

BOOK REVIEWS

Michael Bane. White Boy Singin' the Blues: The Black Roots of White Rock.
New York: Penguin Books, 1982. Pp. 269. Paper, \$5.95.

Michael Bane attempts to show how rock and roll evolved out of a fusion of music and lyrics as sung by black Americans, popularly called the blues, and music and lyrics as sung by white Americans, popularly known as country. The tragedy with Bane's efforts, however, stems from his inability to interpret correctly the blues from the perspective of the people who knew best what lay behind the lyrics. Too often Bane fails to rise above his own racial bias and thus the meaning of his historical approach to synthesize two musical cultures is lost in a hodgepodge of dirty language, epithets, and racial insults to black Americans. Never once in 262 pages does Bane retreat from his depreciating attitude and emphasize the positive contributions black Americans made to "white rock."

Throughout the book, Bane gets carried away in his negative romanticism of Beale Street and its surroundings, leaving his readers thinking that nothing good came from Beale Street despite his claim that white musicians worldwide, including Elvis Presley and The Beatles, owe their rendition of the blues to the Beale Street experience. Bane leaves no doubt that the blues connotes Negritude in its worst form. He places too much emphasis on color, with white Americans always paternalizing and being the mainstay of music as sung by black Americans.

Just as in most aspects of American society, Bane correctly assumes that black America may be the originator of whatever, but until white America sanctions it, it lacks legitimacy. His assumption, however, does not apply to the music industry. Black Americans have never waited for white approval to authenticate their music.

As textual material for secondary and post-secondary students, there are just too many factual errors to recommend usage in the classroom. For example, Bane claims that "it was against the law for a white man to enter a black entertainment establishment" prior to the Civil Rights Movement of the late 1950s and 1960s. Not so; white Americans have never been so restricted. Even more appalling is Bane's attempt to define the meaning of mellow in black terms. His definition of the word as meaning boring is so farfetched that this alone would disqualify this book as an effective teaching apparatus. Then, too, Bane asserts that "Philly soul [whatever this means] expressed black America's longing for acceptance. More bluntly, it spelled surrender." Surrender to whom or to what? Other than religion, music is the only other component of black culture where white acceptance historically was and is today negligible.

Contrary to Bane's conclusions, the music cultures of black and white America are separate and miles apart despite his claim that white musicians copied from blacks, refined the music and lyrics, and made the blues an acceptable form of music known as "white rock." This may be true in terms of white but not so for black America. He says himself that when the acknowledged queen of the white blues singers--Janis Joplin--attempted to satisfy a black audience, "Most of the audience had already headed for the exits. She did one more number, then stopped abruptly. If you don't want to listen, she said, then I'm going to leave."

Black Americans had turned thumbs down on the so-called white blues singer then just as they would today. In general, black Americans have never accepted white musicians such as Elvis Presley, Janis Joplin, Mickey Gilley,

or even Kenny Rogers as replacements for black musicians such as Fats Domino, Little Richard, Marvin Gaye, Smokey Robinson, Aretha Franklin, or Ray Charles.

A statistical analysis of the record industry and in-depth historical inquiry certainly prove Bane's assumptions and conclusions incorrect.

University of North Carolina at Wilmington

Phillip McGuire

Alan M. Kraut. The Huddled Masses: The Immigrant in American Society, 1880-1921. Arlington Heights, Illinois: Harlan Davidson, Inc., 1982. Pp. xi, 212. Paper, \$7.95.

Professor Allen Kraut's volume, The Huddled Masses, is a welcome addition to The American History Series published by Harlan Davidson. As he states in the introduction, the "book combines general descriptions of the new immigration with an analysis of the different aspects of new immigrant life in America."

As such, the work should be of special interest to undergraduate students. The balance between the general and the specific is handled very nicely and therefore accomplishes two things: a general and conceptual history of the new immigration from 1880 to 1921, and various vignettes of immigrant experience, ranging from life at home to a typical immigrant's inspection process at Ellis Island.

Among the topics that Kraut considers are: a) the question of why and how immigrants made the decision to emigrate; b) the eight to fourteen-day voyage aboard a crowded steamship and reception in New York, Boston, or other port of entry; c) the range of modes of work and realities of mobility; d) the pros and cons of assimilation and impact on America; and e) the emergence of nativism and restrictionist groups such as the American Protective Association, the Immigration Restriction League, and the Ku Klux Klan that, combined with antialien attitudes in the post-World War I era, culminated in exclusionary legislation.

