps in the literature remain. For example, Gary W. Gallagher addresses the evolution of northern strategy to "hard war." He finds insufficient study of the Joint Committee

on the Conduct of the War, the effect of the Emancipation Proclamation on Union soldiers, the enlistment of black soldiers into the Union army, and the role of the Union navy. Looking at Confederate strategy, Emory Thomas points to the many answers given for Confederate defeat, including state rights, internal dissent, and financial policy and notes the increasingly positive assessments of Jefferson Davis's leadership. Joseph T. Glatthaar assesses battlefield tactics and the influence of technology such as the rifled musket, and maintains that scholarship on tactics "has barely scratched the surface" (p. 77). The individual soldier is the subject of Reid Mitchell's essay, which traces the literature from Bell Wiley's *Life of Johnny Reb* (1943) through recent, quite notable publications by Larry Daniel and Mark Grimsley, among others. Mitchell looks for more work on the psychological impact of war on the men who fight it.

Mark Neely compares the leadership of Lincoln and Davis. He finds the Lincoln literature adequate, but that on Davis insufficient, and credits Frank Vandiver and Emory Thomas with beginning the re-evaluation of Davis as a modernizer. Michael F. Holt aims at the lack of an integrated synthesis of northern politics, which he attributes to the fact that some of the best writers since 1965 have not made an adequate connection to the Civil War. He sees promising results in recent studies of the Democratic Party, which indicate less support for the war than some Democratic apologists have claimed. There has been much less study of Confederate politics, as George Rable notes, but much of what we have revolves around the "elusive quality of Confederate nationalism" (p. 137) and the effectiveness of Jefferson Davis's leadership.

Michael Les Benedict reminds us that the war was not simply a crisis caused by antagonistic interpretations of the Constitution. He traces the constitutional argument from Dunning and Burgess through Randall's *Constitutional Problems under Lincoln*, which he believes is still the best discussion of specific constitutional issues. He is certainly correct in asking that more attention be directed at such questions in the Confederacy. Benedict also discusses the influence the 1960s civil rights revolution had upon historical writing.

Philip Shaw Paludan in "The Social and Economic History of the North" reminds us that much more is known about the social history of the South than of the North. As to economic history, "the controlling paradigm" (p. 175) has been the Beardian thesis of the Second American Revolution, which was challenged by mid-century historians who detected something more than a plot of industrialists to take over an agricultural nation. He points to an important gap in social history: the failure to study the demographic effect of the loss of 620,000 lives. James L. Roark evaluates "Confederate Economy and Society," noting historians such as Emory Thomas who point to the amazing level of wartime industrialization. Thomas and others remind us of the paradox of an agricultural society suffering a crisis of subsistence. Although the southern population divided along class lines, according

to the work of Paul Escott and William Blair, it also divided along lines of loyalty, as Carl Degler, Daniel Crofts, and Richard Current discuss widespread residual Unionism. Roark notes that we are still faced with the question of whether home-front deterioration undermined military morale, or vice versa. "We are uncomfortable with the dichotomy," he concludes, "for we know that the answer is both" (p. 226).

Although other essays touch on "Women and Gender," Drew Gilpin Faust makes it the center of her discussion. Accounts praising women's work were published before the Civil War was over, although they were "reactionary" accounts emphasizing women's "nurturing role" (p. 229). Later accounts "shifted their focus from what women did for the war to what the war did for women" (p. 230), but many of these involved only upper-class white women. Recently, however, more attention has been paid to the experience of black women, and she notes the interesting work by Reid Mitchell on the meaning of manhood in a wartime society.

Peter Kolchin turns to the postwar experience of African Americans. Ignored in the first half of the twentieth century, most historians today see their fate as "at the heart of the struggle between North and South" (p. 242). One of the key issues currently is the degree to which slaves waited passively to be liberated or actively achieved their own liberation, the latter point first made by Benjamin Quarles and Dudley Taylor Cornish and later by the editors of *Freedom: A Documentary History of Emancipation*. Kolchin sees a great deal of presentism influencing modern historians, and looks forward to more comparative analysis and more studies of families and gender in the postwar period.

My apologies to the writers. It is quite impossible to do justice to these essays without taking more space than a reasonable editor could permit. The surprise is not that they have omitted some excellent works, but that so many have been included, in comprehensive notes if not in text. One problem lies in the fact that many works are cited in several essays. This book needed a consolidated list of publications cited, not just extensive footnotes for each essay. All told, however, this is an important work. Civil War era scholars will refer to it for years to come.

