

BOOK REVIEWS

Harold C. Livesay. Samuel Gompers and Organized Labor in America. Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1978. Pp. x, 195. Paper, \$8.95.

Harold C. Livesay, a former railroader now of the University of Michigan, has written a brief, perceptive biography of Samuel Gompers which maintains the splendid reputation of the Library of American Biography series. Livesay's account will surely disappoint both the "waiting for Lefty" school of labor history and those who would canonize the former cigarmaker. The author credits Gompers' success in organizing a national federation of crafts to his genius for adapting the labor movement to an America which eschewed both ideology and radical solutions to its social problems. Most Americans were, in Richard Hofstadter's phrase, "expectant capitalists" who regarded themselves as Americans first and workers second. Gompers' business unionism rested on a federation of craft unions which supported economic means to achieve immediate, pragmatic goals such as higher wages, shorter hours, and better conditions. Livesay acknowledges that Gompers "built as best he could on the territory he could hold. His successors have done no more" (p. 8).

Livesay indicts Gompers for failing to use political means to achieve labor's goals, because this choice "uncoupled the labor movement from the locomotive of history" (p. 43). The author concludes that Gompers sheathed his most powerful weapon, and his alternative, economic reprisals against selected employers, proved ineffective. Livesay is also harsh on the labor leader for not championing the interests of women, blacks, and unskilled workers. Consequently Gompers alienated the majority of American workers and placed the American Federation of Labor outside of the mainstream of an American society which cried out for organization based on industry rather than craft.

Gompers was a complex, narrow man, unabashedly ambitious, yet personally incorruptible; a conservative realist not above mouthing socialist rhetoric; the organizer of an apolitical Federation who built a powerful political base for himself within the labor movement. Livesay's pen is sharp but fair; his writing style colorfully embellishes a solid piece of scholarly work that is enriched by several vivid metaphors. His chapters contain several summaries of Gompers' credo and his impact on the American labor movement which make this work a useful teaching tool that can be read with great profit and joy by high school or graduate students who ponder the plight of the American worker during the great age of industrial expansion from Grant to Coolidge. Livesay's book stands not only as a brilliant portrait of an important figure in American history, but as a testimonial to the great value of the author's own work experiences in helping him articulate the visceral feelings which have characterized the American worker's response to the political, social, and economic environment.

SUNY Empire State College

Frank J. Rader

Leroy Ostransky. Jazz City: The Impact of our Cities on the Development of Jazz. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1978. Pp. 274. Cloth, \$10.95; paper, \$5.95.

In his introduction to Jazz City, Leroy Ostransky states that "Jazz can happen anywhere." The remainder of his study of the impact of our cities on the development of jazz shows that this music did not happen just anywhere and that New Orleans, Chicago, Kansas City, and New York provided special environments for the flowering of early jazz. Ostransky offers what he calls a "jazz spirit," which seems uniquely American yet only vaguely defined, in order to explain the emergence of jazz in certain cities. A frontier

atmosphere, the tension and social change of industrialization, and a "climate of lawlessness" are facets of this "jazz spirit" which he finds in the four cities he has chosen to study.

The notion of a frontier as a point of cultural interaction and tension emerges as a major theme in the chapters on New Orleans. Ostransky considers class and color prejudices within the Black community and describes the musical interaction (forceably induced by post-Reconstruction Era Jim Crow laws) between Creoles schooled in waltzes, quadrilles, and French opera and the "uptown" musicians who played and sang the blues.

Chicago is also seen as a frontier city, first as a transportation center and gateway to the West, and later as a center of economic and racial conflict between immigrants and newly-migrated Blacks from the South. Industrial Chicago was a magnet for many who created, listened to, and purchased the recordings of "hot" jazz that percolated there during the teens and twenties. In their respective decades, Kansas City and New York also drew jazz innovators and audiences to their neighborhoods.

Lawlessness is yet another component in Ostransky's "jazz spirit." His most colorful narrative introduces us to slum districts, city government corruption, and prostitution, which he calls a "persistent element in the evolution of jazz." The precise influence of prostitution on the music itself is unclear. Indeed, ragtime piano "professors" played in the whorehouses of New Orleans, but can their involvement in the business of prostitution explain the type of music they played?

This illustrates a methodological weakness of Jazz City: its attempt to bridge the gap between good social history and jazz antiquarianism. This is a difficult task, to be sure, but by citing those aspects of urban American life which have been used to explain so many other manifestations of our popular culture, the author weakens his argument with respect to the special nature of jazz. The frontier as a point of interaction, social mobility, and lawlessness existed as jazz developed, but it is not clear to what extent they can be considered causative factors which can explain, for example, the evolution of the swing band or of a style called Be Bop.

Yet the book provides excellent descriptions of the music and its earliest creators. Ostransky has chosen some colorful anecdotes and has made judicious use of other writings on jazz to evoke the feeling of the city environment and its music. While the author's conceptual framework may not answer all of the reader's questions about the origins of jazz (African influences, for example, have little place in Ostransky's analysis), the author has asked some of the questions of the social historian. Jazz City provides much excellent description and many insights for the student of American cultural history as well as for the student of American music.

Columbia University
Rutgers University

Barbara L. Yolleck

Melvyn Dubofsky, Athan Theoharis, and Daniel M. Smith. The United States in the Twentieth Century. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1978. Pp. xiv, 545. Paper, \$13.95.

