reviews

the main stream

PROPHETIC WATERS: The River in Early American Life and Literature. By John Seelye. New York: Oxford University Press. 1977. $15.95.

In this book Seelye represents American Studies at its best not because he develops a new and distinct methodology but, on the contrary, because he applies the methodology of his discipline, literary criticism, to writings which we rarely think of as either aesthetic or imaginative works. America is, as Emerson declared, a poem in men's eyes, and *Prophetic Waters* explores the elaborate poetic at work in exploration journals, promotional tracts, captivity narratives and histories for all occasions. "At the very start," Seelye declares, ". . . the New World was a mad fiction, an apocryphal text between known worlds, a book which would continue to expand as new chapters were added." *Prophetic Waters* adds to this New World book both through its interpretation of earlier chapters and through its own delightful reworking of this material into its own particular epic vision. Seelye is a novelist as well as a critic and in this work he has combined these activities.

What holds the study together, even as it held the early American narratives together, are the rivers of the New World. For Columbus they were the waters of Eden and for the Englishmen who followed they were pathways and walls, rivers of light and rivers of darkness, reflecting the hopes and terrors of people struggling to locate themselves in a shapeless wilderness. America was and is, as Seelye suggests, a territory of the mind, and so the shifting rivers define a terrain that is at once physical and psychological. By reading a wide range of interpreters, from Hakluyt to Byrd, Seelye not only reminds us of the ways in which America has been read but, in turn, reads for us those who made it their text. In so doing, he casts new light on familiar territory in his section on Smith, Winthrop, Bradford, Cotton and Mrs. Rowlandson and calls attention to the significance of lesser read critics like Morton, Hubbard, Mason and Beverly.

Because of the vast array with which this study is concerned there is much that is unsaid about individual texts; because this is a subjective reworking of old materials it may at times seem irritatingly idiosyncratic. But *Prophetic Waters,* partially because of these indulgences, is a rich and exciting work and should have a more profound effect on American Studies than any publication since *Virgin Land.*

Washington University Wayne D. Fields

YOUNG MAN THOREAU. By Richard Lebeaux. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press. 1977. $12.50.

Patterned after *Young Man Luther*, this study attempts to apply Erikson's psychology of life-cycle "stages" and attendant crises to the young Thoreau from 1837, when he graduated from Harvard, to 1845, when he began his Walden experience. Lebeaux traces Thoreau's identity crisis not only to a dominating mother and a reticent father but also to social and cultural forces during a period of transition and revolution. By resisting the pressures of family and community, Thoreau maintained his own "moratorium" or constructive "noncommitment" to an early vocational decision. In the process, according to Lebeaux, he suffered deep guilt feelings toward his father, but achieved autonomy by emulating a "great man" (Emerson) and by identifying with Transcendentalism. Thus "he could conform to an ideology which glorified nonconformity" and remain "committed to non-commitment." Although Lebeaux attributes much of Thoreau's crisis to an "Age of Revolution" (witness Emerson's and Thoreau's early distrust of the commercial spirit, the impact of Unitarianism on New England religion, the significance of Emerson's Divinity School Address), once he has defined the cultural context, Lebeaux dwells on the more personal forces at work in Thoreau's struggle for independence, vocation and authenticity. Among these were his ambivalent, oedipal feelings toward his parents; the sibling rivalry with his elder brother, John, and guilt over proposing to Ellen Sewall after she had refused John; the attempt to establish a home before, during, and after his stay with the Emersons; the death of brother John in 1842, prolonging the moratorium; the subsequent long depression marked by grief, guilt, and anxiety; and ultimately, in 1845, the restorative and transforming effect of his immersion in nature. Through his winter of discontent (1842-45)—not relieved by the interval at Staten Island, his return to his family and the pencil factory, nor by the episode of the Concord Woods fire—he turned inward for the warmth and "invulnerable" love that was to find best expression later in the poetic prose of *Walden*. When he began his Walden venture in late March, 1845, he was fully engaged at last in the achievement of his identity, a reality which sustained him and justified his moratorium. The book *Walden* is both his lament and his plea for the moratorium experience in literature and in consciousness.

