

Industry in Art: Pittsburgh, 1812 to 1920. By RINA C. YOUNGNER. (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2006. viii, 188 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$29.95.)

In May 1903, *Harper's Weekly* presented the nation with a quintessential view of Pittsburgh: "The spectator will observe here and there the reflections of enormous furnace fires casting their gleam upon the sky. It seems as if half a dozen conflagrations were raging about the town." Rina Youngner would note that such evocative material had a long history by 1903. Youngner examines "image makers" and their depictions of the city's startling and stirring sights. In their pursuit of profit, ornament, or a vision of truth, artists portrayed urban flux for local and national consumption.

In Youngner's interpretive arc, artists attempted to translate the industrial changes taking place in Pittsburgh throughout the 1800s. She first considers letterheads, advertisements, and images in national magazines that revealed a manufacturing center emerging from a small town. Youngner then moves to the flurry of city views made by traveling artists in the 1840s and 1850s, blending close readings of images with biographical sketches and chronicles of the city's growth. *Industry in Art* is at its best when Youngner explains art's logistics in tandem with analysis of specific works. Commercial artists of the 1840s were salesmen first, scouring Pittsburgh to find people willing to pay five dollars for a lithograph still in its planning stage. Such detail offers a glimpse of the role that such images played in the lives of contemporaries and suggests the cultural relevance of the cityscape as a midcentury icon.

Chapter 4, which focuses on painter David Gilmour Blythe, introduces art as social critique, a theme that pervades the rest of the book. Blythe's 1850s works, reflecting the "problems and mishaps reported in the newspapers," filled landscapes with working men and evidence of corroded civic values (p. 41). When the heyday of industrial illustration arrived in the 1870s, such critique was trumped by optimistic representations in popular periodicals that highlighted movement, mechanization, and civic success. It was only in the coverage of labor conflicts in 1877 and 1892 that a political edge returned to treatments of Pittsburgh. Youngner shows how illustrations condemned or praised the city's industrial regime through their treatment of protesting workers. The book ends with a look at four artists of the early twentieth century who built their reputations in part through capturing the spectacle of the industrial behemoth.

Youngner guides readers through the images with intriguing results. Yet she could have done more to stress the interaction between art and the people who viewed, reviewed, and commissioned it. Throughout the book, life shapes art, but art seems to have little effect on human lives. Although Youngner provides historical context, she does not attempt to explain how art functioned in the city. Readers receive just as much information as they need in order to view the next

image with some familiarity. The approach can be overwhelming, especially in chapters 2 and 5, where Youngner analyzes forty-six images in thirty-six pages of text. It is perhaps a testament to Youngner's ambitious visual scope that one wants to know more about the people involved. The book's coda observes that twenty-first-century Pittsburgh needs strength to "change once again into the city of the future." That suggests a world of ideas and actions beyond the minds of artists, the further exploration of which could only add to the conversation started in this perceptive study.

Susquehanna University

EDWARD SLAVISHAK

Widows and Orphans First: The Family Economy and Social Welfare Policy, 1880–1939. By S. J. KLEINBERG. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2006. xiv, 230 pp. Tables, notes, index. \$35.)

Public welfare advocates in the 1930s were delighted at the prospect of federal social policies that would help diminish the dramatic differences in how states and communities cared for the poor. S. J. Kleinberg's examination of public and charitable policies toward widows and orphans at the turn of the century in three cities (Pittsburgh, Baltimore, and Fall River, Massachusetts) demonstrates why such concern was manifest on the eve of the New Deal.

Kleinberg, a historian at Brunel University in West London, United Kingdom, established her reputation with *The Shadow of the Mills* (1989), a fine-grained social history that documented the brutal struggle for subsistence among industrial Pittsburgh's working-class families. Her deep immersion in local sources remains the strength of her newest book, in which she convincingly argues that local economic structures, as well as racial and ethnic attitudes, more strongly determined local responses to widowed mothers and their children than broader attitudes of "maternalism." While scholars such as Linda Gordon have emphasized the influence of maternalist Progressive Era reformers who sought to create public policies that would support mothers at home with their children, Kleinberg shows how varied the actual implementation of such policies was. Fall River, for instance, a textile center that depended on the labor of women and children, showed little compunction about sending mothers out to work, and thus developed little in the way of aid to keep mothers out of the labor market. Pittsburgh, by contrast, with few opportunities for women to work in heavy industry, and with a heightened public awareness of job-related mortality, developed a dizzying array of charitable institutions aimed at widows. Pennsylvania subsequently adopted one of the more progressive mothers' pension programs, which, on paper at least, promised pensions as a *right* to deserving, widowed mothers.