

## **Book Reviews**

### **Comments from the Book Review Editor**

This is the first issue of *COMMONWEALTH* to include book reviews. Our readers expressed a desire for a book review section, and though it may have taken longer than some might have hoped, the editorial staff responded to our readers' request. In selecting books to review, we decided to give preference to titles dealing with Pennsylvania government, politics, policy, and history. We hope that our readers enjoy this new feature, and that they will recommend new or classic titles for review. Readers interested in reviewing books for *COMMONWEALTH* should send their names, contact information, areas of scholarly interest, and brief curriculum vitae to Dr. Thomas J. Baldino, *COMMONWEALTH* Book Review Editor, Department of Political Science, Wilkes University, Wilkes-Barre, PA 18766.

*A Prayer for the City.* By H.G. (Buzz) Bissinger. New York: Random House, 1997. 448 pp., \$25.95 cloth, ISBN: 0-679-4219-8-X; \$15.00 paper, ISBN: 0-679-74494-0

In 1996, I interviewed for a job with the Washington, D.C. Housing Authority, which oversees a substantial public housing operation serving the needs of lower-income residents of our nation's Capitol. I was terribly under-qualified for the position, but the challenge excited me. The Housing Authority was entering receivership, which typically means that the administration responsible for running the authority into the ground would soon be removed. I felt quite confident about how I did during the interview, how I could be an asset, how young, bright minds like mine were just what was needed to right this ship!

In the hot August afternoon, I walked three blocks to where I had parked my vehicle. En route, I saw a resident walk out of her public house and fling empty soda bottles on her front lawn. I walked over used condoms and drug needles. In all, I saw ten littering violations to an already disgusting landscape, and my confidence and positive outlook fell quickly. One thought hit me concerning my chosen vocation of helping communities rebound: can one person make any difference in a culture where failure and poverty are so rampant?

Almost ten years later, the question remains open for debate. Many politicians take great credit for gentrified neighborhoods, which is a valid claim if one's goal was to chase lower-income residents out of one's backyard-shifting failure and poverty, not eliminating it. Others build arenas, malls, and stadiums with public dollars and claim that the city's crumbling schools and houses will "come back" because 500 ushers will be employed at minimum wages for eight football games over the span of one calendar year. The hopefulness of newly elected officials and expectant residents is quickly tempered by what appears to be the hopelessness of the American City: residents flee because there are better places to live, and cities either cannot or will not fight hard enough to retain these residents. And the cycle continues...

I must confess to absolutely loving *A Prayer for the City*. I read it for the first time while taking an Urban Studies class at the University of Rochester, where the local community foundation gave me a chance to witness how its modest grants were working to

revitalize a slumping city. I've since read the book at least thirty times, and each time I am struck by the completeness and totality of Bissinger's work. His holistic approach to studying the Rendell administration not only makes for enjoyable reading, but also guarantees that the reader will be aware of the time and place of the policies of the administration. Ed Rendell can welcome all the beauty contestants he likes, but the gritty reality is that Philadelphia was barely breathing when he arrived and had improved little over his first four years. That Bissinger is able to portray this result accurately while painting the mayor as a charismatic, can-do figure tells this reader that he understands community development and neighborhood revitalization in the 1990s.

Just as the reader fully grasps the predicament of Philadelphia, Bissinger answers the question "how did we get here?" before the reader can ask it. On page 203, Bissinger uncovers the Homeowners Loan Corporation (HOLC) Map, drawn in 1937 and now stored at the National Archives in a very inconspicuous place. In this map, assessors determined the viability of neighborhoods based solely on the ethnicity of their residents. Today we would call that discrimination; in 1937 it was sound fiscal policy and helped set the stage for the U.S. mortgage market, the single largest wealth-creating force in this country, unless, of course, one happens to live in the "do-not-lend" neighborhoods.

This map, and the 10 pages of analysis that discuss it, should be required reading for every policymaker in the United States. All community development policy since 1937 is, in my humble opinion, a direct result of this map and analysis. The fate of poor neighborhoods was sealed when lenders determined that lending to residents in poor areas was far too risky for their business. In the 1970s, more than 30 years after HOLC drew their maps, the Community Reinvestment Act mandated that lenders return capital to the neighborhoods from which they receive deposits. But lenders were one step ahead; in the late 1980s, risk-based pricing and subprime loans proliferated in neighborhoods the HOLC would have cautioned against entering. From a dearth of capital to unreasonably priced capital, minorities and lower-income persons continue to pay for the 1937 map.

Bissinger takes the reader into the neighborhoods where the lower-income residents fight for survival; where middle-income city lovers must choose between better housing, better school, safer

streets, lower taxes, or staying in the city; where public servants take small pleasure in courtroom victories as a way to “strike back” at the element they see as destroying their beloved city; and where shipyard workers ponder an uncertain future as manufacturing flees the scene of the crime with a swiftness matched only by the Industrial Revolution that precipitated it.

A book typically is only as good as the access its author had to the stories contained within, and Bissinger’s continuous access to the mayor makes for compelling reading. But the residents tell the real story of Philadelphia. Those who could move out, in most cases, did; while those who could not remained behind to observe the decay firsthand.

Working as a community development advocate, I believe that one person can make a difference in this field, but not without knowing the real story of America’s struggling communities. There is no better source than *A Prayer for the City*.

Michael Butchko  
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Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation

***Pennsylvania Constitutional Development.*** By Rosalind Branning. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1960. 166 pp., \$24.95 paper, ISBN: 0-8229-5818-X

One of the drawbacks of so much scholarly attention given to the U.S. Constitution is a lack of appreciation and respect for the lineage of state constitutions. In this reissue of *Pennsylvania Constitutional Development* (original published in 1960), Branning traces the history of Pennsylvania’s constitution, from its framing in 1776 to calls for change in the late 1950s. Along the way, she considers how well the constitution was able to address the challenges facing the commonwealth and foresee the problems and issues that might lie ahead. In Branning’s view, Pennsylvania’s constitutional development has not been one that would make its citizens proud. Because Pennsylvania’s constitution has not kept up with the “needs of an increasingly complex society” (5), we are left with “[t]he imposition of the will of a past generation upon the present,” which Branning argues, “is not only unwise but undemocratic” (6).