Only ten years ago, a few textbooks dominated the field of twentieth-century United States history. Now, with publishers flooding the market, the authors of The United States in the Twentieth Century believe that their book "is distinctive from other competing texts" (xiv) because it avoids a narrow focus on politics, economics, and diplomacy. Although the book's

distinctiveness might be questioned, students should find the content interesting and the moderate revisionism of the authors challenging. There are three principal themes: the influences of continuity and change on culture and economics; the institutional nature of American politics; and the new internationalism with its interventionist and expansionist tendencies. There is more emphasis on ethno-cultural factors in society and politics than customary, and sections on popular culture have been integrated into the traditional subject matter.

The United States in the Twentieth Century has 33 chapters divided into nine sections, and it is almost evenly split between the period from 1900 to 1940 and the years since then. There are brief bibliographies for each section, and helpful demographic statistics and tables are scattered throughout the text and included in an "Appendix." Unfortunately, the book suffers from the hazards of multiple authorship, some of which were undoubtedly compounded by the untimely death of Professor Smith. Although Professor Dubofsky served as general editor and wrote introductions to the nine sections, the organization is uneven. For example, there are virtually identical quotations from Herbert Hoover on pages 162 and 189, and passages on pages 207 and 214 repeat statements about the working class during the Great Depression. Some of the redundancies might have been reduced had the chapter on the politics of the 1920s preceded rather than followed the chapter on the culture, economics, and society of that decade.

Despite these flaws, the book should stimulate discussion. New scholarship has been woven into the text, and students should find sections on the transformation of the presidency, labor and industrial relations, and national security policy among the most enlightening and potentially provocative parts of the book. Although the virtues of the book outweigh its drawbacks, careless editing is evident. A caption under a photograph of Jimmy Carter addressing Congress with Walter Mondale and Tip O'Neil standing behind him reads: "Jimmy Carter announcing his candidacy, Washington D.C., December 12, 1974" (p. 504), and Edgar Lee Masters, not Edward Arlington Robinson, wrote Spoon River Anthology (p. 170).

All things considered, The United States in the Twentieth Century is a concise and relatively solid textbook that is suitable for undergraduates at several levels. An instructor's manual with brief summaries of chapters and a variety of questions accompanies the textbook.

University of Oregon

Eckard V. Toy, Jr.

Jack Bass and Walter DeVries. The Transformation of Southern Politics: Social Change and Political Consequence Since 1945. New York: Meridian, 1976. Pp. xi, 531. Paper, \$5.95.

This study of contemporary southern politics was written by a journalist and a political scientist. The authors initially give an overview of events in the South since 1945, and then cover each ex-confederate state in a separate chapter. The authors evaluate the decline in the power of southern Congressmen and consider the potential of organized labor in the South. The result is a comprehensive study of the recent South that can be read profitably by laymen, students, and scholars.

The authors state that their research methodology was similar to that used by V. O. Key, Jr., in his classic Southern Politics in State and Nation (1949), though they seem to have relied more on interviews. They employed census data, a nationwide opinion survey about southerners, and materials

from the Comparative States Election Project, but the information from these sources was not used to develop any elaborate quantitative analysis of the recent South. Also, the authors either failed to use, or did not effectively use, some of the recent studies of southern politics, such as those by Numan V. Bartley, Hugh D. Graham, William C. Harvard, Alfred O. Hero, Joseph Bernd, and Perry Howard. But the book has other redeeming qualities that give it great potential as an assigned reading in the classroom.

There are two main themes in this book: the challenge to the one-party system in the South by the Republican Party, and increased participation of Blacks in the southern political system. There are other themes as well, but they all support the view that the South is in transition and is blending in with the nation.

Students will find many familiar names, such as Wallace, Thurmond, and Byrd, in the book. The success of Georgia Democrat Jimmy Carter in his bid for the Presidency in 1976, and the increasing role of southern Republicans in Congress and national politics, such as Senator Howard Baker and Republican National Committee Chairman William Brock, both of Tennessee, help make it timely reading for today's students who express an interest in relevant books.

The book is very readable, and the anecdotal material from the interviews adds a special flavor as well as offering insights into the main characters in the contemporary South. The several charts and maps can be used as the basis of many classroom discussions. This is a good addition to the list of paperbacks that can be used in courses on the American South, recent American history, Black history, and contemporary politics.

Fort Hays State University

James L. Forsythe

Allan R. Millett, ed. A Short History of the Vietnam War. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1978. Pp. xx, 169. Cloth, \$12.50; paper, \$3.95.

The title of this work is deceptive; it is not a history of the Vietnam War. Classroom teachers could use just such a work, and it is unfortunate that the Indiana University Press is exploiting that need instead of filling it. Allan Millett has edited a collection of essays that first appeared in the Washington Post between 1973 and 1975, added a chronology and bibliography of the war, and tacked on a foreword by General Edward G. Lansdale. The latter does not enhance the work since it is nothing more than an embarrassing ramble by the expert on counter-insurgency warfare. Lansdale suggests that we could have won the war by "creating an international tribunal of jurists . . . drawn from our allies and us . . . [that] could have examined the evidence that the aggression in South Vietnam was being directed by the Politburo in Hanoi" and then could have provided license for the American war on the North (pp. xii-xiii). Would the General have been eager to have such a tribunal functioning in October of 1955 (nearly a decade before even the U.S. government detected Northern regulars in the South) when he personally led a team of saboteurs into Hanoi and Haiphong to sabotage the transportation facilities in North Vietnam? Lansdale's essay only provides students with fresh evidence of the arrogance of those who made the policy on the war.