This interesting 250-page biography of the Young Man Thoreau thus begins and ends with Thoreau's commitment to nonconformity, individuation and transcendental living as integral American values, although the Americanness of Thoreau's self-realization is seen less as an American process than as an "archetype" of a psychosocial moratorium. In fact, the assumption of identity crisis within the family leads to excessive Freudian psychologizing regarding the sons' guilt, the "failure of the fathers," oedipal feelings, shame, guilt and the like, especially in the chapters on "Identity Confusion in Family and Childhood" and "The Death of a Brother." Yet, more holistic than Freud, Eriksonian psychology encompasses some elements of the "superpersonal," historical, ideological and socio-cultural, as in chapters 1 and 3 and in the "Epilogue," where the psychic development of the Young Man Thoreau parallels and prepares for the equally significant Young Writer Thoreau. In sum, this is an intelligent blend of psychological and cultural criticism, richly documented from journals and letters.

U. of Connecticut Eric W. Carlson

FROM THE GHETTO: The Fiction of Abraham Cahan. By Jules Chametzky. Amherst: The University of Massachusetts Press. 1977. $10.00.

Focusing on Abraham Cahan's literary career, from 1885 to 1917, rather than on his much longer and more influential career as editor of the *Jewish Daily Forward*, this book is perhaps of less immediate professional interest to the American Studies specialist than was Ronald Sanders' *The Downtown Jews*, published in 1969. Nevertheless, Chametzky's sensitive readings of the relationships of language to the acculturation process as revealed in Cahan's fiction are insightful and valuable to everyone concerned with the immigrant experience—which is, after all, the essential experience for a "nation of immigrants." The climax of this study is Chametzky's analysis of *The Rise of David Levinsky* which repeats much of the material he has offered in earlier articles. For this reason, his analysis of the out-of-print *The White Terror and the Red* in the context of the revolutionary novels of Conrad and James seemed much more useful. Though Chametzky's treatment of the social and political complexities of Cahan's career as mediator between the Ghetto and the American communities is, in a predominantly literary study, necessarily summary, he manages to include a great deal of information useful to the student of Cahan's fiction, of American Jewish writing, and, in general, of the Realistic movement in American fiction.

Southern Illinois University—Edwardsville Jules Zanger

THE ADVENTUROUS MUSE: The Poetics of American Fiction, 1789-1900. By William C. Spengemann. New Haven: Yale University Press. 1977. $15.00.

Drawing on elements of New World travel-narratives, the American Romantic novel expressed an adventurous impulse and served the values of action and curiosity on the new fictional frontiers of the wilderness and the sea. This thrust ran counter to the concerns of the domestic novel, which supported the values of obedience, resignation and reconciliation to accepted moral norms. Within this dialectical framework, Spengemann provides lucid explications of Royall Tyler's *The Algerine Captive* and Poe's *The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym*. His analysis of Romantic texts and later works provides convincing evidence for his main thesis: the travel-narrative was largely responsible for advancing the authority of individual experience in American literature. Such an approach works neatly with Twain's *Roughing It*, but Spengemann's arguments are less compelling when applied to works, like *The Scarlet Letter*, in which travel elements are minimal.

Worcester Polytechnic Institute — Kent Ljungquist

THE WOMAN AND THE MYTH: Margaret Fuller's Life and Writings. By Bell Gale Chevigny. Old Westbury, New York: The Feminist Press. 1977. $6.50.