*University of North Dakota*

RICHARD E. BERINGER

*General George E. Pickett in Life and Legend.* By LESLEY J. GORDON. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998. x, 269p. Illustrations, maps, notes, bibliography, index. \$29.95.)

Even today, according to Lesley J. Gordon, the name "George Pickett" evokes an image skillfully crafted by his widow, LaSalle Pickett—namely the image of Pickett as the "epitome of the mythic Southern soldier" (p. 2)—rather than a clear

memory of the Confederate general's mixed contributions to the Lost Cause. In *General George E. Pickett in Life and Legend*, Gordon seeks to replace LaSalle's idealized version of her famous husband with a more historically sound figure: a deeply flawed individual who merits neither uncritical praise for his supposedly remarkable heroism nor knee-jerk denunciation for his defects. Gordon does a good job of introducing her audience to Pickett the man.

Born into the Virginia elite in 1825, George Pickett was a troublesome, unruly youth whose concerned parents sent him away from Richmond as an adolescent to live in Quincy, Illinois, with his uncle Andrew, whom they hoped would infuse him "with purpose and direction and a better work ethic" (p. 8). Only with his 1842 "conditional appointment" to the United States Military Academy at West Point, however, did the undisciplined Pickett begin to settle down. The army, writes Gordon, provided Pickett with "a sense of belonging and place" (p. 15) that had evaded him—for reasons she does not fully explain—in every other context. Still, Pickett's academic record during his years at the academy was impressive only in its weakness. George Pickett, Gordon reminds us, graduated last in his class of fifty-nine students (p. 15).

From his West Point graduation Pickett headed almost directly to Mexico, joining the 8th U.S. Infantry and a number of his classmates, many of whom would later reappear, of course, as Union or Confederate officers during the Civil War, but who were, for the time being, comrades in arms. In Mexico Pickett participated in some important U.S. Army victories and earned the respect and recognition of some of his superiors. He also learned from experience, writes Gordon, "that charging forward with a spirited and determined force could eventually overtake any enemy" (p. 29). Pickett took this somewhat misguided lesson with him into the Civil War a decade and half later, after doing frontier duty in Texas and in the Washington Territory. Several weeks after Virginia seceded from the Union, Pickett resigned his commission from the U.S. Army. On September 23, 1861, now a Confederate captain of infantry, Pickett received his first orders.

Pickett's early military service record showed a mix of promise and deficiency. The Confederate army, writes Gordon, "offered Pickett a fresh start to prove himself" (p. 68). During the first eighteen months of the war, however, although Pickett on occasion demonstrated to some of his superiors (including his good friend James Longstreet) that he was an "aggressive and zealous" officer (p. 86), there were others (including Robert E. Lee) who had doubts about his courage, his competence, and his discipline. Still, on November 6, 1862, Pickett became a major general in Lee's Army of Northern Virginia and took command of a division of "15,000 battle-worn veterans" (p. 93). It was this division that he proudly launched across the field at Gettysburg on July 3, 1863, and this division whose destruction Pickett witnessed, perhaps from the safety of a nearby barn. Still, according to Gordon the failure of Pickett's charge was not so much a personal failure by the commander but rather the result of "failed coordination between units, lack of

specific instructions to others, exposed flanks, Lee's overconfidence, and Longstreet's hesitancy" (p. 115). Gordon does not exonerate Pickett; she contextualizes him in a network of simultaneous Confederate miscalculations.

Pickett's military service did not come to an end in Pennsylvania. He served virtually to the end of the war, long enough to make the questionable decision to hang for desertion twenty-two North Carolina soldiers who had traded in their Confederate gray for Union blue, and long enough also to bungle at least one more significant opportunity to demonstrate his military skill and valor in battle, at Five Forks in April 1865. After Gettysburg, however, Pickett increasingly diverted his attention to the young LaSalle Corbell, whom he married that September. Even before Gettysburg, writes Gordon, Pickett's "all-consuming love affair" had caused him to begin "losing his stomach for war" (p. 100), though he was unable to imagine himself as anything other than a soldier. When Lee dismissed Pickett from command after Five Forks, he and LaSalle descended into a decade of personal suffering and financial strain. George Pickett died in 1875.