*Pennsylvania Constitutional Development* contains three major themes. First, Branning asserts that Pennsylvania's constitution is in need of wholesale revision at the hands of a constitutional convention. Since the constitutional convention of 1874, Pennsylvania has opted for the piecemeal approach of amendments when, in fact, a constitutional convention "makeover" is in order. Second, though Branning calls on Pennsylvanians to revise their constitution through a convention, she faults the product of the last convention, held in 1874, stating that that constitution "so hampered the legislature that it cannot act efficiently or effectively" (2). Branning's criticism of the 1874 constitution and her plea for a constitutional convention stems from her third and final theme: good constitutional draftsmanship is marked by broad, general wording that allows the constitution to breathe and expand over time.

Branning chooses to tell the story of Pennsylvania's constitutional development using three different time periods. Part I examines Pennsylvania's constitutions of 1776, 1790, and 1838. Drafted in the shadow of the American Revolution, Pennsylvania's original constitution (1776) reflected the radicalism of its time. It provided for a unicameral legislature that met annually and whose proceedings were open to the public and published weekly. Executive distrust resulted in an Executive Council, rather than a governor. While the judges on the Supreme Court were appointed by the Executive Council for seven-year terms, they could be dismissed by the legislature for "misbehavior." The constitution of 1790 replaced the plural executive and unicameral legislature with a governor and bicameral legislature, respectively, while judges were given greater independence by being allowed to serve for "good behavior." At the behest of "liberal reformers," a constitutional convention was assembled in 1837, which produced the constitution of 1838. A divided convention discussed the length of the governor's term, voting, and public education, among other topics, but the deep divisions largely resulted in maintaining the basic structure of the 1790 constitution.

Part II, the longest segment of the book, is reserved for the most detailed constitution in Pennsylvania history, the constitution of 1874. Legislative reform was the aim of the 1874 convention because of the prior legislative practice of passing private legislation, which benefited narrow interests. For example, prior to

the 1874 constitution, railroad companies held enormous sway over the legislature and reaped the benefits of that influence. Recognizing this problem, the convention forbade the General Assembly from passing special legislation on 27 different subjects. Branning points out, however, that despite the needed reforms the convention restrained the legislature in ways that hampered its efficiency and effectiveness. These restrictions included shifting from annual to biennial sessions and securing regularity in the legislative process (bills can cover only one subject, must have a clear title, and must be read on three separate days in each house). The convention also limited the representation of Philadelphia in the state house.

Part III examines 20<sup>th</sup> century development through 1959. Branning laments the fact that amendments, not wholesale revision, marked the change in Pennsylvania's constitution in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Because this is a reissue, and not a new edition of the book, the reader is left to speculate about what Branning would say regarding all of the changes made since the book's publication. The long list of amendments called for in 1959 by the Commission on Constitutional Revision, along with the unlikelihood of ratifying so many of them, caused Branning again to urge the creation of a constitutional convention. Though many of Branning's ideas—and the Commission's formal recommendations—were ratified (e.g. allowing the governor to serve two terms and annual legislative sessions), others were not. Though many amendments to the constitution were ratified throughout the 1980s and 1990s, a constitutional convention to address the long-term ills of the constitution has yet to be called. When “[t]he need for constitutional revision is urgent” (156) but the demand for revision is not, it is no wonder we are still addressing the shortcomings of our constitution in piecemeal fashion.

In sum, *Pennsylvania Constitutional Development* is a story worthy of being read by those interested in Pennsylvania history and state constitutional development. Though it does not provide a comparative perspective whereby the reader can evaluate Pennsylvania's constitutional development in the context of surrounding states' constitutional development, it does present an indictment worthy of discussion and serious thought. Readers interested in learning how to reconcile a constitution with democratic principles, however, will be disappointed. Branning

fails to deliver on her promise to show why the “imposition of the will of a past generation upon the present is not only unwise but undemocratic” (6). Branning might be one of many who find fault with the 1874 document but it constrains us—if it does at all—only if we allow it to. An undemocratic constitution is one that governs a society that cannot amend it, not a society that has chosen not to amend it.

Kyle L. Kreider  
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***A Capitol Journey: Reflections on the Press, Politics, and the Making of Public Policy in Pennsylvania.*** By Vincent P. Carocci. University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2005. 298 pp., \$39.95 cloth, ISBN: 0-271-02546-8

*A Capitol Journey* is an intriguing book written by an equally intriguing observer of, and player in, Pennsylvania politics from 1961 to 1995. It is not a political history as such, a point which the author makes in the preface. It is a memoir of a man who began his career in Harrisburg as a news reporter, became a staff member for the Senate Democrats, and finished a senior staffer for Governor Robert Casey.

The result is an episodic book. Initially, we learn perhaps more than we might want to know about his family history, although it provides interesting insights into the process by which an immigrant family entered the political system. Next, we are given insights into the manner in which the Capitol press corps operated in the 1960s.

Carocci’s shift from reporting the game to becoming a player in it provides the reader with insights on the operations of the Senate. However, the House of Representatives is ignored. Even in the Senate, the focus is on the Democrats. Carocci’s entry into the executive branch of the government under Casey shifts the focus again. This is to be expected in a personal memoir.