The distinguishing features of this ambitious study are its thoroughness, its exhaustive and impeccable scholarship, and its feminist perspective. The chief hypothesis of the book is that Fuller was representative of American women of her time and class in the struggle to find an identity, then fulfill it in an appropriate vocation. (There is, however, as much evidence that Fuller was unlike other women as that she was like them—genius is always *sui generis*.) Chevigny provides copious excerpts from Fuller's writings and those of her contemporaries about her, some of them never before published. In a series of brilliant, psychologically astute essays she explores Fuller's complex responses to her society and its effect on her. An awareness of class identity and class struggle informs much of the social analysis as Chevigny charts Fuller's growth from apolitical Transcendentalist to committed revolutionary. Some aspects of Fuller are not given the emphasis they warrant, for example, the centrality of literary interests from childhood until three years before her death, her achievements as a literary critic and the tragic dimensions of her life and struggles. Nevertheless, the book is the most comprehensive and authoritative study of Fuller and her milieu—mid-nineteenth century New England, New York, and Rome—yet to appear, and a welcome corrective to the overidealized, overromanticized Margaret Fuller of most previous studies. All those interested in nineteenth-century American life will find it valuable.

Allentown College of St. Francis de Sales — Margaret V. Allen

twenties, thirties, fifties

THE AMERICAN DREAM IN THE GREAT DEPRESSION. By Charles R. Hearn. Contributions in American Studies No. 28. Westport, Connecticut and London: Greenwood Press. 1977. $15.95.

This study examines the impact of the Great Depression upon "the American dream of success." Hearn is more concerned with popular attitudes and less with high-level ideas than was Richard H. Pells in *Radical Visions and American Dreams: Culture and Social Thought in the Depression Years* (1973).

After looking at a wide variety of sources, including how-to-succeed guide books and inspirational tracts, popular magazines, sociological studies, and fiction and drama (of varying artistic merits), Hearn concludes that the 1930's was a time of flux "when American values seemed to be in the process of shifting but not in a clear-cut direction." The traditional myth of success lived on, but there was a new stress upon nonmaterial rewards such as peace of mind, love and family. The gospel of work was reaffirmed, but simultaneously a new gospel of leisure was beginning to be promulgated in which the "idols of consumption"—actors, singers, sports figures—displaced businessmen as the national folk heroes. And the preoccupation with security spurred a shift in emphasis "from inner-direction to other-direction and from character to personality" as the prototypical American traits. Hearn's stimulating study is a welcome corrective to most intellectual-cultural histories of the 1930's, which by focusing upon the major thinkers and writers, exaggerate the extent of the break with traditional values that took place during the decade.

University of Nebraska—Lincoln — John Braeman

ANOTHER PART OF THE TWENTIES. By Paul A. Carter. New York: Columbia University Press. 1977. $9.95.

This sentimental tract resembles nothing so much as a genial and generally unrewarding saunter through some of those weed-choked ghosts of subdivisions that seemed such brilliantly promising speculations half a century ago. Professor Carter feels that in the too-much-told tale of the twenties as "jazz age," "a broad continuum of Americans" have never had their stories properly "read into the record." But he gives us no broad continuum himself. His subjects like Harry S. Warner (not of the movie moguls), Governor Nellie Ross of Wyoming, and Will Irwin are just as untypical as Scott Fitzgerald and Clara Bow and Bruce Barton. They were just less successful in the long run. For giving a feeling of life during the 1920's, *Only Yesterday* and *Middletown* are likely to remain unsupplanted.

Indiana-Purdue University at Indianapolis — Warren French

MEN AGAINST McCARTHY. By Richard M. Fried. New York: Columbia University Press. 1976. $14.95.

This is a thoroughly admirable book, admirably researched and admirably written. Fried's thesis is that Joseph McCarthy was as much the product of post World War II politics as he was a shaper. This thesis is as tenable as any of the others advanced to explain the enigma and fascination surrounding the Wisconsin senator. What makes Fried's book outstanding is how he interweaves resource material and argument into prose that is fast paced and clear. Its balance and objectivity, also, give a perspective that is lacking in so many other studies about McCarthy. Well done, indeed.

