

breach in the empire and the powerful opinions on both sides of the Atlantic. Stephen Conway challenges conventional wisdom about Britain's loss, taking a position that resonates with similar discussions of Vietnam: He charges that it was a failure of political will, not strategy or resources, that compelled an end to the conflict.

This slim volume contains much that could be culled for lectures in courses on Britain, the American Revolution, and the Atlantic World, as well as the U.S. survey. Its theme also makes it appealing for assignment to upper-division students, but here Americanists, especially, need to proceed carefully. The essays operate within a separate historiographical universe, in which high politics remains the principal focus of inquiry. It might not cohere well in a course emphasizing the newer American historiography that grounds the Revolution in culture and social history. Secondly, at nearly \$30, this otherwise modest paperback is no cheap buy.

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David Leviatin, ed. *How the Other Half Lives*, by Jacob A. Riis. Boston & New York: Bedford Books of St. Martin's Press, 1996. Pp. xiii, 274. Paper, \$10.95; ISBN 0-312-11700-0.

In one fell swoop, Jacob Riis's *How the Other Half Lives* introduces readers to almost all of the critical themes they will need to confront to understand the Progressive Era. Riis's evocative and disturbing language and his stark photographs grab the reader's attention and demand interrogation. With little prodding, students ask: What was city life really like in the late nineteenth century? How did immigrants react to the conditions they faced? How could Riis be "racist" and also a reformer? Did city, state, and federal governments do too much or too little? Were men and women treated differently? What about children? Do we treat new immigrants or the impoverished "better" today? Why or why not? Because of this sort of reaction, many textbooks contain excerpts from Riis's text. Now, due to the superb editing of David Leviatin and his inclusion of newly available reprints of Riis's photographs, instructors might want to assign the entire book. This edition, accompanied by Leviatin's comprehensive introduction, questions for consideration, and short bibliography, clearly meets the stated goals of the Bedford Series in History and Culture to offer readers "first hand experience of the challenge—and fun of discovering, recreating, and interpreting the past."

For instructors who want their students to both "learn" and "do" history, David Leviatin offers a well-conceived road map. In engaging prose, he first profiles the various editions of *How the Other Half Lives* and then quickly draws the reader into the history of photojournalism by reconstructing Riis's excitement upon discovering "the flash ... the weapon he needed in his 'battle with the slum.'" From there Leviatin offers

a concise interpretation of the Progressive Era along the lines of Robert Wiebe's "search for order" and concludes with a cogent analysis of "Riis's View of Poverty." Leviatin is especially effective in his positioning of Riis. While not dismissing Riis's racial and class biases, he places him clearly among those social reformers who blamed environmental conditions rather than genetics for urban property. Within these sections, Leviatin also examines issues of class, consumerism, sensationalism, and Riis's legacy. Leviatin never loses the reader to abstract theory, yet thoroughly equips students to undertake their own critical analysis of the document.

This text does pose at least two challenges for classroom use. First, the "breadth versus depth" dilemma is ever-present. While it might fit within the parameters of topics courses, teachers will find it more difficult to give it its due in a typical survey course. The other obstacle, I expect, will be more problematic. Due to the production style, Riis's photographs lose some of their visual power. Though the new reprints make a wonderful addition, the largest photographs measure only a few inches (4x5). Students might wonder what all the fuss is about. Facial expressions, dark corners, and tattered clothes fade into the distance. Instructors might solve this in part by foregrounding Leviatin's incisive comparison of Riis's "illustrated lectures" with his book. Or they might augment the text with slides and the 1971 oversized publication. But since Riis's most powerful contribution was his use of the "well-orchestrated visual," this remains a serious shortcoming. Nevertheless, *How the Other Half Lives* offers a lively, rigorous introduction to both the content and methods of "doing" progressive era history.

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Nancy Woloch. *Muller v. Oregon: A Brief History with Documents*. Boston & New York: Bedford Books of St. Martin's Press, 1996. Pp. xiii, 206. Paper, \$13.50; ISBN 0-312-08586-9.

Nancy Woloch's *Muller v. Oregon* is another gem in the Bedford Series in History and Culture. Like its sister volumes, Woloch's work is well crafted for effective classroom use. Her focus is the important 1908 Supreme Court case involving protective labor laws brought by the owner of an Oregon laundry. He held that the 1903 law limiting women employed in factories or laundries to ten hours a day "violated his right to freedom of contract under the due process clause of the Fourteenth Amendment."

At the outset the author raises a number of interesting questions for instructors and students to consider as they embark on an investigation of this important case. (As one who employs the Bedford Series often, I wish more of the volumes included such an extensive supply of thoughtful questions.) Woloch's queries stimulate analytical