If this book were allowed to fly under its true colors (and if the Lansdale essay had been omitted), it might have had some merit as a book of essays dealing with the war. The Washington Post analysts are thoughtful and frequently disarmingly frank, and students might have profited from their insights into Vietnam. But even those positive qualities are colored by the inclusion of essays which may have been inspired journalism but which simply

failed to stand the test of time. For example, Thomas Lippman's essay, "The South: Amid Ruin, A Chance to Survive," originally published at the time of the Paris Peace agreement, speculates favorably on the prospects for the survival of the Thieu government. Another piece by Charles Moskos, Jr., "Military Made Scapegoat for Vietnam," is both shrill and silly in its argument that the American military is a major victim of the Vietnam war. On the other hand, the essays by Murrey Marder ("Our Longest War's Tortuous History") and George C. Wilson ("Hard-Learned Lessons in a Military Laboratory") are sound and well-reasoned.

On balance, however, Millett's book fails on several grounds: the analysis is frequently flawed or outdated; the failure to discriminate in the choice of essays (the only chore of the editor) is apparent; and most importantly, students will not receive a sound historical analysis of the war. Even where he succeeds, Millett has only proven that good journalism is not necessarily good history.

A Short History of the Vietnam War illustrates one further reality of the Vietnam experience which both publishers and teachers might well ponder: the oversimplification of the history of a complex historical phenomenon such as Vietnam might be as dangerous as was the simplistic analysis of the complex circumstances in Vietnam which drew us into the war in the first place. I continue to believe that the best approach to teaching the war relies upon the New York Times one-volume Pentagon Papers. Nothing else succeeds so well in revealing both the complexity of the Vietnam quagmire and the arrogance and self-deception of the American leadership.

SUNY College at Cortland

Frank Burdick

Barbara Mayer Wertheimer. We Were There: The Story of Working Women in America. New York: Pantheon Books, 1977. Pp. xii, 427. Paper, \$6.95.

For nearly three hundred years women have participated in the labor force in America; as author Barbara Wertheimer states, "we were there" in the lines but shared unequally in the rewards. Wertheimer, herself a former organizer for the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America and now a writer and professor at Cornell University's School of Industrial and Labor Relations, is well-qualified to tell the story of working women in America from colonial days to the early twentieth century. The thesis of her work is straightforward: women bore an equal burden but shared unequally in the rewards, fighting an uphill battle for improved conditions in the work force while at the same time maintaining the home and family. The basic ethos of America was that "women's place is in the home." Although women and children worked outside the home through economic need, this conventional wisdom enabled men to discount the value of their labor and to spurn their participation in the union movement, forcing them to organize separately. Women and children were at the bottom of the economic pyramid, the ultimate source of cheap labor, easily exploited and yet necessary to the system.

Wertheimer treats working women as a class, basing much of her story on documents from the unknown and anonymous. The work is thus part of the current wave of women's history which seeks to avoid the creation of heroines as counterparts to the "great men" approach of traditional male-dominated and male-written history. Yet the author's open sympathy for her subjects makes any attempt at unbiased objectivity impossible. The work reflects her admiration for their struggles and their bravery. However, this is the book's great strength for classroom use: the account is dramatic and compelling, and it illuminates an aspect of the economic history of America which is often

overlooked as we recount the rise of the United States to the status of today's economic giant.

The book traces the decline of women from their position of relative equality in colonial America when their scarcity and the value of their labor made them real "partners." One outcome of the Revolution was an increase in the importance of English common law, which denied married women any rights. The significant revolution for laboring women was the Industrial Revolution, for they and their children were to become a substantial portion of that cheap and abundant labor pool which so changed the American economic system. While the Lowell or Waltham system did perhaps act in a paternalistic way to provide economic opportunities for young New England farm girls, those relatively pleasant conditions soon deteriorated as immigration increased the labor pool, and by the 1840s women began a century-long process of protesting, organizing, striking, being defeated and forced to accept miserable wages and conditions, or starving. Little differentiated the fate of the poor white woman from the female slave; theoretical freedom meant for most enslavement to the factory system or domestic service and a life of misery. As different types of work became available a similar story was repeated. When a job became stigmatized as "women's work," wages were one-half what men made and conditions were literally what the traffic would bear. The author does not claim that male workers had an easy time of it, but the wage differential struck women and children, not the white male.

The narrative of women's attempts to organize becomes, in this context of tales of misery, little short of heroic. The creation of the Women's Trade Union League, which reflects today an aura of benevolent paternalism because of its support by middle class "do-gooders" and its opposition to E.R.A., is a landmark in the struggle to organize. The story of the Uprising of the 20,000, the tragic Triangle Shirtwaist Fire, and the Lawrence Strike of 1912 are focal points in the era from 1870 to 1914 and are the highpoints of the book. The work closes with reference to the formation in 1974 of the Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW), which is working within the labor union movement to achieve greater female participation in unions and politics.

The strong points of this work are many. The work is solidly based on primary and secondary sources, and the author has a lively writing style. Her liberal use of quotations, poems, and songs, and vignettes gives drama to her subject matter. The book will be useful in courses on women's history but also should have merit in the general survey for those who are seeking ways to incorporate women's history into the general American history curriculum. This reviewer would take issue with the rather emotional tone of the work, and its overly dramatic title, which may restrict its utility. The scope of the book is limited and selective; the author tells us she has had to engage in "countless sins of omission" in order to cover her subject in one volume, and she also decided to end the story in 1914, rather than bringing it to the present. One would wish for an account of the impact of war and depression on the story. Despite these criticisms, this is a very useful work.