While The Huddled Masses focuses mainly on the new immigration from southern and southeastern Europe and thereby the experiences of Russian and eastern Jews, Poles, Greeks, Italians, and Slavs, Kraut also includes valuable information on Chinese, Japanese, Mexican, and French-Canadian immigrants. The result is a comparative insight into work, living patterns, and restrictionist patterns among various groups.

Most of Kraut's findings are somewhat traditional, but his treatment is what makes the volume noteworthy. He stresses that most Europeans, for example, did not emigrate, and that many sought other alternatives to deal with deteriorating living circumstances. And these people, who more accurately fit Carl Degler's "salad bowl" description rather than the "melting pot" model, played an important and active part in shaping an American culture in the period under study.

In conclusion, as is the style of books in this series, Kraut stresses historiography throughout the text, and he has written a fine bibliographical essay. As a supplementary book, The Huddled Masses can be used profitably in either survey or upper-level courses.

Saint Joseph's College (Indiana)

William L. Downard

Gerald R. Baydo, ed. The Evolution of Mass Culture in America, 1877 to the Present. Arlington Heights, Illinois: Forum Press, 1982. Pp. 209. Paper, \$9.95.

Imagine that you are offering a seminar on the theme of the Evolution of Mass Culture in 20th Century America. You assign each student a term paper on a topic of his or her own choosing. Unfortunately, you neglect to check those topics for their relevance to the seminar theme, or to stress the importance of using original source materials. Your experience while reading the completed papers, I would suggest, would not be measurably different from reading this book.

You would find that three-quarters of the papers show a failure to grasp the main concept of the seminar, that of "mass culture." With three notable exceptions, the students have chosen to write rather standard, chronological accounts of some aspect of American social history, not that of mass culture. Given the seminar theme, the result is a rather odd collection of topics, including the rise of Native American activism, the frustrations of black politicians, and the development of environmental issues. While all the papers are well-written, their insights rarely go beyond the secondary sources on which they are heavily based, and the essays read like isolated chapters from a number of conventional textbooks. Only three pieces might merit inclusion as supplementary reading in a course on American culture. They are Peterson's piece on the emergence of the modern woman, Noveer and Ziewacz's treatment of sports in the 1920s, and Williams's selection on television programming. Although even these are flawed by heavy reliance on secondary accounts, they at least present some original interpretations that might spark class discussions.

The teacher/editor might still have made reading these papers a learning experience. However, Baydo fails to provide any rationale in the brief introduction for what must be his (or his students') non-traditional view of mass culture. More importantly, in a collection of essays as diverse as this one, he apparently saw little need for a summative or concluding chapter. All this is regrettable, for the idea of a book of readings on mass culture is an excellent one, and might have been a real addition to a number of course syllabi.

St. Mary's College of Maryland

Michael L. Berger

Michael D. Richards. Europe, 1900-1980: A Brief History. Arlington Heights, Illinois: Forum Press, 1982. Pp. 276. Paper, \$11.95.

Is there still room on the shelf beside Black and Helmreich, Craig, Dorpalen, Hughes, Paxton, Stromberg, Sumler, et al., for another survey of twentieth-century European history? Professor Michael Richards of Sweet Briar College obviously thinks so. He provides a much shorter narrative than existing texts; yet he attempts "to give some idea of how life was lived by the average man and woman" with more emphasis on social and cultural history. Professor Richards's basic approach remains chronological; he divides these eight decades into twelve chapters, averaging about twenty pages each. In addition, he provides a brief introduction and two overviews for the major sections on 1919-1949 and 1949-1979. The chapters have been embellished with three tables, nine maps, about twenty photographs, and suggested additional readings.

The apparent novelty of this author's approach becomes clearer upon closer examination of the chapter sub-sections. Here priority of place and

space falls more frequently to social, cultural, and intellectual trends within each period; for example, the first chapter on 1900-1914 discusses economic and social changes, the various classes, and the key intellectual and cultural aspects of the period before summarizing the politics and diplomacy that led to the Great War, quite a feat in fewer than twenty-four pages. Some of the subsequent chapters follow a similar pattern, especially those which discuss the development of mass popular culture in the 1920s and 1960s, but even Richards finds it difficult to neglect the primacy of politics when dealing with such significant topics as the Great War, Fascism, World War II, and the Cold War. These chapters cover events in a more traditional fashion, though with a bit on life in the trenches or on the home front, while presenting some of the conclusions of recent research.

