

## reviews

**POLITICS AND THE RESTRAINT OF SCIENCE.** By Leonard A. Cole. Totowa, New Jersey: Rowman & Allanheld. 1983. \$17.95.

Cole opens his work by reviewing cases frequently cited by those opposing government restraint of scientific activities—Galileo's forced renunciation of Copernican astronomy, Lysenko's Soviet biology and Nazi racial science. From this retrospective analysis and a survey of 632 scientists he concludes that the parallels drawn between these cases and the American government's restraint of scientific activities are invalid because of the vastly differing political contexts, and that a nation's political traditions, rather than its scientists, are the most effective protectors against such perversions of science.

The second half of Cole's work focuses more specifically on the American political system and its relationship with science. Cole argues that the American system with its democratic traditions, decentralization of power, and checks and balances has provided appropriate restraints without leading to perversions of science. In the occasional cases where abuses have occurred, such as the proliferation of nuclear power, he argues, it failed because normal political processes were temporarily short-circuited. While Cole's view of the effectiveness of the American government's regulation of science seems overly favorable at times, his work definitely contributes to the debate over how much governmental interference with science is justified.

Michigan Technological University

Terry S. Reynolds

**A PRISON OF EXPECTATIONS: The Family in Victorian Culture.** By Steven Mintz. New York: New York University Press. 1983. \$25.00.

Through the lives of Robert Louis Stevenson, George Eliot, H. B. Stowe, Catherine Sedgwick and Robert Butler, the author analyzes the tensions and themes that were central to Victorian family life. The book argues that the special stresses of these families "reflect the broader historical problems of adapting the values of a differential, hierarchical, patronage society to the values of an increasingly contractual, individualistic society." This well written, insightful approach to otherwise familiar biographical data is helpful to the generalist in search of an entry into the enigmatic, often contradictory Victorian family structure.

University of Missouri-Kansas City

Marlene Springer

SEXUAL POLITICS, SEXUAL COMMUNITIES: The Making of a Homosexual Minority in the United States, 1940-1970. By John D'Emilio. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press. 1983. \$20.00.

John D'Emilio's central subject in *Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities* is the homophile movement that began among American gay men and lesbians in the 1950s and that preceded by almost two decades the better-known, larger contemporary gay liberation movement. By extensive research into previously unknown or forgotten primary sources and by interviews with most of the movement's leaders, D'Emilio has produced a major contribution to the emerging field of gay history that will stand as the definitive record of this hitherto undocumented movement among American homosexuals for some time and that, in its chapters surrounding this central core, also provides the best overview so far of the situation of homosexuality in American society in the post-World War II years. Some of the book's historical comparisons, however, call out for further study. Though the group movement D'Emilio documents here is in its totality certainly a unique one, some of its specific elements are not so special as he implicitly presents them to be. For instance, the notion of homosexuals as an oppressed cultural minority was also a theme in the earlier liberation movements among British and German homosexuals in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (to be fair, nothing like D'Emilio's exhaustive work here has yet been done on those earlier movements, so he had little to work with for comparison), and popular sources like gay literature show an awareness of homosexuality as an "identity" well before the modern period (D'Emilio accepts the view that homosexuality did not emerge as a personal "identity" in culture and history until the late nineteenth century, a view that its originators base on the severely limited evidence of law codes and medical documents.) These differences do not detract from the particular truth of the developments that D'Emilio so impressively and originally documents here, but they place them in a more intricate long-range context than he at times suggests.

New York, New York

Joseph Cady

THE CIRCLE GAME: Services for the Poor in Massachusetts, 1966-1978. By Ann Withorn. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press. 1983. \$17.50

The very confusing history of Massachusetts' many overlapping social service agencies is presented in an only mildly confusing fashion. The author weaves her somewhat stilted narrative of the approaches to helping the poor with poignant, though often repetitious, quotations from users and distributors of government aid. With a broader stroke she covers the question of how American society deals with the problems of poverty. She offers her own suggestions for positive change: increase public expectations by offering a broader range of services. The more people getting assistance, she argues, the more with a stake in making the system work well. A much ignored and very important area of history is treated fairly well. The appendix outlining local, state and federal agencies and their programs is a useful guide.

Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union

Ashley Ward Adams

RUTH BENEDICT: Patterns of a Life. By Judith Schachter Modell. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press. 1983. \$30.00.

Women have played a larger role in the development of anthropology than of probably any other American scholarly discipline. No woman looms more importantly in that story than Ruth Benedict. In *An Anthropologist at Work* (1959), Margaret Mead published a selection of Benedict's writings interspersed with biographical sections that constituted an appreciative sketch of her former teacher. And Benedict left a manuscript incomplete autobiographical fragment that was printed in *An Anthropologist at Work*. But Modell's is the first attempt at a full-length biography. Her stated aim is to show "the threads connecting Ruth Benedict's extraordinary professional achievements to her private struggle and personal dilemmas." In its pursuit, she has done an impressive amount of research in published and unpublished materials. The work, however, is stronger on Benedict the person than upon her contribution to the shaping of anthropology. And even on the personal side, there are three major—and interrelated—flaws: a convoluted prose style, too

much dubious “psychoanalyzing” and a strained effort to make Benedict into a precursor of “1970s and 1980s feminism.”  
University of Nebraska-Lincoln

John Braeman

SACRED SANDS: The Struggle for Community in the Indiana Dunes. By J. Ronald Engel. Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press. 1983. \$22.95.

In a rare combination of environmental science, political process and religious symbolism, Engel has raised an “ordinary landscape” into a archetypal national myth. A strongly pro-environment book which nevertheless explores historical developments and the debates of the 1960s and 1970s with detachment, *Sacred Sands* is particularly strong on the roles of artists, intellectuals and reformers.

Duquesne University

John Opie

ENGLISH AMERICA AND THE REVOLUTION OF 1688: Royal Administration and the Structure of Provincial Government. By J. M. Sosin. Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press. 1982. \$25.00.

This is Sosin’s second book in a projected trilogy which will deal with imperial administration from founding until the American Revolution. In this, as in his earlier work, he concentrates on politics and power.

In 1689, contending for political office and prestige, powerful men led rebellions in Maryland, New York and Massachusetts Bay. These “rebels” merely used “whig” rhetoric as a cover for their designs on power. They created support for rebellion by referring local problems to “[f]ear of Catholicism, social instability, too narrow a governmental base, ethnic animosities, . . . political immaturity,” and the general imperial muddle. Hence, their actions cannot be referred to the advancement of commonwealth principles as they have been by earlier historians.

Yet the “rebels” did advance representative institutions and did clarify the power of local officials. But in England, Whitehall continued to muddle along, unable to coordinate the defense against belligerent France, the new colonial power centers and the sharp imperial disagreements. As a result, the American colonies enjoyed gains from the rebellions, and the colonials lived free of a coordinated colonial policy for the seventy-five years following these rebellions.

Sosin’s conclusions are not startling. Indeed, they are new only in their perspective and their placement of local politics apart from “whig” ideals. Yet no other study has supplied so thorough and persuasive an analysis of this period and its consequences.

University of Florida

Eldon Turner

## reform

GROUNDWORK: Charles Hamilton Houston and the Struggle for Civil Rights. By Genna Rae McNeil. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press. 1983. \$21.00.

Richard Kluger’s *Simple Justice: The History of Brown v. Board of Education and Black America’s Struggle for Equality* (1976) rescued from neglect the key role played by Charles Hamilton Houston in the civil rights revolution. As special counsel for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Houston devised the strategy for the legal attack upon discrimination in education, transportation, jury service and voting that would achieve its triumphant culmination after his death in April 1950. In dealing with those matters, therefore, McNeil’s hero-worshipful biography covers largely what has become familiar terrain. She breaks new ground in two areas. One is on the personal side—Houston’s background, development, private law practice and World War II activities on behalf of black workers. The second is her account of Houston’s successful struggle to

transform the Howard University Law School into a training center for a cadre of black lawyers who would spearhead the fight for equal rights.