University of Utah

Sandra C. Taylor

Patricia Branca. Women in Europe Since 1750. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1978. Pp. 223. Cloth, \$17.95.

Patricia Branca has taken on a formidable task--the evaluation of the impact of modernization on women in western Europe (principally in England, France, and Germany) from 1750 to the present. The result is an interpretative overview which traces the changes in women's condition and role from

pre-industrial through contemporary society. Neither women's oppression nor the accomplishments of female elites is of central interest here. Branca's orientation is clearly toward social history and the examination of the material circumstances and societal and self-perceptions of working and middle-class women.

Based on the research of numerous scholars, Branca develops a conceptual framework for interpreting women's history during the last three hundred years. Her thesis is that modernization, that is, industrialization and urbanization, changed not only the material conditions of women's lives, but their roles as well. As their economic and reproductive functions diminished, they gained new and important stature as the emotional center of the family. Although modernization had some negative repercussions for women, Branca sees it as a largely positive phenomenon in their "coming of age." She maintains that feminism, a concomitant development, was not merely an aspect of reformism, but the female response to change in role and status. Feminism continues in contemporary society as women face conflict between societal demands for female self-sacrifice and personal demands for adult self-expression.

Branca's work is commendable on two counts. First, she takes on the important question of modernization and develops a framework in which one can begin to evaluate its impact on the lives of women. Second, her work is explicitly comparative; she points out and attempts to explain the differences in material conditions, role expectations, and feminist responses in various European nations. However, her determination to interpret, to make sense out of the complex phenomenon of modernization and to link the past to the present has produced a distorted sense of the past and a history marred by present-mindedness. While she summarizes arguments pro and con on a variety of controversial topics--laboring conditions in pre-industrial society, demographic change, sexual expression--her treatment of many topics is cursory and her conclusions sometimes too broad and unsubstantiated.

Although Branca's prose is not always the best and the quality of her chapters is uneven, undergraduates will appreciate the fact that her work is readable, brief, and uncluttered. In spite of its limitations, it succeeds in "facilitating new thinking in new directions" on the history of modern women.

St. Mary's College of Maryland

Dana Greene

Michael Anderson. The Family and Industrialization in Western Europe, The Forum Series. St. Louis: Forum Press, 1978. Pp. 16. \$1.45. Daniel R. Browner. Russia and the West: The Origins of the Russian Revolution. The Forum Series. St. Louis: Forum Press, 1975. Pp. 16. \$1.45. David F. Trask. Woodrow Wilson and World War I. The Forum Series. St. Louis: Forum Press, 1975. Pp. 16. \$1.45. Michael Adas. European Imperialism in Asia. The Forum Series. St. Louis: Forum Press, 1974. Pp. 16. \$1.45.

Various types of series are available to history teachers. Some, like the Heath Series, have volumes that treat problems in depth. Others, like the Forum Series, offer short volumes or individual articles, either new or reprinted. From the titles available in the Forum Series, which offers new articles, the teacher could select his own textbook (Forum indeed already offers several sets of articles on a single theme bound together); or he could select material to supplement a traditional textbook; or he could present material to stimulate class discussion.

The problem is that these several uses are not necessarily compatible. If the material is used as a textbook, with no other reading, then a pamphlet

would need to present elementary information. If it is used to provide a supplementary focus, it needs to present information in some depth and perhaps advance some of the historiographic arguments. If the material is used to stimulate class discussion, it could be speculative, even outrageous, in a way that the first two uses would preclude.

The four pamphlets reviewed here are uneven in meeting this question of function: whether to provide basic information, supplementary depth, or stimulation. Michael Anderson of the University of Edinburgh in The Family and Industrialization in Western Europe comes the closest of the four to providing something for each use. In his pamphlet Anderson presents recent--very recent--demographic research in a discussion of the effects of the Industrial Revolution on family life. He attacks the folklore concerning the pre-industrial family and dismisses the "disruption" theory of industrialization; industrialization effected a number of changes on family life, but those changes took place slowly. The old conception of social atomization of the newly urbanized and industrialized peasant is simply wrong; people migrated to cities in patterns based on kinship and friendship, and in the cities the family stayed together longer. The only problem with a revisionist article--and this one revises almost all the traditional notions about the effects of the Industrial Revolution--is that its impact is lost on those who know nothing to revise. Still, The Family and Industrialization would be useful as a basic text, as supplement, or as a stimulant for discussion.

The weakest of the four pamphlets is Daniel R. Browner's Russia and the West: The Origins of the Russian Revolution. It is replete with value judgments, misleading statements, and inaccuracies. Browner avoids current discussion over the sources of the peasants' economic ills and over the industrialization of Russia, and his thesis that contact with the West caused Russia's revolution is neither proved nor well-argued. Worse still, no student without a great deal of advanced knowledge could determine why.