Carocci does not hesitate to render his opinions of those with whom he worked and the various legislators with whom he interacted. Some of the legislators whom he names—not always in complimentary terms—are still active in Harrisburg. His detailed descriptions of some of the manipulators that he observed and the

scandals surrounding four Senators in the 1970s should be read by every Pennsylvania voter before going to the polls.

Each governor from David Lawrence to Richard Thornburgh has his own chapter. Casey is given an entire section. Carocci's views of the governors do not appear to be influenced by his Democratic Party connections. In assessing the governors he knew and covered, he ranks William Scranton with Casey.

Despite the uneven coverage, this is a book worth reading by anyone trying to understand the operation of Pennsylvania's state government in the latter part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Harold Cox  
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***Front-Page Pittsburgh: Two Hundred Years of the Post-Gazette.***

By Clarke M. Thomas. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2005. 332 pp., \$34.95 cloth, ISBN: 0-8229-42488

In a famous letter to Colonel Edward Carrington written in 1787, Thomas Jefferson offered perhaps one of the most compelling statements for the intrinsic value of a free press to a democratic society. "Were it left to me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers or newspapers without government," he observed, "I should not hesitate a moment to prefer the latter."

That Jefferson advocated civic engagement and discussion through a free press, despite enormous criticism leveled at him by newspaper editors and contributors for his anti-Federalist political stance, shows just how democratic the notion was.

Among Jefferson's early detractors was John Scull, printer and original editor of the *Pittsburgh Gazette*, the city's first newspaper established just a year before Jefferson's famous comment. The young nation's early political tensions were often played out in the press, and they mirrored the challenges American journalists have faced ever since in their frequently unpopular role as "watchdogs over the government."

Clarke M. Thomas, retired senior editor of the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, expertly chronicles the nuanced, often complex life of the nearly 220-year old newspaper that emerged when the country was but a "howling wilderness." As Thomas illustrates, the newspaper's



initial tendencies, “a serious nature, a friendly attitude toward business, involvement in community affairs and open to varying opinions—within limits” (6), carried the publication through a myriad of social, political, and economic challenges and sustained it when so many other newspapers collapsed or merged. In many ways, the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* defied the odds and survived when it probably should not have, making Thomas’s historical account an occasionally surprising and dramatic book.

Thomas’s account underscores the notion that journalists not only chronicle history but frequently shape it. His focus in the first chapter of the book on Scull’s political advocacy establishes what would become a truism for over two centuries: that the newspaper and its leadership clearly shaped much of Pittsburgh’s, and even the nation’s, political awareness and identity. Drawing heavily from numerous historical accounts, such as J. Cutler Andrews’ *Pittsburgh’s Post-Gazette*, as well as original news stories and editorials from the newspaper, Thomas navigates readers through wars, economic boom and decline, uncomfortable race issues from slavery to civil rights, changes in editorial identity from conservative to liberal, and the murky waters of media competition and business mergers.

Indeed, it is in Thomas’s examination of mergers that the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* takes on a somewhat mythic character, surviving when so many newspapers across the nation collapsed under the weight of competition, bad management, ethical challenges, or simply the changing political tide. Almost at its very inception, the *Pittsburgh Gazette* faced local competition, mostly, according to Thomas, because of the political factions that emerged at the same time across the new country. But the *Gazette* staved off that competition until, almost inexplicably, it merged with the *Pittsburgh Post* in 1927. Thomas’s description that opens the chapter on the merger emphasizes the event as a turning point in the newspaper’s staying power, though he certainly does not suggest that it answers all questions on that front.

The 1927 transaction that resulted in the union of the *Gazette* and the *Post* was one of the most mysterious in the history of Pittsburgh and, indeed, of national journalism. Without any warning to the staffs involved, four newspapers

were combined into two, and then, within minutes, reconfigured to form completely different combinations. (148)

Thomas narrates an extraordinary deal of bait-and-switch between two media moguls, William Randolph Hearst and Paul Block, Sr. After behind-closed-doors meetings and a rapid-fire business exchange before the ink on the acquisition papers was dry, the newspaper that would become the modern *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* was born and the newspaper competition in the city was reduced from five to three.

Post-merger, the newspaper's story became the nation's story—wrestling with the realities of the Civil Rights movement, Dr. Martin Luther King's assassination, public outcry over political stances of its editorial pages, and frequently controversial coverage of education and abortion issues. But the book's description of the 1992 Teamster's strike at a rival newspaper offers impressive, particularized detail to an issue especially poignant in the northeast: the tensions between corporate and family ownership.

Perhaps what makes this book most noteworthy is that the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette's* history spans over two centuries—nearly the life of the city in which it was born. Thus, it is a story not just of a single publication, but rather of a growing and changing city and nation. While the *Hartford Courant* is widely regarded as the nation's oldest continuous newspaper, and the drama of the *New York Times* and the *Chicago Tribune* certainly garners those publications more time in the public spotlight, Thomas shows that the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette's* narrative may be more fundamental to understanding the evolution of American print media.

Thomas's account moves at a journalistic pace, which makes it eminently readable, and archival photographs offer fascinating visual support and detail. The book recommends just as easily to the casual Barnes and Noble bestseller reader as it does to a student in an advanced media history course.

Andrea Breemer Frantz  
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***The WPA History of the Negro in Pittsburgh.*** Edited by Laurence A. Glasco. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2004. 432 pp., \$39.95 cloth, ISBN: 0-8229-4232-1

One does not often have the opportunity to review a book that was truly seven decades in the making, so obviously the first question to confront is, was it worth the wait? Although it is painful to realize that this valuable resource has existed in obscurity for so long, the only possible answer is an emphatic yes. This work has great value not just to those interested in the history of Pittsburgh but also to scholars of African-American, New Deal, and urban studies as well.