\* \* \*

REBEL FOR RIGHTS: Abigail Scott Duniway. By Ruth Barnes Moynihan. New Haven and London: Yale University Press. 1983. \$19.95.

This work—volume number 130 of the Yale Historical Publications—is a thoroughly researched, well-written biography of the leading figure in the fight for woman's suffrage in the Pacific Northwest. Novelist, journalist and lecturer, Duniway led the campaigns that gained women the vote in Washington, Idaho and Oregon. Moynihan's should stand as the definitive account of her life and activities. But perhaps the work's most important contribution is its moving away from the narrow focus by most students of woman's suffrage on the eastern and largely upper-middle-class-led National Woman Suffrage Association (after 1890 the National American Woman Suffrage Association). I hope that the result will be to encourage more attention to the struggle at the local-state level.

\* \* \*

THE RESPONSE TO PROSTITUTION IN THE PROGRESSIVE ERA. By Mark T. Connelly. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press. 1980. \$18.00.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, prostitution was not simply a widespread feature of the urban scene, but was in fact a tacitly tolerated part of the fabric of the American social order. While there was a long history of concern about, and attacks upon, prostitution, Connelly argues that prostitution did not become a major *national* issue until the progressive era. He appears on reasonably sound ground in viewing that period's pervasive interest in the "social evil" as emerging in response to the feared breakdown of the nineteenth-century code of sexual morality. He is less persuasive in his more ambitious argument that contemporaries made prostitution into a "code word" symbolizing the anxieties generated by the broader social and cultural changes accompanying industrialization, rapid urbanization and the influx of millions of new and alien-seeming immigrants. And he gives insufficient weight to the simple fact that prostitution was a real problem—not simply because of its public health aspect, but because of its link with crime and corruption.

\* \* \*

WOMEN AND AMERICAN SOCIALISM, 1870-1920. By Mari Jo Buhle. Urbana, Chicago and London. 1981. \$21.95.

Given the yearning of left-wing intellectuals to lay claim to be heir to a native radical tradition, socialism looms larger in American historiography than in American history. Ruhle's study of the women's side of late-nineteenth-early twentieth century American socialism finds two conflicting strands within the movement. One was represented by immigrant women who, despite their otherwise noble feelings against class oppression, continued to hew to traditional definitions of women's role; the other by those—mostly native-born middle class activists—who embraced socialism as the means to achieve the ultimate goal of female emancipation. Buhle makes a significant contribution by showing that the current attraction by many feminist activists to left-wing politics and anti-capitalist rhetoric is hardly a new phenomenon. But the bulk of the book is a tedious recital of manifestoes and paper organizations little noticed at the time and long since forgotten. And the author's personal biases constantly intrude; she goes so far as to suggest that the failure of the mainline socialist leadership to champion "the advanced tendencies in modern life"—i.e., sexual equality—doomed the movement to "the backwash of history."  
University of Nebraska-Lincoln John Braeman

## literature

NEW ENGLAND LOCAL COLOR LITERATURE: A Women's Tradition. By Josephine Donovan. New York: Frederick Ungar. 1983. \$12.95.

This study by one of the foremost scholars of American women's literature will be equally at home on women's studies and literature shelves. Though it is organized in the

humdrum fashion of the introductory text, treating one author and work after the other with awesome regularity (a format imposed, one suspects, by the publisher), Donovan's book makes a contribution to feminist scholarship by giving new authenticity to the truism, posited years ago by Jay Martin, that in local color writing lies the origin of American literary realism. Donovan's thesis is that in addition to forming a "coherent, feminine literary tradition," the works of Harriet Beecher Stowe, Rose Terry Cooke, Elizabeth Stuart Phelps, Sarah Orne Jewett and Mary E. Wilkins Freeman reflect an actual shift in women's consciousness, from a "woman-identified" vision in which women are ascendant, to a male-dominated world, so that by the 1880s female dependence on male approbation replaced the strength of the women's culture evidenced in earlier women's fiction. The book should be useful to undergraduates and of interest to scholars; the style is authoritative and clear.