To his already considerable gifts as an historian David F. Trask is now adding experience as Historian of the Department of State, and his Woodrow Wilson and World War I is brilliant. Trask rejects New Left formulations and argues that Wilson fought both left and right, both revolution and reaction. What caused Wilson to go to war, Trask claims in contrast to Arthur Link, was the President's determination--his obsession--to secure the influence necessary to assure a lasting peace. While America was a belligerent he maneuvered so as to be able to compel "both the Central Powers and the Allies to accept his plans for a just and a lasting peace. . . ." Only in Trask's discussion of the peacemaking does he maintain essentially, and a little uncritically, a traditional interpretation: that Wilson bargained away details to secure his League of Nations. Trask argues that the failure of Wilson's effort to gain American ratification was because the President assumed, mistakenly, that "his ideas had broad and durable support in America," and the failure of the Versailles Treaty as a whole, Trask asserts, occurred because America did not become involved in the post-war settlement. The only failing of Trask's work is that he does not present enough evidence to let a student test his generalizations; a student would have to depend on other material.

Michael Adas of Rutgers in European Imperialism in Asia writes the pamphlet most likely to stimulate class discussion. Using a non-technical definition of imperialism and generally avoiding premature conclusions, Adas discusses the first centuries of European contact with Asia and concludes that until the nineteenth century European influence was only slight. From the time of the Industrial Revolution, however, contact became increasingly pervasive, and led to restructuring of Asian class systems and invidious influence on peasant villages. Unfortunately for the survival of colonialism

and for Asians, the Europeans tended to perpetuate increasingly anachronistic governments and institutions while they introduced elements of overwhelming change. But Adas says too little for a student entirely unacquainted with Asia to argue the hypotheses he presents.

Thus, of these four pamphlets, three are excellent studies, but only Anderson's could fulfill all three of the purposes for which a series like the Forum Series could be used. Both Trask and Adas would require students to receive information from other sources for their pamphlets to be used effectively.

North Texas State University

Bullitt Lowry

Deno J. Geanakoplos. Medieval Western Civilization and the Byzantine and Islamic Worlds. Lexington, Massachusetts: D.C. Heath and Co., 1979. Pp. xii, 513. Cloth, \$12.95.

One of the more difficult tasks for the scholar is to write a single-volume text to cover the hundreds of years known as the Middle Ages. The breakup of the Roman Empire fostered and influenced three adjacent civilizations: Medieval Europe, Byzantium, and Islam. The three cultures co-existed for centuries and each interacted with the others. Most medieval history textbooks give only passing notice to Byzantium and Islam, and the treatment is that of separation of cultures. Deno Geanakoplos' approach is that of a comprehensive and comparative history. The framework of the text is three-culture. Thus added to the difficulty of a time sequence for several centuries is the integration of cultural exchange, influence, and rejection. Geanakoplos handles the difficulties superbly.

Another unique feature of this textbook is the author's presentation of the lives of minorities in the three cultures. For example, he presents the life experiences of women, homosexuals, Jews, and heretics whenever the information is available.

The text is well organized, the bibliography useful to students, and the maps, charts, and illustrations adequate. The index is complete and helpful. Color photography would have greatly enhanced the book, but illustrations are in black and white. This book is highly recommended as a well-balanced text for upper division medieval history classes.

Northern Arizona University

Delno C. West

Edward Crankshaw. The Shadow of the Winter Palace: The Drift to Revolution, 1825-1917. New York: Penguin Books, 1978. Pp. 509. Paper, \$3.95.

Edward Crankshaw has written a detailed, witty, and accurate account of Russia between revolt (1825) and revolution (1917). He has centered it quite properly around the lives of the five tsars (including Alexander I) whose attitudes and actions defined their country's course during their reigns. His pointed character sketches show why Russia made so little industrial or political progress during the nineteenth century, and why the country was so badly managed throughout the period. Alexander II, for example, displayed throughout his twenty-five year reign "that inconsequence, that lack of a cutting edge, that alternation between enthusiasm and apathy, stubbornness and defeatism, vision and myopia, which in early days had so disconcerted his tutors" (p. 210). Nicholas II comes off worse, displaying on so many occasions "the almost awe-inspiring shallowness, the incorrigible silliness of his mind" (p. 458).

Crankshaw relies on personality sketches, describing the activities and attitudes of many Russians, both within the government and in the intellectual circles that criticized the tsars, and eventually destroyed their dynasty. His accumulated evidence shows that Russia was directed by men of limited vision, resourcefulness, and initiative. Even the precious few gifted individuals, such as Loris-Melikov, Witte, and Stolypin, who were able to create some forward movement, were undermined by hostile and fearful reactionaries.

Reliance on individuals creates a problem for the college reader: the gaggle of names quickly overwhelms and confuses. Students can easily lose sight of important themes that recur throughout the book, as they attempt to sort out ministers, intellectuals, generals, advisors. Two themes, in particular, deserve further attention: the widening gap between backward Russia and industrial-parliamentary Europe, and the presence of intellectuals of great talent. How paradoxical it is to see giants like Dostoyevsky, Tolstoy, Mussorgsky, Rimsky-Korsakov, and indeed Lenin, shining like beacons against the leaden sky of Russian politics. Emphasis on these themes at the expense of many minor individuals might have produced a more stimulating and engaging book for college audiences, and a more versatile teaching instrument for an instructor.

The format of the work is a further drawback. It desperately needs maps, graphs, charts, genealogical tables, photos, and drawings, to attract and maintain interest, and to guide the reader through the last century of the Romanov dynasty. At a time when visual imagery is so influential, an edition such as this can quickly repel students weaned on television, films, and magazines.

John Jay College of Criminal Justice

George Kirchmann

Samuel H. Mayo. A History of Mexico: From Pre-Columbia to Present. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1978. Pp. xi, 454. Paper, \$9.95.