Professor Richards has done an admirable job summarizing a significant period of European history in a short narrative account that is readable, generally accurate, and balanced. He does provide more information on popular life and culture than other texts, although some, e.g., Hughes and Stromberg, do have more detailed coverage of intellectual trends: For advanced college-level courses that focus on twentieth-century Europe, the Richards text would be too thin unless heavily supplemented. This new text would seem better suited for lower-level college students or high school students enrolled in advanced placement European history courses. In short, there may still be some room left on the shelf after Richards is placed between Paxton and Stromberg, even though there are now five editions of Hughes and three of Craig.

University of Toledo

Larry D. Wilcox

Walter Laqueur. The Terrible Secret: Suppression of the Truth About Hitler's "Final Solution." New York: Penguin Books, 1980. Pp. 262. Paper, \$5.95.

Walter Laqueur has few peers in the field of twentieth-century history. Author and editor of fifteen works, he is also editor of The Washington Quarterly and professor of contemporary history at Tel Aviv University in Israel.

It has been common knowledge for years that there was considerable knowledge of the "final solution" in the Allied countries long before the collapse of Nazi Germany. Laqueur's purpose in this work is to examine this issue systematically and determine exactly how much was known, how it was known, when, and by whom. His secondary purpose is to attempt to answer the much more difficult question, "Why was it not believed?" The necessity of attempting to answer this latter question becomes quite evident as one reads through the book, for Laqueur repeatedly demonstrates that at a very early stage of the war a great deal was known concerning the fate of the Jews, and that this information was not confined to Allied political leaders.

The time period covered by the author is from June 1941, the beginning of the German invasion of Russia, to December 1942, the date of the first common declaration by the Allied powers condemning the mass slaughter of the Jews. The date most often used to define the beginning of the policy of extermination is the Wannsee Conference of January 1942, but the author points out that the real start of mass murder began with the use of special SS units, the Einsatzgruppen, that followed the German army into Russia in the summer of 1941. The selection of the later date is less debatable since the Allied declaration, although it did not mention specific techniques or localities, was obviously based on the knowledge that the Nazis were engaged in systematic mass murder.

The six chapters of the book attempt to answer the above questions by a consideration of the different groups or countries from which information originated, i.e. Germany, the allies, the neutral countries, Poland, and the Jews in and outside of Europe. The sources of information were as varied as the victims themselves. Vatican envoys, Red Cross officials, neutral diplomats, front line troops on leave, members of the resistance, and neutral businessmen all brought back to the West news that something monstrous was underway in Eastern Europe and Russia.

Why then was the information so frequently misunderstood or simply rejected? To this question Laqueur contends that there cannot be one or even several easy answers. He believes that only an appreciation of the uniqueness of the situation offers any hope of understanding how "paralyzing fear . . . , reckless optimism . . . , disbelief . . . or genuine ignorance . . ." combined to blunt information on the Holocaust.

This book should certainly become a mainstay in any modern Europe course or even the second part of a western civilization or world history survey. His style and language are clear and precise, and his step-by-step reconstruction of how messages originated, were transmitted, and then by whom and how received, is a model of historical research. The subject is compelling and offers to the student a new approach to a dark chapter in modern history. In light of recent world unreaction to the events in Cambodia, his speculations as to the reasons for rejection or disbelief of the news of the Holocaust appear timely and convincing. Overall, a solid work of scholarship and a very useful addition to the classroom for book reviews, lecture material, research projects, or required reading.

Clayton Junior College

Robert H. Welborn

Deborah Gorham. The Victorian Girl and the Feminine Ideal. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982. Pp. 223. Cloth, \$20.00.

If man's inhumanity to man is the major theme of all recorded history, men's inhumanity to women is an important secondary theme. The oppression of women has been one of the least sensational but most pervasive features of western civilization. Women would accept their inferior status more willingly if they believed that the inferiority was natural and proper, and so in the nineteenth century men set out to convince them of exactly that.

In The Victorian Girl and the Feminine Ideal, Deborah Gorham documents the Victorian socialization of women into the cult of femininity and domesticity. The men were so successful at the manipulation that many of the most important writers of the literature for mothers and young women were women themselves.