Pickett's widow lived on, however, soon devoting her energy to the task of transforming her husband into a sectional, even a national icon. I must confess to finding this closing chapter of Gordon's book somewhat disappointing. Pickett the man had earned little respect from me by this point, but the idea that his widow could reconstruct this ever-so-mere mortal into an icon lured me forward. Gordon clearly lays out the process by which LaSalle attempted to effect the general's resurrection: through her copious writings, lectures, and theatrical performances on the subject, and her doctoring (and sometimes wholesale invention) of his personal papers. What is less well explained is just why—or even *whether*—so many Gilded Age Americans so readily substituted LaSalle's mythical creation for the historical George Pickett they thought they remembered.

Colby College

ELIZABETH D. LEONARD

*Bazaars and Fair Ladies: The History of the American Fundraising Fair.* By BEVERLY GORDON. (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1988. xxvii, 285p. Illustrations, tables, notes, selected bibliography, index. \$45.00.

Anyone who has wandered through the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries by way of diaries, newspapers, or reminiscences has probably come across a fund-raising fair—a small antebellum "ladies fair," an elaborate Civil War-era Sanitary Fair, or a grand, turn-of-the-century bazaar. In our contemporary lives, most of us have happened upon summertime church fairs, art festivals, or holiday craft sales. Beverly Gordon's book, *Bazaars and Fair Ladies: The History of the American Fundraising Fair* explains the significance of these phenomena in American history,

how they have changed, and women's central role in their development. Gordon wants us to understand the fund-raising fair as both an "institution" that has developed over time, and as an "experience" people encounter and make sense of from different perspectives. On the first count she succeeds extremely well, and on the second count she is partially successful, leaving us with a tantalizing but incomplete picture of what fairs meant to nineteenth- and early twentieth-century participants.

Gordon does an excellent job of tracing the rise of the fund-raising fair from the 1820s through the present, illuminating the institution's complexity and importance. She points out the many tensions inherent in fairs—between domesticity and commercialism, good works and frivolity, respectability and sexuality—and offers insightful analyses of their origins and significance. Gordon also demonstrates that many trends in American design and cultural history started with women's fund-raising fairs, a point other historians have overlooked.

This book also allows us to imagine what it would be like to experience one of these fairs. Gordon provides glorious descriptions and her book is invaluable for the way it allows us to "see" the intricate design features of the booths, hear the waterfalls splashing over colored lights, and smell the pine boughs decorating the ceilings.

But while we fantasize about walking down those gaudy aisles, it is harder to understand exactly what nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century women—who are very much at the center of her story—felt as they visited or worked on these fairs. Most of Gordon's information about the fairs, especially those before World War II, come from printed descriptions, newspaper reports, and organizational histories. We hear comments from male observers, but what is missing are the "voices" of the women who did most of the work. Private diaries and letters could illuminate this perspective. For recent fairs, Gordon uses oral interviews that provide helpful insights into why women today participate, but for the earlier period we are left mostly with the author's speculations.

Gordon's arguments about women's role also could be better contextualized. For instance, she argues that Civil War-era fairs tended to be more professional and commercial, and attributes this to the "stronger male presence" in their organization. Both Lori Ginzburg's *Women and the Work of Benevolence* and Jeannie Attie's article "Warwork and the Crisis of Domesticity" could suggest more nuanced interpretations of this push toward efficiency and professionalization by relating it to the history of women's reform work and their relationship to the United States Sanitary Commission and the federal government.

Moreover, the strength of Gordon's analysis is undercut by a puzzling decision to reserve many of her interpretive points for the final section, called "Conclusions." Within the main body of the text Gordon describes without comment fair booths or sale items that manifest deeply racist attitudes—for instance, the recreation of



Mount Vernon's veranda for a "Colonial House" at Milwaukee's 1896 Bazar [*sic*] of All Nations that included "pickanninies" who "tumbled about in play" on the lawn. A photograph on the same page shows women dressed as dolls for an 1893 church fair, and includes two in black face. While Gordon notes at the end of the book that fairs "furthered prevailing class and race structures and stereotypes," these examples seem to demand more interpretation.

Well written and beautifully illustrated, Gordon's book provides an excellent introduction to an overlooked topic, and the gaps in her analyses will simply provide excellent opportunities for further research.