The history of Mexico is complex because of the multidimensional, multi-racial makeup of its people. It has been a history of both violent and subtle change. Samuel H. Mayo has captured much of this essence in a succinct and informative survey of Mexican history beginning with the pre-Columbian civilizations.

The chapters, written in a crisp and often lucid prose, are brief but full of useful information and interesting anecdotes. The author examines the social, political, economic, religious, and cultural forces which have shaped Mexican history and its people. He presents vivid and striking portraits of key individuals, leaving the reader with very human images with all their strengths and frailties.

Mayo's book contains several features that have been absent in other surveys. For example, the author makes a consistent effort to present the reader with differing viewpoints on key issues and personalities, although he does exhibit strong biases against Antonio López de Santa Anna and Porfirio Díaz. He also attempts to dispel many of the negative stereotypes which have permeated other books on Mexico by presenting a balanced account of the conflict and consensus which has characterized Mexican history.

A unique feature of Mayo's book is the inclusion of three thematic chapters which provide student and teacher with an alternative approach to the study of Mexican history. Of the three, the chapter which examines the historical controversy surrounding the causes of the Mexican War is the most

useful. Unfortunately the analysis and organization which characterizes this chapter is not present in the chapter on the literature and music of the Revolution of 1910. The chapter on the revolutionary muralists is of value because of its description of various murals and its analysis of some of the muralists themselves. Its value would have been enhanced if pictures had accompanied the text.

For the most part the chapters from the pre-Columbian period until the end of the administration of Lázaro Cardenas in 1940 are well researched, balanced, and organized. There is at times a tendency to be redundant and the book's continuity might well have been improved had certain chapters been integrated. The problem comes with those chapters which attempt to present information on Mexico after the Second World War. While they do contain useful data concerning Mexico's growth and progress, they are not as tightly written or organized as preceding chapters and in fact reflect a lack of clarity as to their purpose.

Generally speaking, the text is marred by errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation. It lacks consistency in its footnoting format which can be confusing when identifying sources. At times the author has included long quotations from other sources, and, while this is not a major flaw, occasionally there arise questions as to the appropriateness of particular quotes in the text. The book contains only one chart and a map of modern Mexico. The author has included an unannotated bibliography of standard works. However, these represent only minor flaws and the instructor, lay reader, and undergraduate at the college level should not be deterred from reading this fine addition to the survey literature on Mexican history.

University of Michigan-Flint

Juan Ramón García

NOTES ON OTHER MATERIAL OF INTEREST

Philip Greven's well-received study of colonial social and intellectual history, The Protestant Temperament: Patterns of Child-Rearing, Religious Experience, and the Self in Early America, is now available in paperback, making it more useful in classrooms. Meridan (New American Library) publishes the paperback edition at \$5.95. While doubtlessly beyond the ken of most survey students, it will find a place in many advanced undergraduate and graduate courses in U.S. social, colonial, family, and religion history classes.

Forum Press of St. Louis, Mo., has been distinguishing itself in recent years with its innovations and its timely, well-written textbooks. Its World of Asia series, intended for college and high school audiences but finding a broader market as well, seeks to provide the essential background for introductions to the various Asian nations. The individual volumes in the series have now been brought together under one cover. The resulting study, Akira Iriye, et al., The World of Asia (1979; paperback, \$8.95), includes an introduction which emphasizes the relevance of Asia to American readers, and includes as well a section on Korea not previously available. As is true of the individual volumes in the series, the one-volume study is enriched with maps, photos, lists of suggested readings, and glossaries. It is likely to find uses where the individual studies were not as valuable.

REB

COMMENTARY

BY WHAT STANDARD?
A RESPONSE TO RONALD E. BUTCHART

Louis Y. Van Dyke
Dordt College

I have read with interest the article of Ronald E. Butchart, "Pedagogy of the (Less) Oppressed; Second Thoughts on the Crisis in History Teaching" (Teaching History, IV [Spring, 1979], 3-12), as well as his reply to John Anthony Scott in the same issue. Several of his contentions compel my endorsement. Butchart argues that history teachers must concern themselves with the subjective condition of their students because to concentrate only upon objective conditions of teaching and learning and to preoccupy oneself only with methods is to strike at the symptom of malaise rather than to attack the disease of alienation. He states that,

the subjective condition of the student is one that itself may contribute a great deal to the crisis in teaching. Focusing exclusively on the objective teaching conditions not only ignores the sources of much of the crisis, but can in fact deepen the alienation itself, thereby compounding the crisis.

Furthermore, he suggests that ". . . unless our dialogue has clear theoretical foundations, unless our classroom behavior springs from reasoned theoretical positions, we shall continue to generate irrelevant curricular and methodological reforms." Again I agree. Nothing is as enervating as a turgid repetition of names, dates, and places. History becomes alive only when it is subjected to analysis and interpretation. Finally, Butchart is to be commended for his candor in asserting the "politicization of history and history teaching." The study of history cannot be an "exact" science since the historian is part of the subject matter which he examines.

But herein lies the problem. Butchart must surely be aware that when we politicize history we also become propagandizers, because no one among us, I insist, is capable of an objective analysis of a given situation. We analyze according to our own presuppositions, and our conclusions inevitably reflect the same. If one presupposes that economic conditions affect our behavior and course of action, then one's analysis and one's conclusions will reflect that premise. It cannot be otherwise. However, if we take the concept of humanism seriously, Butchart is surely free to analyze the situation according to his presuppositions: just as he must allow others the freedom to operate according to theirs. In other words, when we concentrate upon the subjective condition of our students, there are not going to be any formulations according to any "clear theoretical foundations," nor can there be. Thus, it seems to me, we are not soon likely to come to an agreement as to the source or to the solution of student alienation.