El Camino College — Joseph M. Collier

the military

SCHOOL FOR SOLDIERS: West Point and the Profession of Arms. By Joseph Ellis and Robert Moore. New York: Oxford University Press. 1974. $9.95.

THE TWENTY-FIRST MISSOURI: From Home Guard to Union Regiment. By Leslie Anders. Connecticut: Greenwood Press. 1975. $17.50.

PIPE CLAY AND DRILL, JOHN J. PERSHING: The Classic American Soldier. By Richard Goldhurst. New York: Reader's Digest Press. 1977. $12.95.

Although these three books deal with aspects of the American military experience, they differ markedly in approach. *School for Soldiers*, written by two academics, a professor of history and of English who fulfilled Army reserve obligations by teaching at the Military Academy, is a scholarly analysis of the institution's mission and goals. As the title indicates, they find that the aims are narrowly functional: West Point strives to prepare combat leaders and any conventional education involved in the process is largely incidental. The volume is based on careful observation and research, including extensive interviews with cadets and officers at West Point. Ellis and Moore have rendered a valuable and sobering public service with this thoughtful book. They demonstrate clearly how the institutional strictures and pressures invited the massive cheating scandal that has besmirched the Academy's reputation.

In exhaustive detail Leslie Anders traces the history of the Twenty-first Regiment of Missouri during the Civil War and the first year of occupation. While the author keeps the focus on his regiment, he successfully relates its activities to the broader issues of the war. Although this well-written book has an extensive bibliography, it contains no documentation.

The season for Pershing biography has arrived. In 1973 Donald Smythe published *Guerilla Warrior*, a study that takes Pershing through the Mexican expedition. (Goldhurst candidly acknowledges his reliance on the Smythe book for the first portion of his biography.) And in 1977 this popular biography appeared, as well as Frank E. Vandiver's scholarly two-volume work, the culmination of many years' work. The Goldhurst book, stimulating and perceptive, is a good introduction to the subject. Since Pershing's real importance stemmed from his command of the American Expeditionary Force, the imbalance of the biography is attested to by its devoting 71 pages to the punitive expedition and only 63 to World War I. Now that Vandiver's study is completed, a more balanced popular biography can be written.

University of Maryland — Walter Rundell, Jr.

GENERAL HORATIO GATES: A Biography. By Paul David Nelson. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press. 1976. $17.50.

In focusing on the stormy military career of General Horatio Gates, the author objectively discusses and assesses Gates' responsibility for disputes and controversies related to military affairs during the American Revolution. Central to all these controversies was Gates' cordial relationship with the New England radicals and his willingness to use their influence to gain command. Gates made mistakes, but his critics, according to the author, have been too severe and he deserves more credit for achievements than historians have been willing to give. The author makes a good try at correcting that imbalance. For those wishing to investigate the relationship between politics and the military during the American Revolution, the Gates biography is a good place to begin.

Iowa State University Clair W. Keller

EVERYTHING IN ITS PATH: Destruction of Community in the Buffalo Creek Flood. By Kai T. Erikson. New York: Simon and Schuster. 1976. $8.95.

It used to be said that sociologists write long books to tell us what we already know. This is not too long a book, but it tells us what we already know so well—that people are unsettled when they experience personal trauma, and that the destruction of neighborhood and neighbors, before one's very eyes, adds trauma to trauma—that Prof. Erikson need do little more than quote the survivors of the Buffalo Creek flood themselves. This book does not do what C. Wright Mills (who is reverently wheeled out in the introduction) said sociology ought to do, i.e. teach us how to read the daily newspaper, and unless we learn those lessons we are doomed to suffer again and again from the stupidities which led to the Buffalo Creek disaster in February 1972, and to the social disaster of inept post-flood reconstruction. About a third of this book is historical and not to be trusted, and another third is culturo-logical in which we learn that mining is a skilled/unskilled activity, that the residents of Buffalo Creek were independent folk like all mountain people/dependent on company largess like all mining people, that Appalachia was isolated from America until 1900/1920/the New Deal/World War II/the present, and that Buffalo Creek was a community/series of communities/lacked a sound communal base. The rest tells us in bare bones what happened when the Pittston Co. dam gave way and dumped 132,000,000 gallons of sludge and water down the valley and how people felt afterwards, based on legal depositions and interviews. All such stories are moving, and because this disaster occurred in what is now called Appalachia, will appeal to those who oppose strip-mining and those who insist that the mountaineers have real community, which those of us in the cities and in the universities have lost.