The genesis of this book was in the American Guide Series, which was part of the New Deal's Federal Writer's Project. Created in 1935, the Project was terminated by a conservative Congress in 1939, making this but one of many works that was never completed. The manuscripts (there are multiple drafts and conflicting outlines and indices) have been in the Pennsylvania State Library in Harrisburg since the 1940s. Few scholars have used this outstanding resource on African-American urban life, even though it was microfilmed in 1970.

Laurence A. Glasco, an associate professor of history at the University of Pittsburgh, has edited the manuscripts to create a very coherent and usable volume. He has also written a complete yet brief introduction that provides an excellent framework for understanding the work itself. In just 15 pages, he not only explains how he edited the text and gives the all important background of this New Deal project, but also nicely explores the original book's strengths and weaknesses. This introduction greatly expands the potential audience for the volume, as now undergraduates and others can access the work easily. To make full use of the microfilm, users formerly had to bring this information with them; in the published volume, Glasco nicely packages the needed contextual background.

The book consists of 14 chapters, six appendices (most were part of the original project but one is a guide to what was microfilmed), four maps (all added), and a newly created index. Because this was a work in progress with multiple authors, the chapters vary greatly in scope and focus. They are arranged in roughly chronological order and provide as a whole an interesting

1930s popular history of blacks in the Pittsburgh area from the colonial period to the Great Depression. To an urban historian, Chapters 12 and 13, “Folkways” and “Arts and Culture,” are likely to be the most interesting ones. They provide many insights into everyday African-American life in Pittsburgh during the first third of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. This work can be coupled with W. E. B. DuBois’ masterful *The Philadelphia Negro: A Social Study* (1899; rev. ed., Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1995) to provide students with an excellent introduction to the details of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century black northern urban experience.

Any work like this has its limitations, and Glasco acknowledges them in his introduction. For the scholar, it is quite frustrating that few of the original sources have been noted and that women, although present, are under-represented in many of the chapters. Most of these shortcomings are simply inherent in a volume that was never meant for an academic audience and the rest are likely the result of its incomplete nature or the period in which it was created. Thanks to Glasco’s thorough introduction, none of these limitations seriously affect the value of the book.

For graduate students and other scholars, this work serves as an outstanding introduction to the microfilmed documents. By reading this book before exploring the manuscript, it should be much easier to make sense of original documents. For most teachers and students at the secondary and undergraduate levels, this volume can substitute for the microfilm in providing a primary source from seven decades ago on still unresolved issues of race and class in urban America. For anyone interested in Pittsburgh or the African-American urban experience in the early twentieth century, this work is a must. Both Glasco and the University of Pittsburgh Press should be congratulated for making this valuable volume widely available.

John H. Hepp, IV  
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***Harry, Tom, and Father Rice: Accusation and Betrayal in America’s Cold War.*** By John Hoerr. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2005. 344 pp., \$29.95 cloth, ISBN: 0-8229-4265-8

This book is an illuminating examination of the effects of the Red Scare on a congressman, a labor union leader, and a Catholic

priest who lived in the Pittsburgh area during the height of McCarthyism. The primary strength of Hoerr's book is the richly detailed biographical information that he draws upon to create a highly nuanced look at the decision-making processes of those who found themselves to have the misfortune of appearing before the House Un-American Activities Committee.

Another important strength of this book is the insight it provides on the interplay between labor unions and anti-Communist fervor during the late 1940s and 1950s. The book tells the story of Representative Harry Davenport, labor union leader Tom Quinn, and Father Charles Owen Rice. Hoerr can personalize each story because of his personal ties with each man, most especially his uncle, Harry Davenport. The book is also aided by a number of personal interviews that provide a great deal of information that otherwise would have been lost to history. The preservation of this story is important to understanding how the Red Scare affected the lives of regular, working-class Americans. The author's intimate knowledge of the characters and his informal writing style make for vivid reading.

Hoerr presents many interesting themes in the course of the book. Foremost among them is the ideological evolution of Harry and Father Rice. Harry was elected to Congress in 1948 as a champion of workers' rights and a Progressive determined to help the "little guy." Almost immediately upon his arrival in Washington he learned that things would not be easy because of the prevailing political situation engendered by the Red Scare, which made it very difficult for Harry to maintain his leftist ideology. However, the most surprising aspect of Harry's story is the speed with which his ideals evaporated.

Harry's evolution is especially noteworthy because the ultimate betrayal of his most closely held values was caused not by real change from within, but by political expediency. The book thus contains a cautionary tale of the compromises sometimes necessary for public service. The clash between Harry's values and his pragmatism underscores the conflict between idealism and political necessity. Harry's story is tragic, as he is forced to betray his core beliefs when confronted by forces beyond his control.

Father Rice experienced an important ideological evolution from anti-Communist activist to radical reformer marching with Dr. Martin Luther King. Some books present people as ideological

monoliths that never deviate from their life paths; Hoerr succeeds in presenting a more nuanced, and therefore more accurate, description of the ways in which politics can change a person's views. These changes can be both positive and negative, a point brought home in each case portrayed here.

Another important theme is the power of guilt by association and the effect it can have on civil liberties. Tom's story shows the effects of being associated with a Communist organization and the pall it can cast over one's life for years. In many ways, Tom's is the most sympathetic story in the book because he deserved his fate the least. Tom's story was also the most intimate because Hoerr was able to conduct several interviews with him.

Hoerr's book will interest anyone curious about labor movements, McCarthyism, or the local history of Pittsburgh. The author's focus on the city is particularly strong, for the book provides a unique insight into politics and union activism in Pittsburgh in the post-World War II years.