The cult of domesticity was essential to the Victorian male not so much because he feared the competition of women as because he needed a refuge from the vicious competition of expanding capitalism. His wife was his helpmate; his daughters his sunbeams; and his sons future cut-throat capitalists who would need the same refuge from the world that he needed himself.

The extremes to which the apostles of femininity had to go in idealizing the submissive and self-sacrificing wife and mother are probably a measure of women's resistance to that role. The manipulation was supposed to be gentle, but it could be very harsh. If parents together with novels, poems, manuals, and correspondence columns were enough to convince most

Victorian girls and women, there was always the threat of the clitoridecomy for any whose "'chlorotic' or 'hysterical' symptoms" or menstrual problems convinced her doctor that she had been masturbating.

For the person who is familiar with Victorian history and literature The Victorian Girl and the Feminine Ideal will contain no surprises, but Gorham has written an informative and interesting book.

SUNY-Cortland

C. Ashley Ellefson

Frank F. Mathias. G.I. Jive: An Army Bandsman in World War II. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1982. Pp. xii, 227. Cloth, \$17.50.

Library shelflists are filled with memoirs and autobiography. Water-gate inspired many such inside stories and Presidents now retire from office with a first task of writing their memoirs. For all of this recent attention, it has doubtless been the country's wars that have generated the most numerous and often the best of the genre. For the most part, however, war-related memoirs celebrate the generals, the tacticians, or the political leadership behind them. G.I. Jive is unique. In this memoir, Frank Mathias, a professional historian, presents the memoir of an army bandsman with service in the Pacific theatre during 1943-1945.

The account is based on numerous family letters written during those years, but also on a careful gleaning of related newspaper and secondary sources. Mathias is most scrupulous in his attempts at historical accuracy. He is to be particularly congratulated on his inclusion of maps detailing campaigns in Papua and the Philippines, including Luzon and Manila. For all of that attention to accuracy, this book is not the account of a professional historian. Rather it is a lively, personal account of a young and naive Kentucky saxophone player who, at 19, found himself called into his country's service. Each new army base, each new experience -- from Fort Benning to Manila -- combined the novel with the educational. Clearly Mathias matured considerably during the war years. Yet while the book shows that maturation, it is not a self-analytical treatment designed to give a larger message about war and its effects. What is exciting is the innocence with which each new personal experience was incorporated into Mathias's memory and the way in which he has woven those memories into a perspective on the war. Not merely a bandsman stationed on the base, he witnessed assaults and invasions as part of his service. Thus his story is one with insight into army base life as well as front-line exposure to the Japanese. We find out much about a young soldier's thoughts toward the enemy, his battles with that other enemy -- tropical disease, and his feeling for his comrades in music. All of this constitutes fascinating reading. Accompanying the text are photographs of Mathias's unit plus war scenes which add to our understanding of the memoir.

Much to the surprise of this reader, G.I. Jive has much to offer. Read as the memoir that it is, it offers historians important perspectives on the fighting of World War II. The book would be a worthwhile addition to both public and academic libraries particularly since the atypical experiences described will provide balance to the more traditional memoirs of war.

Georgia College

Thomas F. Armstrong

David E. Kyvig and Myron A. Marty. Nearby History: Exploring the Past Around You. Nashville: The American Association for State and Local History, 1982. Pp. xiii, 300. Cloth, \$15.95

The team of Kyvig and Marty have undertaken to extend the product of an earlier collaboration, Your Family History: A Handbook for Research and Writing, to that of a general treatment of the local historical scene. Using the term "nearby history" to encompass the various dimensions of the local historical experience (family, community, church, ethnic group, gender) Kyvig and Marty have sought to identify as well as analyze new methodological approaches to "exploring the past around you" based upon analysis, comparison, and change over time. In addition, the authors have attempted, through this introductory work, to pull together the numerous threads of what might be called the "new local history."

Kyvig and Marty organize their text as a "how to" of "nearby history." This comprehensive presentation of what another historian called "microhistory" begins with a discussion of the motivation for studying history, local history in particular. With the inspiration established, the authors move carefully from the "how to" find a topic through the "how to" locate, analyze, and preserve documentary, oral, and visual sources. A similar treatment of artifacts and architecture is followed with a final application of the "how to" technique to the writing and publishing of the product of these labors. The authors conclude with a chapter that seeks to bridge the gap between those historians (frequently amateur) dedicated to recalling nearby experiences and those (frequently professional) concerned with painting the big picture. The authors maintain that historiographical changes associated with "the new social history" have gone far, especially with their emphasis upon history from the bottom up, to establish a common ground of both topical interests and methodological expertise between these untoward sisters.

