

Native Americans, working white men in cities, and rural women who performed their elocutionary prowess in speeches during the 1790s. Such individuals and countless others used print and oratory to formulate ideas about what it means to be a public before they thought of themselves as national subjects.

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Philadelphia Stories: America's Literature of Race and Freedom. By SAMUEL OTTER. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010. 408 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$29.95.)

The central theme of Samuel Otter's *Philadelphia Stories* is the idea that the one-time capital city of the United States was conceptualized from the outset as a social laboratory, the site of a large-scale social experiment. The idea of an experiment, which of course suffused much of the way early Americans thought about their new government and evolving social structure, drives an analysis that repeatedly emphasizes the self-consciousness that informed Philadelphians' willingness to try new approaches to old problems, or, in some cases, their appetite to tackle the new problems that had been created and were emerging out of the new circumstances of race and democracy in the early United States. Although literary history forms the central axis of Otter's analysis, he weaves together a diverse range of materials, including novels, social theory, politics, art and architecture, and social history to offer a fascinating account of the cultural, social, and intellectual history of Philadelphia from the American Revolution through the Civil War.

The book is divided into four substantial chapters, each of which is organized around a different strand in Philadelphia's history, but is also roughly chronological, albeit with significant overlaps in each section. The first section, "Fever," focuses on the yellow fever epidemic of 1793, the second, "Manners," begins in the 1790s but traces a narrative of "conduct and character" that concludes in the 1830s and 1840s. "Riot," the third chapter, is organized around the series of race-, religion-, and ethnic-motivated "disturbances" that shook the city between 1829 and 1844. Finally, in "Freedom" the book focuses on the debates around abolition and slavery that gained momentum in the city in the 1840s and 1850s. The crucial articulations of these themes are found, in Otter's study, in written and visual texts that range the generic gamut from political pamphlets to social theory, histories of the city, and, of course, novels. By tracing thematic continuities across texts from diverse genres and across several decades, Otter is able to find coherence in the cultural and literary life of the city where others have often insisted on an absence of such unifying or temporal continuities in the intellectual narrative of Philadelphia's history.

Throughout the study Otter moves fluidly back and forth across time, showing a knowledge of the city's history (literary, social, cultural, and political) that is both deep and wide. With *Philadelphia Stories* Otter challenges us to rethink both the inner life of the city and its place in the larger narrative of the cultural and social development of the United States over its first one hundred years. *Philadelphia Stories* is indispensable reading for anyone interested in the history of Philadelphia. But that would be faint praise indeed for a book that merits the attention of all students of the early United States and, more broadly, of those attentive to the deep and intricate ways in which literature and social life are intertwined with one another.

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Women of Industry and Reform: Shaping the History of Pennsylvania, 1865–1940. By MARION W. ROYDHOUSE. (Mansfield: Pennsylvania Historical Association, 2008. 104 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography. \$12.95.)

Frequently Pennsylvania history is a tale of two cities: Pittsburgh and Philadelphia. In contrast with this limited perspective, in *Women of Industry and Reform* Marion Roydhouse presents a statewide analysis of the recent literature on Pennsylvania women. Examining the public and private lives of Pennsylvania women from 1865 to 1940, she includes the voices of women from rural and urban areas, women who worked in heavy industry and light manufacturing, as well as working-class labor organizers and middle-class reformers. The words and thoughts of individual women illuminate and humanize this study.

Roydhouse argues that between the Civil War and World War II, women actively contributed to the transformation of Pennsylvania's economy from an agricultural to industrial base. Acting as workers and reformers, women helped Pennsylvania develop into an industrial powerhouse. Roydhouse begins with an examination of rural communities in the aftermath of the Civil War, when increased demands for coal radically altered rural life by creating new employment opportunities. Using examples from Carbon, Dauphin, and Lebanon counties, she documents how working-class women facilitated employment of male family members in the mines. In mining towns where women carefully managed family resources, cared for children, cooked, cleaned, and frequently kept boarders, they also supported male workers in their pursuit of better wages and safer working conditions.

Moving from rural coal mines to the industrializing cities of Pennsylvania, Roydhouse turns her attention to the impact of industrialization on women in urban areas. She argues that race, gender, and ethnicity influenced the choices