Andrew P. Miller  
Wilkes University

***Pennsylvania Elections: Statewide Contests From 1950–2004.*** By John J. Kennedy. New York: University Press of America, 2006. 214 pp., \$31.95 cloth, ISBN: 0-7618-3278-5

For many years, the best (only?) book on contemporary Pennsylvania politics was Paul Beers' *Pennsylvania Politics Today and Yesterday*, which was published in 1980. But over the last two years several fine books have appeared to fill the gap in this important field, and among them is this book. Kennedy, an associate professor of political science at West Chester University and the author of *The Contemporary Pennsylvania Legislature*, has assembled election statistics for all state-wide general elections in Pennsylvania from 1950 to 2004 (N.B. primary election data are not included). The electoral contests include senatorial, gubernatorial, state row offices (lieutenant governor and internal affairs—both of which were removed from direct election by the constitutional changes of 1968—treasurer, auditor general, and attorney general), and presidential.

Each office is presented in its own chapter with the exception of the row offices, which are discussed in a single chapter. There is

also an introductory chapter that discusses Pennsylvania's political history and geography. Within the chapters, the author discusses each election separately, providing information about the major parties' candidates (the author chose not to include any third or minor party candidates in his analysis), their personal and political backgrounds, the major issues in the race, significant issues that were addressed, and any important event that influenced the outcome of the race. Election descriptions vary in length from a paragraph or two to several pages. Most are informative at a basic level while several are fairly detailed, e.g. the 1980 Specter–Flaherty and 1991 Wofford–Thornburgh Senatorial races, and the 1962 Scranton–Dillworth gubernatorial election.

While there is much useful information contained in its pages, the book lacks an overarching central thesis. The author appears to have chosen to present the data and to allow it to speak for itself, the individual election analyses notwithstanding. Since the author never presents the research as theoretically driven, it is perhaps unfair to criticize it this way; however, the work would have been stronger had the author identified a general trend or explanatory factor that would have tied many of the elections together.

I also question the author's decision to present the electoral data as a percentage of the two-party vote as opposed to each party's percentage of the total vote cast in an election. The author reasoned that because third parties had not generally received significant numbers of votes, it was easier to understand an election's outcome by contrasting just the two-party vote. Though individual third parties may indeed frequently receive few votes, removing all third party totals in an election inflates, however so slightly, the totals for the two major parties, which distorts whatever trend analysis a person may want to undertake.

Finally, the author's choices in locating some counties in geographic clusters—southeastern, southwestern, northeastern, and central—raised a few questions in my mind. Of greatest concern was the placement of Bradford, Susquehanna, Wayne, Pike, Sullivan, Wyoming, and Schuylkill counties into the central region rather than the northeastern region. Most residents of those counties would likely consider themselves residents of the northeast. In addition, the geographic division would have benefited from a fifth region: a northwestern cluster that would have made the central region more homogeneous. One of the interesting things about a

geographically based presentation of electoral politics in the state is that the regional divisions of the last half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century may be losing whatever explanatory power they may have had. With the change in voting behavior in the southeastern suburban counties, the changing character of the populations in the Pocono counties and the transition in the south central counties as they fast become bedroom communities for the Baltimore–Washington area, a new set of regions may be necessary.

Despite my reservations, Kennedy's work contributes to our understanding of electoral politics in Pennsylvania. Along with Jack M. Treadway's *Elections in Pennsylvania*, students and scholars alike have two fine resources.

Thomas J. Baldino  
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***The People of this Generation: The Rise and Fall of the New Left in Philadelphia.*** By Paul Lyons. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003. 288 pp., \$42.50 cloth, ISBN: 0-8122-3715-3

This book is must reading for anyone interested in understanding the rise, accomplishments, challenges, and demise of the New Left. It is also a highly instructive book for social scientists and activists who want to understand the nature of coalition building, political movements, and social and political activism. Finally, Philadelphia history buffs should not miss this important contribution to local folklore and legend.

Of course, one could always ask the question, why the need for yet another book on the New Left and 1960s student activism? After all, the shelves are already filled with books by Todd Gitlin, James Miller, Allen Matusow, Jack Whalen and Richard Flacks, and Edward Quinn and Paul Dolan, to name a few. Lyons pre-empts that question almost immediately when he asserts on page 2 that “one must examine the social and political movements of the 1960s—what participants call ‘the movement’—in the context of their geographic, political and cultural environments.” It is this local contextual analysis that distinguishes Lyons' book from those that preceded its publication.



Lyons, a Professor of Social Work at Richard Stockton College in New Jersey, has amassed a wealth of archival information supplemented by in-depth interviews of former student activists, filtering both through his own insightful understandings of what transpired in the 1960s. The result is a richly detailed history of how the New Left developed in Philadelphia on eight different college campuses and how it interacted, or failed to interact, with other, non-student activist organizations such as the American Friends Service Committee. Thus, the contextual rooting is conducted on two levels. The macro level is the city of Philadelphia, an older, de-industrializing city that was losing population and jobs, undergoing racial change, and coming under the political reign of Frank Rizzo, police chief turned mayor who epitomized the conservative white backlash movement that gripped many cities and, ultimately, the nation's politics in the mid-to-late 1960s. While these themes ring familiar for many cities, Philadelphia was distinguished by its Quaker heritage, which has influenced organizational development and race relations in the city. On the micro level, Lyons introduces a contextual examination by focusing on four different types of college campus—Catholic (LaSalle, Villanova, and St. Joseph's Universities), Quaker (Bryn Mawr, Swarthmore, and Haverford Colleges), elite private (University of Pennsylvania), and working class public (Temple University).

Rising from the ashes of the U.S. Communist Party's collapse and the subsequent Soviet invasion of Hungary in 1956, the New Left was heavily influenced, in its early stages, by the black-led civil rights movement in the American South. Initially anti-ideological and heavily participatory, the New Left would eventually encounter severe fissures that prematurely ended this once vibrant, promise-filled movement. The increasing militancy of the civil rights movement, which, in part, shifted from a pro-integrationist, non-violent stance to a Black Power, pro-nationalist, "by any means necessary" position; the urban riots and the subsequent hard line police response; the rise of identity politics (e.g. Black Power, feminism); and the cultural revolution of "drugs, sex, and rock and roll" that swept young Americans, all chipped away at the foundations of the New Left in Philadelphia as it did elsewhere.