*Carleton College*

RACHEL FILENE SEIDMAN

*The Philadelphia Ten: A Women's Artist Group, 1917–1945.* Exhibition catalogue. By PAGE TALBOTT and PATRICIA TANIS SYDNEY. (Philadelphia and Kansas City, Mo.: Moore College of Art and Design and American Art Review Press, 1998. 175p. Biographies, illustrations, sources, exhibition history, index. Cloth, \$50.00; paper, \$35.00).

"Sweet Grapes," a graceful bronze maiden wearing only a cluster of grapes, represented early twentieth-century garden art in one corner of the centerpiece garden at the 1999 Philadelphia Flower Show. Philadelphia native Harriet Whitney Frishmuth (1880–1980), creator of "Grapes," was one of the best-known members of the group known as "The Philadelphia Ten," the subject of this volume. Frishmuth's art training was not typical of the rest of the group, because she studied primarily in Europe, while most other members were graduates of the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts or the Philadelphia School of Design for Women. But Frishmuth shared her fellow members' commitment to exhibiting and selling her work, in the face of a male-dominated art establishment that presented formidable barriers to professional women artists. As the authors note, the Philadelphia Ten challenged conventional expectations for women, but faced critical reviewers who never let them forget that their work would be judged as women's work and examined for traces of "feminine" styles or subjects. In response to such attitudes, one of the major painters in the group, Theresa Bernstein (b. 1890), began her career signing works with only her family name, in order to be judged without gender bias.

The Ten were noted for the variety of styles and subjects in their shows, which typically featured impressionist or mildly modernist landscapes—Bucks County hillsides, New England seacoasts, Irish valleys, and other exotic locales from Taos to Venice—along with portraits and still lifes, and after 1926, bronze or marble statuary. Unlike the sculptors, the painters never included nudes in the exhibitions,

preferring landscapes and portraits that would suit the middle-class homes of their primary clientele. Coming out of the conservative artistic traditions at the School of Design (predecessor of Moore College of Art and Design) and the Pennsylvania Academy, most members of the Philadelphia Ten resisted European modernist trends until after 1930, when some abstract work began to appear in their annual shows. This caution may well have enhanced their popularity with the mainstream, moderately affluent collectors they perceived as their market.

A visual delight, with no less than ninety-three color plates, this volume is more than a simple catalogue. The detailed and well-documented biographies, including material on the women's teachers, schools, and professional networks, make it a useful reference tool as well. Talbott and Sydney have retrieved from obscurity the art works and life experiences of twenty-three painters and seven sculptors who participated in some or all of the sixty-five exhibitions of the Philadelphia Ten between 1917 and 1945. Although not all of the group lived in Philadelphia, the majority of regular exhibitors were trained there, and their major annual show always appeared in a Philadelphia venue. The number of exhibitors in any one exhibit was usually limited to ten. Precedents for the numerical designation comes from the Ten American painters, male impressionists from New York and Boston, and the Eight, later termed the Ashcan School, of New York. Less flamboyant than the male groups, these women were motivated by the "practical purpose" of gaining new venues for their work, to "enhance their visibility locally and nationally." Traveling exhibits around the country, "vigorous self-promotion, aggressive marketing, and creative outreach" helped to expand their circle of patrons beyond Philadelphia and New York, as far west as Texas, and south to Mississippi. The all-female membership followed in the footsteps of earlier women's professional art groups like the Union des Femmes Peintres et Sculpteurs, founded in Paris in 1881, and the National Association of Women Painters and Sculptors, founded in New York in 1889.

Familiar names in the Philadelphia art world of the 1920s and 1930s, members of the Ten were largely forgotten from 1945 until 1990 when the Michener Museum in Doylestown asked Patricia Sydney to write a catalogue essay on the Ten for an exhibit of Bucks County landscapes from the work of Fern I. Coppedge (1883–1951), today the best-known painter in the group. The only woman associated with the Pennsylvania Impressionists, Coppedge grew up in the Midwest, then attended the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts after moving to Philadelphia in 1917. She joined the New Hope artists' colony in 1920 and soon became known for her rugged outdoor scenes of Bucks County.

The Philadelphia Ten exhibition, which traveled to five museums around the country, was created at Moore College to help celebrate its 150th anniversary as the oldest women's art school in America. Lavishly illustrated with numerous black and

white photographs as well as the color plates, this catalogue is the definitive pictorial record of its subject.