In addition to being a substantive treatment of the "whys," "wherefores," and "why nots" of local history, this work is an excellent learning tool as well as a thorough reference guide. Throughout one finds integrated, frequently in neat boxes, an abundance of documentary and illustrative support material. The excellent bibliographical essays that follow each chapter are especially comprehensive, up to date, and valuable for further inquiries. The appendices include samples of forms/applications as well as numerous sources of public information necessary to collect, preserve, and protect the products of local history.

While this is a strong work, there are a few points with which one might take issue. First, the authors' use of the word "trace," more or less to refer to sources of historical information, proves a bit ambiguous. This reader could not shake the image of an oft-tread Indian path winding its way through the wilderness of the Ohio country. Second, some of the text reads a bit like an outline. Nevertheless, this work succeeds both as a methodological synthesis and as a reference guide to local history. Professional historians and those who simply dabble in the business of reconnoitering a nearby past should profit substantially from this fine effort by David Kyvig and Myron Marty.

Glenn C. Altschuler. Race, Ethnicity, and Class in American Social Thought, 1865-1919. Arlington Heights, Illinois: Harlan Davidson, Inc., 1982. Pp. xv, 141. Paper, \$6.95.

While this is a well written little book, it suffers somewhat from a lack of tight organization. A wealth of researched materials has been cleverly synthesized for a valuable and interesting profile of Blacks, Native Americans, and immigrants. It emphasizes the conditions, patterns and experiences of each group. Assimilation is addressed but lacks any formal analysis.

In Chapter I, "The Persistence of Race and Racism," Altschuler traces the transition of racist thought from its "scientific" or biological basis in the nineteenth century to the social, political, and cultural circumstances arguments of the twentieth century. There follows a brief discussion of the racial policies of the Reconstruction period and its aftermath. In summarizing the Black response to these racist ideas and policies, Altschuler presents a brief discussion of Black nationalist thought (Bishop Turner) and short critiques of the social thought of such men as Washington, DuBois, Fortune, Trotter, and Douglass. A brief but inadequate summary of the NAACP follows. The last section focuses on the Native American and the racist rationalization for territorial acquisition and the development of anti-Indian policies and practices.

Discussions of ethnicity follow this brief chapter on racism. The development of anti-immigrant sentiment is followed by a summary of what happened to the ethnics in the acculturation process and the forces that tend to sustain as well as undermine the importance of ethnicity. The impact of World War I and the development of coercive Americanization programs is followed by a discussion of two intellectuals (Horace Kallen and Randolph Bourne) and their re-examination of ethnicity and the role of the State in fostering cultural diversity.

The last chapter, "Coming To Terms With Class Differences," describes how issues of race, class, and ethnicity were joined in the latter part of the nineteenth and the first part of the twentieth century. The central theme centers around the sharp differences in American social thought in the latter part of the nineteenth century over the question of how best to ensure equality of opportunity as a bulwark against the spectre of industrial conflict. A well written summary of the ideas of the reformers and utopian writers is followed by an able discussion of socialism and its failure in the American social order. The chapter ends with a discussion of the emergence of social scientists and social engineers and their role in the development of progressivism and the growth of the modern liberal state.

A major annoyance in the book is the substitution of bibliographical references in the text for footnotes. The work, however, is greatly strengthened by an excellent fourteen-page bibliographic essay. Overall, the book is sound and should prove to be an excellent resource for undergraduate students interested in social history and ethnic relations.

Archimedes L.A. Patti. Why Vietnam? Prelude to America's Albatross. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980. Pp. xx, 612. Paper, \$10.95.

Hugh Higgins. Vietnam. Exeter, New Hampshire: Heinemann Educational Books, Inc., 1982. Second edition. Pp. 180. Paper, \$7.50.