Lyons attempts to highlight these struggles by focusing primarily on two organizations: Philadelphia Resistance, the anti-war organization; and People for Human Rights, the anti-racist organization. In many ways, these two organizations epitomize the early hopeful years of the New Left and its later, more seriously troubled years. They also underscore the difficulties of political mobilization on any large scale.

After taking the reader on a tour of the eight college campuses and the New Left organizations they spawned (e.g. SDS Economic Research and Action Project at Swarthmore; Penn Rights Council and Students Opposed to Germ Warfare-STOP-at University of Pennsylvania; and Conscience at Temple University), Lyons shifts his focus to the two pivotal organizations, the Philadelphia Resistance (PR) and People for Human Rights (PHR), to demonstrate the impact of the tumultuous 1960s on the New Left. Growing out of the combined anti-war efforts at the various college campuses and aided by the Quaker organizational infrastructure, PR emerged in 1967, focusing its energies largely around anti-war activities such as draft counseling and demonstrations. PHR, on the other hand, emerged from the growing militancy of the Civil Rights Movement, taking as its mantra a heavy anti-racist position. According to Lyons, both organizations flirted with third world and Maoist ideologies, a growing trend within some New Left circles. Adopting the rhetoric of liberation strategies and, in some cases, their tactics, this development alienated many potential supporters. PR, however, because of its reliance on and influence by the Quaker infrastructure and its focus on anti-war activities, was less culpable, maintaining a "moral high ground" (224). Despite this more palatable stance, PR, like PHR, eventually imploded, mimicking the experience of the New Left in general.

Lyons touches upon many interesting themes in the book such as the a-historicity of the New Left; the influence of the Quaker tradition on New Left organizing; the role of class and spiritual context and mission in shaping students' world views and approach to activism and organizing; and the impact of identity politics, black nationalism, and the cultural revolution on the New Left. However, these themes are left largely undeveloped. For example, the comparison between PR and PHR, which contains many of these themes, never attains a satisfactory resolution. Lyons suggests that both organizations were attracted by Third World revolutionary

struggles but he does not really explain why PR did not go as far in embracing them as did PHR and other New Left organizations. The Quaker influence and the focus on anti-war activities that characterized PR are surface reasons that need much more exploration. Lyons attempts to give the reader a thick description of New Left activities while also exploring numerous themes. This is not an easy task and, as is often the case, the details tend to crowd out larger analysis. Nonetheless, through the excavation of such rich details, Lyons has brought the reader into the day, the moment, and the experience of the 1960s New Left, which is a rare treat.

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***Ruling Suburbia: John J. McClure and the Republican Machine in Delaware County, Pennsylvania.*** By John M. McLarnon III. Newark, DE: University of Delaware Press, 2003. 352 pp., \$60.00 cloth, ISBN: 0-87413-814-0

In 2006, the politics in suburban Philadelphia counties are changing as Democrats challenge Republicans for control of elective offices representing those areas. Recent Democratic candidates for president, Congress, governor, the state legislature, and county and municipal governments have won the majority of votes or at least competed in close elections with Republican winners. Voting and voter registration document the shifting identities of the suburban voters.

Current Democratic success in the suburbs is remarkable because of the firm grip Republicans historically have had on voter loyalties there. Southeastern Pennsylvania's five counties (Bucks, Montgomery, Chester, Delaware, and Philadelphia) were solid Republican areas from the late 1800s through World War II. Philadelphia broke Republican control during the reform movement in the late 1940s and early 1950s and became home to a powerful Democratic organization, but the suburban counties remained under the control of the county Republican political machines.

John McLarnon's *Ruling Suburbia* provides a fair, clear-eyed, and colorful view of the power of the McClure family in Delaware County. William McClure and his son, John, were the "bosses" controlling the Republican machine from 1875 until 1965.

McLarnon's focus is on the life and times of John McClure who ran the County from 1907 to 1965. McLarnon portrait and analysis of John McClure as "boss" in the suburbs expands our understanding of this type of political leadership beyond what we know from studies of large cities.

McClarnon is a talented story teller who weaves details about places, people and events into an entertaining account of a political master at work. While presenting the history, he also provides the needed connections to theories of machine success and decline, as well as comparisons to other political bosses featured in studies of large central cities. For example, McClarnon writes, "McClure was never involved in the crimes on the order of the police beatings and kidnappings in Tom Pendergast's Kansas City. He used but never allied himself with organized crime the way that Pat Nash and Ed Kelly had done with the Capone mob in Chicago" (240).

Like George Washington Plunkitt of New York's Tammany Hall machine, McClure's long tenure as boss was founded on his keen ability to "read and react to the needs of the electorate" (12) as well as to his willingness to use "loyalty, patronage, macing, bigotry, greed and innate political savvy to maintain his power" (239). And like the Philadelphia electorate that Lincoln Steffens described in his *The Shame of Cities*, the voters of Delaware County did not care so much "for honest, democratic government" (12), and so they repeatedly returned McClure's Republicans to office.

*Ruling Suburbia* is an excellent work of political history with an expansive list of references and extensive notes. Readers interested in Pennsylvania politics, especially in the southeastern region of the state, and in the practice of machine politics suburban-style will find McClarnon's *Ruling Suburbia* most useful.