Stephens College

Nancy Walker

THE MARRIAGE OF EMILY DICKINSON. By William H. Shurr. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky. 1983. \$22.00.

Shurr argues that if one reads those poems which Emily Dickinson bound into homemade fascicles in the order which R. W. Franklin established in 1981, they express a sort of narrative of a consummated affair with her married clergyman-counselor friend Charles Wadworth, to whom, Shurr is quite sure, the fascicles were meant to be sent. There are match-ups of extra-literary evidence to heighten the credibility of the case—mutual friends, for example, who acted as go-betweens to "launder" letters which Emily wanted to go to an unnamed friend in Philadelphia. If Shurr is right, are we all relieved? Is this the happiest literary-biographical news of the century? "Yeah, Emily. Way to go!"? Or is it none of our business, a lavish expenditure of critical energy on a matter on which the lady clearly wanted some privacy, and on which it is impossible to be quite certain? Take your choice. A bigger shock for me was Shurr's argument that by and large Emily Dickinson's critics have missed the strong eroticism of many of her poems. Seems to me my teachers and friends who value her work always knew about that. My good students have always seen it. Erotic force gives much of Dickinson its poetic kick.

SGL

THE UNDISCOVERED CONTINENT: Emily Dickinson and the Space of the Mind. By Suzanne Juhasz. Bloomington: Indiana University Press. 1983. \$17.50.

Juhasz argues that Dickinson's gradual withdrawal from society was a psychologically healthy strategy for dealing with her particular situation; that is, Dickinson's mind afforded her a more private, expansive and universal world to explore than could be offered by either of the traditional domestic/feminine or public/masculine realms of action. The bulk of Juhasz's study examines how Dickinson's verse reflects this orientation towards the mind as a place: the use of the vocabularies of architecture, geography and space travel; the reliance upon analogy, parallelism and aphorism; and Dickinson's attempts to "measure" intense mental experiences (pain and delight), as well as to fathom the ultimate goal of such experiences (*viz.*, eternity). Although Juhasz's study seems limited by her reliance upon only a handful of Dickinson scholars, her thesis seems valid, and her analyses of individual poems are often provocative.

\* \* \*

THE AMERICAN NOVEL AND THE WAY WE LIVE NOW. By John W. Aldridge. New York: Oxford University Press. 1983. \$16.95.

Aldridge's book is a disappointment. After a promising first chapter tracing the evolution of the American novel, it quickly dissolves into a series of book reviews (DeLillo's *Players*, Styron's *Sophie's Choice*) or general surveys of a writer's career (Kosinski, Baldwin), interspersed with brief, rather cynical appraisals of contemporary American life. Offering regrettably few insights and no documentation, the book seems oddly fragmented, impressionistic and subjective.

Rhode Island School of Design

Alice Hall Petry

LITERARY ADMIRERS OF ALFRED STIEGLITZ. By F. Richard Thomas. Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press. 1983. Cloth: \$14.50.

In this brief study of the relationship between the photographic aesthetics of Alfred Stieglitz and the literature of four American moderns, Gertrude Stein, William Carlos Williams, Hart Crane and Sherwood Anderson, the author performs an admirable job of presenting the points of comparison but inadequately demonstrates them. In spite of its shortcomings, however, this book is a fascinating volume and suggests an exciting field for further study.

Iowa State University

Charles L. P. Silet

UNCLE SAM PRESENTS: A Memoir of the Federal Theatre 1935-1939. By Tony Buttita and Barry Witham. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press. 1982. \$20.00.