The volume by Archimedes L.A. Patti will be of most value to the teacher interested in the Vietnam war. Patti was an OSS agent in Southeast Asia at the close of World War II and was one of the first Americans to meet Ho Chi Minh and certainly one of the very few to get to know him. "Ho's sincerity, pragmatism, and eloquence made an indelible impression on me," Patti recalls; "He did not strike me as a starry-eyed revolutionary or a flaming radical, given to clichés, mouthing a party line, or bent on destroying without plans for rebuilding. This wisp of a man was intelligent, well-versed in the problems of his country, rational, and dedicated." We learn this opinion now, long after such an observation might have been essential, because Patti was prohibited from publishing his account--first by the U.S. Army and later by the pressures of McCarthyism--until after the American departure from Vietnam. Teachers and scholars should be concerned with this fact, since recent court rulings upholding the right of intelligence agencies to suppress the writings of former operatives improve the odds that other such vital information will be withheld from the American people in the future.

Patti's work is also of interest because he details the complex policy objectives of the French, British, and Nationalist Chinese in Vietnam in late 1945 and shows that alone among the interested nations only the United States had no clearly defined policy for Southeast Asia. As a result, American representatives there could only react to, never initiate, policy decisions. Patti's work is indispensable to an understanding of the critical period 1945-46 when America had its last best chance to chart an intelligent course in Vietnam.

Hugh Higgins in Vietnam presents a very different perspective, not only on the Vietnam war, but also on the events in Southeast Asia since Vietnam won its independence. Higgins, a British journalist, is decidedly critical of American involvement and rejects every American rationale for intervention. In addition, he holds that the post-war problems of Vietnam are a product of the lingering after-effects of American involvement, and not inherent defects in the Vietnamese political and social system, a belief that seems to permeate most American reports. It was the physical destruction of the land, the existence of millions of urban refugees created by the war, and the collapse of the local "consumerism" economy created by the Americans that bedeviled Vietnamese reconstruction. Similarly, Vietnam's recovery has been hindered by an unfriendly China and the destabilizing effects of the murderous Khmer Rouge in adjoining Kampuchea.

Vietnam offers a palliative to the distinctly hostile views of Vietnam featured in the American press since the American departure. Higgins reminds the reader that President Nixon promised Vietnam \$3.25 billion in economic assistance, a promise no American president has seen fit to honor. He points out that, while the United States has exploited the lot of the "boat people" (those who he argues cannot adjust to the harsher reality of the new Vietnam), the United States has not been particularly eager to accept these same people to American shores. Public school teachers need to read Vietnam, if only for the advantage of a different perspective; assigning the book in most high schools would probably invite the wrath of the local American Legion.

Robert A. Hayes. The Brazilian World. Arlington Heights, Illinois: Forum Press, 1982. Pp. 87. Paper, \$5.75.

John Francis Bannon. The Colonial World of Latin America. Arlington Heights, Illinois: Forum Press, 1982. Pp. 89. Paper, \$5.75.

Although these two volumes, the first in The World of Latin America Series, provide a brief account of two different aspects of Latin American history, each volume does provide an excellent overview of the subject discussed. While the specialist in the field will benefit from these volumes, they will be of extreme value to those who have little knowledge of the Latin American world.

In The Brazilian World, Robert Hayes, in discussing the various periods of Brazilian history, uses the thematic approach. Although politics is emphasized, other aspects of Brazilian life are presented. A weakness of this volume is the brief treatment of the colonial history of Brazil and its influence on later developments in the nation.

John Francis Bannon also places emphasis on political developments in colonial Latin America. However, other areas of life, i.e., the role of the Roman Catholic Church and the economy, are discussed. In his description of Indian civilizations, Bannon states that a fourth Indian civilization was making advances. He fails to mention the name of the Indian tribe or the advancements being made. Although maps of modern day Latin America are provided, maps of the political units as they existed in colonial times should have been included.

Despite these minor flaws, teachers of world history courses will benefit from these volumes. Of value is the glossary of terms included at the end of each volume. Too often treatment of Latin America in world civilization textbooks, usually written by a non-specialist, is confusing and lacking in insights about this important area of the world. With the solid synthesis of the subject matter each author discussed, world history instructors with little knowledge of Latin America will find these volumes of extreme importance.

Louisiana State University-Shreveport

W. James Miller

Robert Brugger, ed. Our Selves/Our Past: Psychological Approaches to American History. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981. Pp. xiii, 416. Cloth, \$26.50; Paper, \$8.95.