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***A City Transformed: Redevelopment, Race, and Suburbanization in Lancaster, Pennsylvania 1940–1980.*** By David Schuyler. University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2004. 288 pp., \$74.00 cloth, ISBN: 0-271-02207-8; \$20.95 paper, ISBN: 0-27102208-6

The story of Lancaster, Pennsylvania, is the story of most medium-sized cities from the Atlantic Ocean to the great Midwest. Born of necessary density, these pedestrian cities thrived prior to the automobile and then struggled to remain relevant throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century. However, if this were the sole dilemma confronting community development policy in the Eastern United States since 1940, cities most likely would have found the elixir that guaranteed survival and shared it amongst themselves.

But the struggle for survival that Lancaster and other cities of its kind faced was the result of multiple aggravating factors: consumers' desire for a plot of land with a home, increasing racial tension and the white flight that accompanied it, an abundance of roads to complement the abundance of vehicles, and the general sense that living in the city was not where one's future would shine brightest. At the conclusion of World War II, those Americans who had failed to heed the credo, "Go West," made their own mantra: Move Out of the City.

As cities began to decline, governments at every level intervened. What Schuyler fails to emphasize, however, is that the field of community development is closely tied to community organizing: citizens, feeling disenfranchised, rally together to make their needs known. Ignoring this (and other) key components of a broader neighborhood revitalization strategy make for a weak, one-dimensional analysis of even the most stimulating topic.

Lancaster, Pennsylvania, is not particularly interesting as a subject; and David Schuyler's *A City Transformed* paints a shallow picture of what might have been a lively discussion of future plans for Lancaster in 1940. Schuyler's over-reliance on newspaper accounts and overemphasis on the mayor's platforms for neighborhood revitalization make for dry, why-should-I-care reading. Why would someone living outside of the city of Lancaster care if the greater Lancaster metropolitan area decays into a modern-day Pompeii?

Communities are more than bricks and mortar, shopping centers and freeways, politicians and town hall meetings. People make choices every day that affect a city's sustainability: where to live, work, eat, shop; where to educate their children; and most important, whether to become involved in the dialogue that shapes their hometowns. Schuyler makes no attempt to interview Lancaster's residents from that time, to understand the reasons for

suburban flight, or to determine if the pre-1940s sense of Lancaster's future was rosy or expectant of inevitable decline. Little attention is paid to the sociology of returning veterans of World War II or how their choices affected Lancaster. By contrast, entirely too much time is devoted to local forms of government. The policy decisions made by the federal and state governments regarding urban areas from 1930-1960 guaranteed the fate of the vast majority of America's older cities, and a council meeting with the newly elected mayor of Lancaster in 1962 could do little to alter that force.

Schuyler missed a prime opportunity to make his book moderately interesting by not interviewing descendants of the residents of Barney Google Row. What had become of these families? Had the strong social bonds they built in what policy-makers referred to as "a ghetto" been more significant than a newer dwelling place? Or did their displacement not fundamentally alter the patterns of their lives, which would then justify the city's decisions not only on moral grounds (helping those in need), but also on economic ones (higher tax base, more opportunity for infrastructure)? Did these people merely show up at the town hall meetings, dutifully reported by the *Lancaster Intelligencer Journal*? Schuyler also commits another grave sin of omission by focusing his analysis too narrowly. He fails to compare Lancaster with similar Pennsylvania cities (Wilkes-Barre, York, and Harrisburg come to mind) or cities in upstate New York that might offer clues as to why Lancaster was "less transformed."

Based on Schuyler's book, *A City Transformed* ultimately is a misnomer for Lancaster. It never underwent a transformation, but rather was tinkered with by a revolving door of elected officials, to the interest of the local press alone.

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***Devastation and Renewal: An Environmental History of Pittsburgh and Its Region.*** Edited by Joel A. Tarr. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2004. 296 pp., \$32.00 cloth, ISBN 0-8229-4156-2; \$24.95 paper, ISBN 0-8229-5892-9

In the late 1960s, I was a graduate student at the University of Pittsburgh and lived in the Squirrel Hill neighborhood adjacent to beautiful Schenley Park. The drive each morning through the park to Oakland, the university's neighborhood, was idyllic. As a transplanted Philadelphian, I often reflected during the short drive on the dire warnings from family and friends about the inhospitable milieu of the city "out west." Although I quickly came to admire this gritty city, the warnings were not without foundation. Some mornings, when the wind blew across Squirrel Hill from the Jones and Laughlin plant, there would be a thin veneer of red dust on the car. I wondered what its color was in my lungs. Each year, after the snow thaw and spring rains, my wife and I would develop severe intestinal discomfort, which we would attribute to the drinking water. We joked that it gave new meaning to the concept "spring cleaning."

I mention these recollections because many Allegheny County citizens tell similar personal stories. For these citizens, *Devastation and Renewal: An Environmental History of Pittsburgh and Its Region* is required reading, for it places in an historical context the individual experiences of urbanites living in a compromised environment. For policy makers and academics, Joel A. Tarr, the Richard S. Caliguiri Professor of Urban and Environmental Policy at Carnegie Mellon University, and his colleagues have chronicled the impact on air, water, and land when urban regimes confront the conflicting demands of commercial, industrial, and recreational uses of an ecosystem. In doing so, the authors both reinforce and question conclusions found in the policy literature on identifying and implementing the elusive public interest.

The introductory chapter by Tarr and Edward K. Muller traces the abuse of the natural landscape by the increasing scale and rapacity of industrial capitalism. The advantages of Pittsburgh's environment were discovered early in the nation's history: the confluence of three navigable rivers, nearby rich veins of coal, and awe-inspiring hills and valleys. The rivers, especially the westward flowing Ohio, made the city an early commercial gateway to an undeveloped continent. Coal, and its derivative coke, fueled the city's transformation to an industrial titan. The hills, too steep for farming, became precarious residential locations above the rivers' floodplains to house the expanding population. Eventually the rivers became polluted, the air smoky, and the valleys slag disposal

sites. At the same time, other forces were at work to improve these deleterious environmental consequences and eventually to plan a Renaissance city. The story of how this was accomplished, including who benefited and who bore the costs, is the focus of this work.