The Federal Theatre Project was one of the most innovative, and most controversial, of the New Deal programs. Its energetic director, Hallie Flannagan, had a three-fold purpose: to find work for unemployed actors and technicians; to reach a vast new audience who had never seen a live stage performance; and to promote a new form of theatre more in tune with American realities. She published her personal account of the experiment in *Arena* (1940); Jane D. Mathews has provided a solidly researched study in her *The Federal Theatre* (1967). This memoir by Tony Buttita, who was a reporter for *The Federal Theatre Magazine* and press agent for several of the project's productions, adds interesting insider sidelights. But he does not substantively alter what is known. Perhaps the most significant contribution is how Buttita inadvertently documents—even while seeking to rebut—opponents' charges of political propagandizing.

University of Nebraska-Lincoln

John Braeman

## the city

CITY OF THE RIGHT: Urban Applications of American Conservative Thought. By Gerald L. Houseman. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press. 1982. \$25.00.

Houseman examines the work of five prominent conservative authors—Edward Banfield, William Buckley, Jr., Milton Friedman, Irving Kristol and Ayn Rand—to construct a composite philosophy from their views of the American city and its problems and to suggest thereby how we might better understand and anticipate urban policies in the Reagan administration. Honest about his own position (“This author hoped that conservative governance could have been avoided....”), he is not heartened by the ideas of his five sources, aside from their commendable “frankness.” He finds a philosophy “which can only be called uncaring, brutal, divisive, and inhumane.” While noting major differences in style and minor ones in ideas, Houseman skillfully critiques their common belief in political orthodoxy (emphasis on authority and elite leadership), inequality of income and opportunity, and technological and market economic solutions to all human problems. The findings in this analysis of conservative thinkers who either dislike cities or most of the people living in them are not likely to surprise many people, but the presentation is witty, passionate, unsympathetic, fresh and clear. Ironically the book is grossly over-priced.

\* \* \*

CITY BUILDING IN THE NEW SOUTH: The Growth of Public Services in Houston, Texas, 1830-1910. By Harold L. Platt. Philadelphia: Temple University Press. 1983. \$29.95.

The author of this thoroughly researched case history of the planning, implementation and development of public infrastructure and services of Houston's early years makes excellent use of a generation of conceptual gains in American urban and social history. Exploring Houston's “reciprocal” process of growth and change in physical form (natural and built), social organization and political-economic behavior, Platt argues that local public service development, like the city's growth and prominence, was increasingly dependent on national political and economic influences, particularly in the two decades

before 1910 when Houston (population 78,000) became the Southwest's leading city. However, he provides little sense of the social patterns; carelessly interchanges key terms like city builders and city planners, city and metropolitan area; is redundant; and too often fails to elaborate what was important amid the wealth of detail presented. Platt may well be right that his local case study offers excellent opportunity to verify recent generalizations in American history, but too many of them are assumed rather than tested here. What does emerge, nonetheless, is a superbly documented record of "a growing mastery of the city-building process" by Houston's leading citizens.

University of Washington

John Hancock

**THE POLITICS OF PARK DESIGN: A History of Urban Parks in America.** By Galen Cranz. Cambridge, Massachusetts and London: MIT Press. 1982. \$25.00.

The subtitle claims too much. Cranz focuses upon only three cities—New York, Chicago and San Francisco—and with regard to those cities deals primarily with playgrounds and large "country" parks on the Central Park model. Her interest is not in the aesthetics, but rather the politics, of park design. And even within her self-imposed limits, she has sought to depict "general trends, often at the expense of the full particulars leading to and stemming from specific events." She finds four distinct phases in the development of American park design. During the first—titled "The Pleasure Ground: 1850-1900"—the ideal animating the civic-minded elite responsible for park policy was to provide escape to the country as a refuge from the evils of the city. In the second—"The Reform Park: 1900-1930"—"efficiency-minded experts in recreation" strove to make parks (or more accurately, playgrounds) "a mechanism of social reform." In the era of "The Recreational Facility: 1930-1965," "park bureaucrats" devoted their energies to physical expansion rather than programing. Since roughly 1965, park policy has suffered from a "philosophical vacuum." Given Cranz's rather thin research, her conclusions are more provocative than definitive.