University of Cincinnati Henry D. Shapiro

GOLD WAR AMERICA: From Hiroshima to Watergate. By Lawrence S. Wittner. New York: Praeger Publishers. 1974. $6.95.

Cold War America is a solid, well-researched and sometimes angry account which draws upon the best of recent revisionist scholarship to question and challenge the governing assumptions behind postwar America's full emergence as a corporate state. Not all will agree with Wittner's assumptions or interpretations; his underlying theme of postwar America's growth of corporate privilege at home and drive for economic supremacy abroad will likely disturb those who find this conceptual framework offensive. Nevertheless, this is a powerful and convincing history, and deserves a broad audience.

Iowa State University Mary S. McAuliffe

APPOINTMENT AT ARMAGEDDON: Muckraking and Progressivism in American Life. Contributions in American Studies, No. 20. By Louis Filler. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press. 1976.

This book, composed of 30 separate and usually unconnected chapters, adds little to the contributions made by Professor Filler in his previous works. Although the book has no apparent thesis, Professor Filler disparages the theses of most contemporary scholars of Progressivism without in any way coming to grips with their arguments. American Studies scholars will find little that is useful to them in this volume.

Northern Illinois University Robert W. Schneider

RED CHILDREN IN WHITE AMERICA. By Ann H. Beuf. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press. 1977. $9.00.

In my judgment this book is not worth reviewing. Only 20 pages (pp. 71-91) are devoted to the author's study, the rest of it is filler with little scholarly content. The study itself is naive and naively interpreted. The only jusification for publishing this work is our willingness to suspend critical judgment in the face of demands for "affirmative action." I cannot believe that this does the "red children" or the scholarly community any good.

CKW

arts

THE LIFE AND PHOTOGRAPHY OF AN AMERICAN ORIGINAL: Alice Austin, 1866-1952. By Anne Notovny. Old Greenwich, Connecticut: The Chattam Press. 1976. $22.50.

This beautifully edited edition of the life and work of the gifted and unpretentious amateur photographer Alice Austin shows aspects of American social change and material culture difficult to visualize from other sources; the larger collection of Alice Austin's photographs on which it is based is perhaps second only to the Joseph Pennell collection as a photographic record of a time and place. Less systematic than Pennell, who consciously set out to record change over time in his region, Alice Austin produced work which is aesthetically lovelier, and hardly less valuable: she seems to have shot anything which she thought would be interesting: the wondrously complicated furnishings of her own room, social gatherings, historical events in New York City—and particularly Staten Island, immigrants, working people, ships that passed within view of the family home.

Anne Notovny's text is graceful, tasteful and socially sensitive. A strange comparison struck me in contemplating Alice Austin's career: I thought of Hawthorne's *The House of the Seven Gables*: The old woman out of touch with the world around her. The old house, which she cannot afford to keep up. The attempt to make ends meet by converting part of the house into a business. Photography (Remember? Old Hepzibah Pyncheon took in a boarder who was a daguerreotypist). The bitterness of the rich girl become indigent spinster. Even the poorhouse is common to both stories.

SGL

AN ENDURING HERITAGE: Historic Buildings of the San Francisco Peninsula, 1850-1920. By Dorothy F. Regnery. Stanford: Stanford University Press. 1976. $18.95.