Anyone who wants to know more about the psychological aspects of historiography definitely should consult this interesting anthology. Robert Brugger has selected works from writers committed to a diversity of theoretical viewpoints, but he has avoided works based on the simplistic, pejorative reductionism that one often encounters in Freudian psychohistory. In general the selections reflect the moderate eclecticism found in The Psychohistorical Review, and not the more extreme psychologism that characterizes The Journal of Psychohistory.

In his introductory chapter, "The House of Many Gables," Brugger provides a very useful history and analysis of the broad field of psychohistory. In contrast to Lloyd deMause and his followers, Brugger denies that psychohistory represents a new science of almost unlimited potentiality, but rather he argues that one should seek the modest goal of producing "psychologically informed history." Rejecting the method of mechanically "applying" psychological generalizations to the complexities of historical experience, Brugger

expresses the hope that a cautious use of academic psychology might "heighten consciousness without distorting it." Although he acknowledges that modern psychology has been characterized by theoretical pluralism, he never faces up to the problem of how the "psychologically informed" historian should decide which theoretical perspective has the greatest validity in explaining human behavior. Brugger does recognize the "lasting value" of cognitive psychology as developed by theorists such as Leon Festinger, but he does not explore the similarities between this approach and the common-sense psychology implicitly used by most historians.

Although the selections are informative and helpful, I finished the volume unconvinced that Brugger has demonstrated that the study of formal psychology can add much insight into the study of mankind's past. In fact, the most persuasive selections of the book appear to be based on a common-sense approach to psychology. James Youngdale, for instance, does present a strong case for soundness of many of Alfred Adler's ideas, but he is not able to show how Adlerian psychology, used deductively, is superior to the more conventional ways of understanding the goals of the Populists. In the polemical excerpts of Robert Lifton and Bruce Mazlish, one notices that psychology is secondary to ideological commitment.

In the classroom the teacher should use Our Selves/Our Past with caution, but at the college level there are times in which it would be appropriate to assign specific chapters of the book. When one has students interested in academic psychology, this would be an ideal suggestion for a book review. It is possible that some of these students might decide that the historical aspect is more fascinating than the psychological theory.

Mount Senario College

Thomas T. Lewis

Edward Wagenknecht. American Profile, 1900-1909. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1982. Pp. 376. Cloth, \$22.50; Paper, \$10.00.

Edward Wagenknecht's latest contribution to his ever-growing and impressive array of sixty-odd book credits is American Profile, 1900-1909. The scholarship one expects from an author with Wagenknecht's credentials is not denied this book--notwithstanding its survey nature. The author--Professor Emeritus at Boston University--straightforwardly intended to "survey American life in manifold aspects between 1900 and the close of Theodore Roosevelt's administrations." This book is to be followed by a similar effort covering the Taft years and Wilson's term until the United States entry into World War I.

Wagenknecht undoubtedly succeeded in his "survey" with a masterful blend of scholarship and personal remembrances, producing a book that in fifteen chapters goes skittering across the scale of American social and intellectual life--music, art, religion, education, recreation, movies, comics, and important news events of the day. The author's prowess as a biographer is evident from the quality of several biographical sketches provided in three sections entitled "Representative Figures of the Time." These provide valuable insight into the backgrounds of the makers and shakers of the period. Included in these sections are William Jennings Bryan, J.P. Morgan, Andrew Carnegie, Booker T. Washington, Mark Twain, and others. In many respects it is a far more scholarly work than one would expect from the intent of the book. Statistical information is presented in a profuse bombardment that would stagger the most gluttonous researcher. Here is a book that history teachers will find useful in providing material to enhance old and tired lecture notes, interspersed with mundane and over-used historical "revelations."

The major flaw is the distractingly long and disjointed sentence structure. This reviewer frequently floundered on the rocks and shoals of what at times seemed to be an ocean of comma phrases. Wagenknecht struggled with a problem common to any survey--how much depth is suitable or adequate to the intent of the work. He never did quite settle on a common ground--resulting in a book that at times says just the right thing and at others tells you far more than you really wanted to know or expected from a survey. The section on the development of the comic strip would do justice to a fourth-year journalism paper! But these are minor complaints about what is undoubtedly to be another credit to Wagenknecht's ability. We look forward to the sequel.

Justin F. Kimball High School and
Mountain View College, Dallas, Texas

Hansel Martin