While Butchart claims to offer no panacea, he does offer an analysis and possible solution to the problem. He asserts that students are victimized by "cultural imperialism," and that a history by and of an elite, therefore, simply has no relevance for them. He suggests that,

If, for instance, one perceives oneself as powerless, an object of history, not a subject, one may conclude that history is irrelevant; but one may potentially see instead that the original perception of objectivization and powerlessness was mistaken.

Certainly mistakes have been made in the past in ignoring the history of

minorities and ethnic groups, and no excuse can be made for that omission. I must caution, however, that merely giving the masses a history of themselves is to err in the other direction. We will be simply substituting one hegemonic group for another, and the teaching of history will be as unbalanced as before.

Butchart sees students' alienation as stemming from economic oppression. While I have no doubt that this may be the case in certain segments of the country where ethnic and minority groups are chronically unemployed and/or underemployed, I do question whether or not his proposition can be stated as a general rule. In my section of the nation's mid-West, the farm economy is fairly stable, there is no massive unemployment, and high school and college students can usually find part-time and summer employment--and they still abhor the study of history! I do not believe that any one explanation will satisfy to account for the lack of interest in studying history.

It seems to me that the root cause of student alienation is a spiritual one, not an economic or material one. We live in a scientific and utilitarian society in which new and bigger is considered to be better, that which happened yesterday is old and useless, and that which happens tomorrow will be better than today. As one disillusioned young history teacher told me, "My constituents believe that if you can't eat it, drink it, smoke it, play with it, sleep with it, or make money with it, it's no good." An age of materialism will certainly see no value in a study of the Declaration of Independence. For three decades at least students have been told that the possession of things, of material sufficiency, generates happiness and well-being. The end result was that along with the possession of things, we also had inflation, civil rights inequities and resultant riots, and an abominable war. Students have sensed that even though they have the bread, they are still not living. Yet, no alternative to materialism has been given, and consequently, students drift from crisis to crisis.

I reiterate my agreement with Butchart that we must work with the students' whole attitude and demeanor and that the implementation of suitable methods must follow. It seems to me that we must inculcate the notion that ideas are important, that institutions are built upon ideas, and that institutions perpetuate cultures. Now, it happens in the course of history that some institutions need to be maintained, some need to be modified, and some need to be eliminated. It is also true that no one can say with verity just which institutions belong in which category. Students must realize that it is they who are the future and that the future depends upon them. Therefore, it is incumbent upon them to study and to research just how a culture came to be what it is with what effect and whether certain cultural aspects must be retained, modified, or eliminated. We must impress upon them that their survival depends upon their ability to do so. We cannot perform the task for them. Historians are not seers. Just how we stir this student interest, of course, belongs to the critical category of methods.

RESPONSE

Ronald E. Butchart
SUNY--College at Cortland

My thanks to Professor Van Dyke for his kind words as well as his caveats. My response will be, perforce, brief.

First, let us eliminate the whipping boy. The charge that "when we politicize history we also become propagandizers" does nothing to advance the discussion. Rather, it simply ignores my original contention that history

teaching is always political inasmuch as it either reaffirms hegemony or raises its bases to a problematic. The question for the teacher is not whether politics enters his work, but where he stands vis á vis the politics inherent in his work. Determining his political stance requires constant attention to and testing of precisely those presuppositions which Professor Van Dyke apparently believes to be immutable. To label teaching "propaganda" because it recognizes the usually obscured relation between the transmission of culture and the nature of power is to obfuscate political reality or to redefine a word previously reserved for activities based on a conscious distortion of history or legend. Let me note here also, since it is a related issue, that I am not calling merely for a reversal from elite history to mass history. I trust my response to Professor Scott makes that clear.

The more central concern of my critic is the source of contemporary student alienation. He denies its material base, preferring to argue that student alienation is a spiritual problem arising from a materialistic culture. Curiously, in denying a materialist interpretation of student alienation, Professor Van Dyke reaffirms it, for the root of the spiritual problem he identifies (a problem not unlike the condition I describe as alienation from love, community, or connectedness) is, in his words, "an age of materialism" His description, particularly the apt quotation from his disillusioned young friend, describes nothing so well as a society immersed in the fetishism of commodities, an alienated society in the best of materialist interpretations. Thus we appear to be back to my original argument.

I carried my analysis further, however, suggesting that the alienation from knowledge reflects as well an alienation from meaningful participation in social production--an alienation from work. The observation that young mid-westerners still find summer employment bears little relevance to that argument, except to add further unintended support to the original formulation. My remark that "in the arena of productive labor, [young people] have been alienated from meaningful roles throughout their dependency" referred not to the opportunity to sell their labor power to McDonald's or K-Mart (itself a symptom of alienation). Rather, it referred to the idea that the degradation of labor in the last century was a process of human degradation that contributes to the destruction of community, inasmuch as the worker's role in productive processes becomes increasingly machine-like or animal-like; that modern work increasingly requires "a stupefied population," as Christopher Lasch observes, "resigned to work that is trivial and shoddily performed, predisposed to seek its satisfaction in the time set aside for leisure," and hence contributes to an alienation from knowledge; and that the objectification of man as labor power, a commodity, contributes mightily to man's subsequent tendency to commodify or objectify all of his relationships, including his relationship to the past or to any of the humane studies. We must understand the cumulative impact of those historical tendencies if we are to understand the current crisis in learning.