Our growing awareness of architecture as both historic document and cultural artifact has been supported by a growing number of publications that range from utilitarian, pocket-sized guidebooks to deluxe picture-essays. This recent entry on the list has the format of the latter but happily also can serve as a guide to about fifty historic buildings of San Mateo and northern Santa Clara Counties in California. The book has a map, a bibliography, excellent photographs by Jack E. Boucher, and a nice sampling of older views and some HABS drawings. It is a useful (though a bit luxurious) guide to an interesting area.

University of Missouri—Kansas City George Ehrlich

THE KANSAS ART READER. Edited by Jonathan Wesley Bell. Lawrence Independent Study: University of Kansas. 1976. $6.50.

The *Kansas Art Reader* is a useful and interesting collection of photographs, graphics, paintings and critical-historical essays relating to the arts in Kansas, divided into sections on the visual arts, music and literature. A fourth section—"Close Up"—addresses itself to individual artists. The emphasis is inevitably contemporary, but such historical figures as Eugene Ware and E. Haldeman Julius are also treated. The sweep is very wide, ranging from the symphonic music of Charles Stanford Skilton to Rock and Grass Roots Art.

This sort of state or regional survey tends to run into problems of two sorts. First, it must avoid being mindlessly boosterish—the tone, for example, of the introductory material in the Federal Writers Project *Kansas*. From that, the *Kansas Art Reader* is almost entirely free. Second, such a book must define what it means by the Kansas ethos, and any ethos is hard to define. The existence of a Kansas Spirit has been proclaimed from the beginning, but not often well defined, and a good deal of the material in ths book implicitly rejects some of the earlier definitions. Some of the contributors, however, wander into rather mystic realms in an attempt to find the Kansas Spirit, for example, in a painter of seascapes. Two of the essays, while interesting

in themselves, fail to connect their topics, documentary photography and country music, to Kansas at all. Most of the contributors sensibly present the best that has been done by Kansas artists. As one might expect, the Kansas Spirit was most explicitly expressed in literature. Lorin Leland writes perceptively about poetry, past and present, and its shifting relation with the state, and presents a pocket anthology of representative pieces, which show a considerable range of attitudes. Michael D. Butler's "Kansas Novels" is the best short treatment that one could imagine and has some conclusions about its lack of local realism and its failure to form a tradition that will startle many readers. Among other essays which are notable are Curtis Besinger's "Learning from Lakin," a model essay on vernacular architecture as a key to culture. The editor's introductory essay on the art of Kansas is a very successful introduction and survey. Roy E. Gridley's "Images from an Older Kansas" reminds us of the Kansas which was known before 1859.

It is customary to end this sort of review with a few grumbles. The *Kansas Art Reader* is copiously illustrated, but on paper that reduces all the illustration to a featureless gray: no blacks, no whites, just grays. Some of the paintings simply vanish, and none of the excellent photography appears to any advantage. The usefulness of the book is also impaired by the exasperating lack of an index or an analytical table of contents. The contributors might also have been identified by more than their names. But the collection is a good one and, as I have indicated, well above the traditional sort of thing in its freedom from provincialism.

University of Kansas Edward F. Grier

science

PHYSICS, PATENTS, AND POLITICS: A Biography of Charles Grafton Page. By Robert C. Post. New York: Science History Publications. 1976. $15.95.

Page (1812-68) began his career as an experimentalist in electromagnetism and as such was sometimes compared to Joseph Henry. By 1868 both had ceased making significant scientific contributions, but Henry had enhanced his scientific reputation while Page's lay in shambles. In both style and substance he had moved closer to those inventors whom he served as a long-time examiner in the Patent Office. The Office itself had become less a haven for scientific men and more a "liberal friend" of the practical inventor (the percentage of applications approved increased dramatically over the years), while scientists had established their own National Academy of Sciences and sharpened the distinctions of style and society which separated them from the mechanic-inventor. In tracing the flawed career of Page, the author has significantly extended our understanding of the relationship between science, technology and politics in mid-19th century America.

