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School for Soldiers: West Point and the Profession of Arms. By JOSEPH ELLIS and ROBERT MOORE. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974. Pp. ix, 291. Bibliography, index. \$9.95.)

"How does what I am doing impact on the goal of producing people who know how to make guys fight wars?" (p.146). This is the type of question that instructors at West Point are advised to ask themselves as they go about their academic duties. Their task is to produce soldiers not scholars. The United States Military Academy is not an academic institution in the true sense of the word, it is first and foremost a mold of army officers.

Joseph Ellis, assistant professor of history, Mount Holyoke College, and Robert Moore, assistant professor of English, University of Maryland, have written an in-depth study of one of the United States's national institutions. The aim of their book is to show in detail the philosophy and operation of the United States Military Academy today.

This is a book that is thoughtful, scrupulously objective, excellently written and, in places, startling. The authors, both former West Point faculty members, very carefully allow West Point to speak for itself; they interviewed officers and cadets, they studied official academy publications and quote extensively from all. The result is a picture of an aggressively self-confident institution convinced that its system possesses the answers for a contemporary world. The system was developed in the early nineteenth century by Sylvanus Thayer (little known in educational circles outside West Point) and has been but little touched by the monumental changes in American higher education since. The academy, in fact, sees any pressure for change, whether from the public, from Congress, from educators, or from cadets, as outside interference. Over and over again, West Pointers answer critics by saying something like: "I hate to give up on a

winner" (p. 45). They argue that the West Point way of doing things has produced great men in the past and will continue to do so in the future, if the system is left alone. West Point relishes the fact that it is an anachronism in the modern world, because West Pointers look to their past as the source of definitive certitude in an uncertain and indefinite world.

This book discusses all pertinent aspects of West Point life. The faculty is seen as being more involved in administration than scholarship; teaching is dispensing packaged instruction. The West Point education creed, as promulgated by academy leaders, seems to be: there is an answer to every question. As long as the engineering method of breaking problems down is followed, the answer to any problem can be discovered. But, asked a new faculty member at an orientation meeting, what if a cadet asks a question I don't know the answer to? The response was that cadets expected answers and should be given them.

The authors portray the cadets as individuals playing the roles assigned them by a public impressed with the historic spectacle of "the long gray line." Most are willing to go along because they feel the rewards for sticking it out are worth the price. Their West Point careers begin with the so-called Beast Barracks (the push-ups, sit-ups, yes sir, no excuse sir, hazing routine), and their military orientation continues into their academic years. They are quickly taught that they are at the academy to be molded, that independent thought is not a virtue, that military ratings are more important than academics.

The reader's reaction to these and similar insights throughout the book will vary according to his own attitudes. The person who believes there are set answers to all questions will leave this book feeling that the future of the military and the nation are in good hands at West Point. Those who believe that there are unanswerable questions, that man's history has been the story of a continued attempt to come to grips with life's uncertainties, will leave this book very depressed. Historians, particularly those familiar with the history of West Point, will leave with a feeling of *déjà vu*. West Point's philosophy and basic approach is what it has always been, and the equation of change with danger to itself and the nation has remained constant throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. One has the feeling too that such will be the case in the future, and this again is good or bad depending on one's views.

Professors Ellis and Moore have written an excellent book, one

whose pages teem with insights too numerous even to mention here. This is a book to be read and pondered not only by devotees of military and educational history, but by all interested observers of contemporary affairs.

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Ethnic History in Pennsylvania: A Selected Bibliography. By JOHN E. BODNAR. (Harrisburg: Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, 1974. Pp. 47. Introduction. \$1.00.)

For those interested in ethnic studies and specifically the ethnic experience in Pennsylvania, a valuable tool has recently been published in John E. Bodnar's *Ethnic History in Pennsylvania: A Selected Bibliography*. This collection of sources, both published and unpublished, although selective and spotty, yet provides a basis for the more extensive work that must be done in depicting the state's complex and rich ethnic mosaic. In that sense, it is a working companion for the historian, pointing up what is known and what still needs to be uncovered.

The scholarly literature assembled by the head of the Ethnic Studies Program of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission deals with the experiences and adjustments of the various minority groups who settled in William Penn's Quaker haven from colonial times to the present. Nevertheless, the emphasis is upon the nineteenth-century immigrants — Germans, Irish, English, black slaves, the early Jews — and this is an admitted weakness in the sampling from both a chronological and a sociological point of view. Bodnar himself laments the fact that little is known of the blacks in the twentieth-century Pennsylvania city, of immigrant laborers in the factories of Pittsburgh, of Jewish peddlers, of Slavic miners, or of immigrant boys and girls in silk and cigar factories. These were the people, often nameless and forgotten, who put their shoulders to the wheel to build a heterogeneous society characterized by the ongoing social processes of adjustment and fragmentation, assimilation and factionalism, ending in melting pot or seething caldron, as the case may be.

In the rush to make right the wrongs of centuries of neglect and