*Ridley Park, Pennsylvania*

NINA DE ANGELI WALLS

"Colonial Williamsburg: Planning and Public History." A thematic issue of the *Public Historian*. Edited by SHELLY BOOKSPAN. (Berkeley: University of California Press for the National Council on Public History and the University of California, Santa Barbara, vol. 20, no. 3, 1998. Single copies for individuals, \$13.00; institutions, \$22.00.)

*The Public Historian: A Journal of Public History* devoted an entire issue in 1998 to Colonial Williamsburg's interpretive program. Shelly Bookspan explains in her editor's introduction that this attention to a single institution is justified because the analysis of Colonial Williamsburg's program addresses the question, "Does public history matter?" Bookspan also stresses that Colonial Williamsburg's story brings together the most critical issues facing public history in the late 1990s, namely, (1) education—the historical stories and the interpreters and administrators who tell them, (2) engagement—the intellectual exercises and sensory experiences by which visitors learn, (3) entertainment—the delivery mechanism necessary to reach diverse learners, and (4) earnings—the need to pay for the administration and implementation of labor-intensive interpretation at public history institutions.

Instead of analyzing Colonial Williamsburg's interpretive program as it now exists in light of contemporary historical scholarship, learning theory, or cultural criticism, the *Public Historian* presents four articles on the process of developing interpretive themes and strategies. "Colonial Williamsburg and the Practice of Interpretive Planning in American History Museums" is an extensive article (pp. 11–52) by Cary Carson, Colonial Williamsburg's Harvard-trained vice president for research, and the architect of Colonial Williamsburg's transformation from cheerleader of American patriotism in the Cold War (see Jack Lord in *Story of a Patriot*) to the 1990s advocate for political complexity and ambiguity in teaching folks what it meant in late-eighteenth-century Virginia to "Become an American" and "Choose Revolution."

Carson's essay is background for the other three journal articles. He addresses three themes: (1) how strategic planning became part of Colonial Williamsburg's institutional culture in the 1970s, and how that planning led to the present interpretive program, (2) the relationship of this planning process to broader American social issues and trends in the history museum field, which have changed historical museums from collections-driven to education-driven institutions, and (3) discussion of "best practices" at Colonial Williamsburg and elsewhere that are vital

to any serious history museum's effort "to practice history in the public interest" (p. 13).

Carson opens with John D. Rockefeller and the guiding principles of the Colonial Williamsburg's restoration (relevance, relativism, visual impact, entertainment), but focuses on his own era for which the landmark document was the 1977 report "Teaching History at Colonial Williamsburg: A Plan of Education." This report, building on new social history research, developed three themes at Colonial Williamsburg (p. 36): (1) choosing revolution, (2) becoming Americans, and (3) new consumers. Carson admits that the report's impact on daily interpretation at Colonial Williamsburg was underwhelming. The "delivery system" was not up to the task, and the interpretive staff were resistant to change. The whole institutional culture at Colonial Williamsburg needed a revolution. The introduction of a new theatrical delivery system got its first real endorsement in the late 1970s in order to get the revised message to Colonial Williamsburg's interpreters and visitors. As Carson observes, "Sirloin steak put in at one end of the system came out the same-old hamburger at the other." Or more accurately, "nothing came out" since Colonial Williamsburg's staff ignored the whole initiative.

Now in 1998, after several abortive attempts, and with some dramatic breakthroughs in African American interpretation (notably the popular Carter's Grove Plantation program, and the controversial slave auctions), Carson contends that with internal reorganization and refinements of theme, Colonial Williamsburg—"big but not dumb"—has engineered the type of outdoor classroom it needs (new thematic neighborhoods), developed the delivery system (the dramatic art of storytelling by first person interpreters), and refined its three themes to one simpler message—"Becoming Americans."

For readers of the *Public Historian*, the question is, will Colonial Williamsburg's audience of one million visitors buy the product, come to visit, respond to the delivery system, and ultimately get the message? In short, we are back to the original question—Does public history matter? Another question may be asked here. Are we in the history museum field taking ourselves (and our agendas) too seriously? More importantly, are we underestimating our audiences, whose intellectual and experimental needs may not be met by having life compressed into a one-act play?