University of California, Santa Barbara Carroll Pursell

THE FORMATION OF THE AMERICAN SCIENTIFIC COMMUNITY: The American Association for the Advancement of Science, 1848-1860. By Sally Gregory Kohlstedt. Urbana: University of Illinois Press. 1976. $10.95.

In three important articles and now in this book, Sally Kohlstedt has examined the organization, operations and membership of the A.A.A.S. during the first dozen years of its existence in an effort to understand its role in the emergence of a self-conscious scientific community and in the establishment of professional standards for scientific work in the United States. In so doing, she pointedly avoids any attempt at the erection of grand theory, but there are unexamined assumptions in her work which take the place of grand theory, in that they define the questions to be asked and the proper mode of answering them. Those assumptions are two: that a self-conscious scientific community did develop in America during the midnineteenth century, and that this scientific community was characterized by a professional culture (whether or not its members were themselves "professionals"). Having made these assumptions, Kohlstedt asks "how?" and answers with her careful study of the A.A.A.S. To those who accept her assumptions, this book needs no defense. To those who are willing to doubt, the importance of this book will be seen to lie in its ability to force us to confront those assumptions and thereby to examine the history of nineteenth century science directly, without reference to what we pretend to know about American science in our own time. In either case, Kohlstedt's work establishes a new standard synthesis, with which others will have to argue.

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THE EMERGENCE OF AGRICULTURAL SCIENCE: Justus Leibig and the Americans, 1840-1880. By Margaret W. Rossiter. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1975. $15.00.

There is important information in this book about the establishment of the first agricultural chemistry laboratories and the first agricultural experiment stations in the United States—and hence by implication about the establishment of "the laboratory" as the critical research tool of physical science—but much of it is hidden beneath Rossiter's attempt to explore the history of agricultural chemistry itself through an examination of the "reception" of Leibig's ideas in America. Like much work in the "internal" history of science, this aspect of her work is flawed by a failure to clarify for us the issues on which debate turned, which we cannot reconstruct imaginatively for ourselves without substantial aid from one who is, as Rossire appears to be, an adept in the lexicon of lost science. And her footnotes and endnotes offer little assistance to us in our attempt to understand the thrust and details of her account. Good advice from readers or editors would have made this a substantially more useful work than it is, and careful production editing would have caught the numerous typos which mar the appearance of this otherwise handsome volume.

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DESIDERATUM IN WASHINGTON: The Intellectual Community in the Capital City, 1870-1900. By J. Kirkpatrick Flack. Cambridge: Schenkman Publishing Co. 1975. $11.25.

This study of clubs and societies in Washington after the Civil War raises important issues in American social and cultural history: about the role of institutions, especially voluntary societies, in the creation of a self-consciously American system of values and behavior; about the relationship of social and professional organizations in the development of public policy; and about the real place of the so-called learned societies in the life of the mind in America. These are old issues, of course, but Flack raises them in a new context and this is important, for his own failures to deal with these issues adequately may force us to look at them more directly in the future, and to avoid some of the problems which characterize this book. Flack focuses his discussion on scientific societies and social organizations to which scientists belonged, and assumes that the existence of such societies and organizations is proof of the existence of an "intellectual community." That matter remains unsettled, as does the issue of whether "scientists" are ipso facto "intellectuals." Flack tends to confuse culture defined as mannerly behavior and culture defined as a set of tools—intellectual and customary—for dealing with the world, so that we never know quite what kind of "national culture" is being created, but again his confusion points to a relationship which must be explored more fully. And Flack assumes that a vision of intellectual improvement articulated by Jefferson or Joseph Henry is the same as a vision of intellectual improvement articulated by Henry Adams or F. W. Putnam, although both Adams and Putnam would have found such an assertion of identity, as distinct from continuity, particularly offensive—another matter to be examined in the future.

University of Cincinnati Henry D. Shapiro