University of Nebraska-Lincoln

John Braeman

## religion and reform

**BREAKING BREAD: The Catholic Worker and the Origin of Catholic Radicalism in America.** By Mel Piehl. Philadelphia: Temple University Press. 1982. \$19.95.

The Catholic Worker, probably the American movement which has best demonstrated the power of the fusion of profound traditional spirituality and a thoroughly radical politics, has received plenty of attention from American authors and critics. The power of committed, radical idealism is a strong attraction not only to the few who live it, but also to those who have a sense of shortcoming in their own lives up to a lesser standard. Thus we can expect the stream of books and articles on Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin—both clear candidates for eventual canonization in the Catholic Church—and their Catholic Worker to continue indefinitely.

Because the Catholic Worker is a movement of the heart and soul, to some degree the secondary works on it will never quite catch its spirit, its intensity. Thus the several works of Day, including her autobiography, *The Long Loneliness*, will continue to be the fundamental sources. However, scholars such as Piehl have an important role to play in focusing an objective eye on the movement; among the secondary studies, this is a good one. Piehl's scholarship is sound, and, in addition to chronicling the movement as a whole, he performs an important service by discussing the effect of participation in the movement on such reformers as Michael Harrington and Eugene McCarthy and by discoursing on the origins of Catholic pacifism in America—an interesting piece of background in light of the recent signs of the evolution of the Catholic Church from a defender of the status quo to a critic of social oppression and nuclear armaments.

TM

THE LANE REBELS: Evangelicalism and Antislavery in Antebellum America. By Lawrence T. Lesick. Metuchen, New Jersey, and London: Scarecrow Press. 1980. \$15.00.

Nearly five decades ago, Gilbert H. Barnes in his pathbreaking *The Antislavery Impulse* showed the connection between antislavery and evangelical Protestantism, pointed out the critical role played by the revivalism of Charles G. Finney in laying the basis for this linkage, and pictured the 1834 debate over slavery at Lane Seminary in Cincinnati, the conversion of most the students involved to immediate emancipation, and their exodus in response to a trustee crackdown as a pivotal episode in the emergence of the abolitionist movement. Lesick accepts rather than challenges this interpretation; his contribution lies in giving a fuller and more detailed account of the events at Lane.

University of Nebraska-Lincoln

John Braeman

## the military

MEN WANTED FOR THE U.S. ARMY: America's Experience With an All-Volunteer Army Between the World Wars. (Contributions in Military History, No. 27) By Robert K. Griffith, Jr. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press. 1982. \$29.95.

More than an account of the recruiting and composition of the Army from 1920 to 1940, this book analyzes the factors that influenced the size and quality of the forces. Higher pay and increased benefits, the author contends, do not insure "quality" recruits, and the technology of warfare and America's increased commitments abroad may demand peacetime conscription. Solidly researched and well written, this study provides information and insights pertinent to the continued debate over the best method to procure soldiers and their role in defense of the national interest.

\* \* \*

YORKTOWN'S CAPTIVE FLEET. By John O. Sands. Charlottesville, Virginia: University Press of Virginia. 1983. \$25.00.

Conventional historical research is combined with underwater archaeology to provide a fascinating study of the campaign that many consider the most decisive of the American Revolution. Beginning with the gloomy military outlook for the colonies in the spring of 1781, the author describes the ambitious British strategy designed to conclude hostilities and the valiant efforts of Washington and his forces. The British army, driven to Yorktown in hope of supplies, reinforcements or escape by sea, was compelled to surrender when the Royal Navy was repulsed by a joint French and American fleet at the Battle of the Virginia Capes. The effect in London was a change in government and negotiations for peace and independence. Based on primary sources and investigation of sunken ships, this account adds new light on the events that took place that memorable fall. Illustrated with prints, sketches and photographs, with a description of vessels engaged, this well documented book will appeal to both scholars and buffs.

University of Miami

Raymond G. O'Connor