The second article in the *Public Historian* is an outside review of the thematic refinement of the Colonial Williamsburg program entitled "Becoming Americans Again: Re-envisioning and Revising Thematic Interpretation at Colonial Williamsburg" (pp. 53–76). Marie Tyler-McGraw, a National Park Service historian, edited a series of conversations with Colonial Williamsburg's staff in January 1997. She interviewed five staff members, including Cary Carson, who were participants at different levels in the revision and implementation of the "Becoming Americans" curriculum. These committed participants are enthusiastic about the ideas driving

the revised interpretive program, as well as the stories of people and dramatic methods being used as the delivery system. Their commitment illustrates a basic fact of public history. If you want results, you have to involve all levels of staff in planning. As tradesman "Doc" Hassell observes, "I still think that too much time is spent talking amongst people who are developing the interpretive plan and too little time given to the (frontline) interpreters to discuss these same ideas."

The third article, "Colonial Williamsburg's Choosing Revolution Story Line" is by Edward Ayers, a former Colonial Williamsburg interpreter who is now a historian at the Yorktown Victory Center. Ayer's essay finally provides the content of the "Becoming Americans" program, and links the story line to Colonial Williamsburg's buildings and character interpreters. This article (pp. 77-92) is largely and appropriately descriptive and essential for those who might try to read the *Public Historian* articles in order and wonder what "Becoming Americans" really means in the Colonial Williamsburg context. There may be some virtue in actually starting with the Ayers piece if you are planning to read the whole issue of *The Public Historian* and have not visited Colonial Williamsburg lately. The story line is essentially how two immigrant cultures—one European, one African—interacted over time to become decidedly but not identically American by the mid-eighteenth century, and the series of decisions these groups went through in the process of "Choosing Revolution" in the 1770s.

The *Public Historian* series on Colonial Williamsburg closes with a brief essay by Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, Philips Professor of Early American History at Harvard. She reviews the Colonial Williamsburg curriculum report "Becoming Americans: Our Struggle to be Both Free and Equal, a Plan of Thematic Interpretation," edited by Cary Carson and published in 1998 by the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation. Ulrich finds this essential internal document unusually "engaging" (p. 93) for a work written by a staff committee and an inspiring demonstration of public history teamwork for others in the history museum field. The most "intellectually satisfying" chapter for her is "Enslaving Virginia" which reinforces the historical anomaly that American democracy and American slavery grew up side-by-side.

Almost eclipsed at the end of the *Public Historian* are three book reviews, with a lead review by Rhys Isaac of LaTrobe University in Australia on Richard Handler and Eric Gable's, *The New History in an Old Museum: Creating the Past at Colonial Williamsburg* (1997). Handler and Gable are anthropologists at the University of Virginia who conducted ethnographic fieldwork in 1990-91 at Colonial Williamsburg, with the support of Colonial Williamsburg staff who were responsible for research and interpretive planning (Cary Carson, Dennis O'Toole, et. al). The anthropologists published a preliminary summary of their work in the *Journal of American History* (1994) which drew a fiery response from Cary Carson. Carson predicted at that time that Handler and Gable's planned book would be a work of fiction whenever it appeared. Handler and Gable, in *The New History*, took

Colonial Williamsburg to task on two counts. Based on research in the Colonial Williamsburg corporate archives and their fieldwork, they concluded, (1) that Colonial Williamsburg's conservative corporate culture is driven more by the need to make money and attract people through the admissions turnstiles than by education, and that cultural conservatism defeated Colonial Williamsburg's own interpretive plan, and (2) that the interpretive plan of Cary Carson et al. was a radical, politically correct social construction (the new social history) being forced on frontline interpreters and the unsuspecting public by a band of liberal historians who are not liberal enough for Handler and Gable. Rhys Isaac sees merit in *The New History* but faults its theoretical assumptions and its outdated fieldwork.

Regardless of one's opinion of Colonial Williamsburg as a standard bearer for public history, or of Handler and Gable's critique, the fact remains that public history certainly does matter for those who have committed their professional careers to it, and the *Public Historian* has performed a great service by creating a national forum for substantive discussion about interpretive themes and strategies. The fact remains, however, that the visitors history museums seek to engage are not growing in proportion to the population in general, in proportion to visitation growth in other types of museums, or in proportion to the growing sophistication of delivery systems. We need to find out why public history does not matter to more Americans.

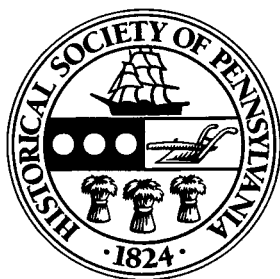
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