We may well not "come to an agreement as to the source or to the solution of student alienation," as Professor Van Dyke asserts, but that does not mean that the source or solution is unknowable. The philosophical solipsism behind that notion is untenable. Nor is it true that there will be no formulations according to "clear theoretical foundations." We will each reach a formulation, some from clear theoretical perspectives, others from obscure theoretical perspectives. Too often in the past the latter defined our work--with few positive results. Perhaps if we take seriously the historical nature of alienation we can make some modest movement toward assuring our students that their future will be worth inheriting.

TEXTBOOKS AND THE NEW YORK TIMES AMERICAN HISTORY EXAMINATION

James Hantula
University of Northern Iowa

James L. McElroy's review of four American history textbooks (Teaching History, II [Fall, 1977], 67-73) provides several insights into the crisis of classroom teaching. In addition, it appears to endow the New York Times American history examination with unquestioned relevance to the crisis and to textbooks. However, the relevance of the examination is not apparent. Limited technical data about the results of the examination have been made public. More important, specific facts are not emphasized on the examination. Indeed, the examination is politically partisan, sexist, and concerned with the present.

The Times did not publish the topical specifications of the examination nor describe the process by which the level of items was determined. Some information was made public regarding the sampling procedure and administration of the survey. But reliability and validity coefficients were not revealed. Concurrent validity with current textbooks, for example, was not discussed. Without this technical data, it is difficult to assess the relevance of the examination. As professional organizations did not support the examination, its credibility is doubtful.

Analysis of specific items on the examination reveals colonial times are "old times forgotten." References to leaders suggest American history began with Roger Williams and was fostered by General Howe, Hamilton, Washington, Jefferson. In the nineteenth century, American history appears to drift except for the leadership of Monroe, Carnegie, Morgan, Rockefeller, and McKinley. The significant persons of American history turn out to be mostly men of the twentieth century and mostly Democrats. Republicans and females are almost excluded from these "high points" of American history.

Such a history may be relevant to high school textbooks espousing similar views. Yet, the review does not indicate reading level of the four textbooks. Nor does it contrast and compare the textbooks and the Times examination. Clearly, the examination is not relevant to college textbooks since it was administered to college freshmen. Presumably, these students were not enrolled in an American history class. Hence, claim of relevance between the examination and college textbooks confuses notions of cause and effect.

In sum, the review does not establish the relevance of the New York Times examination to the four textbooks under review. A claim of relevance is made in the introduction, forgotten in the body, and noted obliquely in the conclusion of the review. Given the information provided in the review, there is little warrant for this claim. Given the limited public information about the examination, there is more warrant for a counter claim of irrelevance. The Times examination is a contributor to the crisis of classroom teaching. It is part of the problem, not the solution.

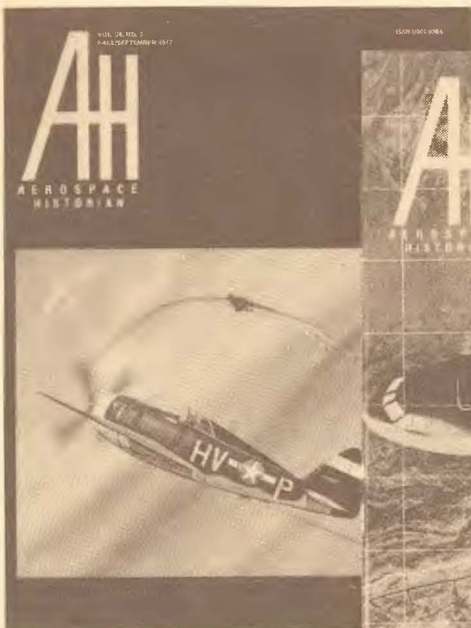
NOTES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

On April 4-5, 1980, the Texas Tech University History Department will sponsor a Conference on the Teaching of History. The sessions will revolve around contemporary problems in teaching history on the secondary, community college, and college levels. Some of these papers will be published in a book based on the Conference. Persons proposing papers in the areas of

methodology and content should submit a one page abstract by October 15 to Jayme A. Sokolow, Department of History, Texas Tech University, Lubbock, Texas 79409.

The twenty-third annual Missouri Valley History Conference will be held in Omaha, Nebraska, on March 6-8, 1980. Papers and sessions relate to the traditional topic and area studies as well as quantification, psychohistory, teaching methodology, research tools and techniques, and interdisciplinary studies. Panel, paper, and commentator proposals should be submitted by November 1, 1979, to Professor Oliver B. Pollak, Department of History, University of Nebraska at Omaha, Omaha, Nebraska 68182.

The interest of the historical profession in a reexamination of the role and structure of survey courses in undergraduate education has prompted the History Department of the United States Air Force Academy to prepare a report on teaching the Department's basic survey course in World History. The Department believes that a global approach to freshman history is necessary and that a description of their program may stimulate useful thought in other faculties. Dr. Tom McGann, Distinguished Visiting Professor, and Captain Don Bishop are coediting the report. They plan that the report, World History in Liberal Military Education, will be ready for distribution early this fall. Persons interested in receiving a copy should write to Colonel Alfred F. Hurley, Professor and Head, Department of History, USAF Academy, Colorado 80840.



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