Much of this conflict focused on the city's most commanding natural landmark, its three rivers and their tributaries. So it is appropriate that a trilogy of articles explores the use and abuse of the Allegheny, the Monongahela and the Ohio rivers. In his article "River City," Muller provides an overview of the symbiotic relationship between Pittsburghers and their rivers over time. Rivers sustained the commercial, residential, and industrial activity, yet were acted upon when flows were altered, the aquatic composition degraded, and the banks developed. Results were sometimes catastrophic. The rivers' pollution drove the death toll from typhoid fever to the highest in the nation.

Tarr and Terry Yosie examine the political conflicts over this critical problem of the city's water supply and sewage treatment. They explain that the urban regime provided high quality drinking water in the first decade of the twentieth century, which reduced the typhoid fever rate to the national average, but the treatment of wastewater was not completed for another half-century. The delay was caused in part by the political rivalry of local governments and in part by the professional competition between public health physicians and sanitary engineers.

The typhoid bacterium was not the only pollutant in the water. Nicholas Casner documents in his article that during the 1920s acid mine drainage resulted in 2.5 million tons of sulfuric acid being dumped annually into the Ohio River at Pittsburgh. This pollution, originally accepted as a cost for economic prosperity, soon created unacceptable trade offs such as acidic tasting water, corroded locomotive boilers, and leaky home plumbing. The political conflict among interested parties resulted in highly controversial court decisions supporting the polluters. While water treatment was eventually used to neutralize the acids, mine drainage remains a problem throughout Pennsylvania.

The second triad of articles examines the most visible of the city's previous pollution problems: its smoky air. Angela Gugliotta offers a cultural history of smoke as a prosperity symbol to the masses, physical nuisance to the middle class, and costly



impediment to post-war economic diversification for the financial elite. Some cataclysmic events, such as the deadly Donora air pollution disaster in 1948, explored in an article by Lynne Page Snyder, made public the connection between pollution, in this case from a zinc plant, and public health. The symbolic use of this event by pollution control advocates helped initiate limited federal proposals. However, the most enduring conflicts over smoke control took place at the city and county levels, as reported in the article by Tarr and Sherie R. Mershon. Their analysis makes clear that the antismoke coalition pressure for policy reform was a necessary but not sufficient condition for clean air. Equally important were the transition from coal to gas in domestic furnaces, the change from steam to diesel locomotives, and eventually the deindustrialization of the region.

Both the urban regime and community groups could find some common ground to support remedial action on water and air pollution since contaminants ignored, for the most part, class and political divisions. This was not the case with landscape desecration, as explained in a study by Andrew S. McElwaine. Elites disagreed over the control and use of the land and tensions between the urban regime and neighborhood organizations were never resolved because of a lack of direct communication between well-meaning civic reformers and local-oriented ward politicians. Consequently, urban plans, such as the one for the Nine Mile Run Valley by Frederick Law Olmstead, Jr., were never implemented. Nine Mile Run Valley became a slagheap instead of a park.

The anthology ends with an analysis by Samuel P. Hays that is both a reminiscence of his personal participation in local environmental action and a comparative cultural analysis of regional environmental values. He concludes that there is little support for an environmental culture in a region of “rustbelt” standards emphasizing economic development. Environmental concerns lack a local voice because citizen organizations are disorganized, rely on business contributions, and have ceded initiative to the federal government. The mass media report on the rehabilitated environment as a crucial recreational attraction for professionals in the “new economy” rather than as an intrinsic value to preserve. Educational institutions have not developed adequate environmental programs for a variety of reasons specific to their missions and resources. Hays’ analysis is an appropriate ending, for

he questions past achievements while at the same time calling for a renewed commitment to an environmental ethic.

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***Breaking the Backcountry: The Seven Years' War in Virginia and Pennsylvania, 1754–1765.*** By Matthew C. Ward. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2003. 360 pp., \$34.95 cloth, ISBN: 0-8229-4214-3; \$21.95 paper, ISBN: 0-8229-5865-1

Standard studies of the Seven Years' War tend to focus on its effect on New England or on the dramatic struggle for Canada, but the war's impact on the Virginia– Pennsylvania backcountry and on Native Americans has largely been overlooked. In this clearly written and logically organized book, Matthew C. Ward, a lecturer in the Department of History at the University of Dundee, Scotland, addresses this gap.

When France and Britain entered what would become a global war over the Ohio Valley fur trade, the French had little trouble persuading Native American trading partners to join them and mount raids on civilian targets because the natives had many grievances. Eastern Delawares resented the advance of settlement and the loss of their lands in the infamous Walking Purchase, and the Ohio Valley tribes feared that their lands would be next. Beginning in 1754, Native American raids emptied the backcountry of settlement in some areas; destroyed plantations, livestock, and crops; and disrupted the regional economy because city merchants could not collect debts from rural customers who had lost everything. Casualties were substantial; 1% of the total population of both colonies (4% of the backcountry population) was killed or captured, figures comparable to losses in America's Revolutionary and Civil wars.

Ward argues that the Seven Years' War changed the nature of colonial life in four ways. It increased the power and activities of colonial governments that, for the first time, were compelled to raise and provision an army. In addition, it demonstrated the individualistic nature of the backcountry and its separation, geographically and mentally, from eastern politics and society. It also altered irrevocably the relationship between Great Britain and

the colonists. Britain resented the latter's reluctance to fight; colonists observed the blunders of inept leaders such as Edward Braddock and Sir John St. Clair and took on new confidence in their own abilities. Resentment against the British, who did not seem to appreciate the colonists' war contributions, and who tried to protect Native Americans by banning white settlement beyond the Appalachians, would smolder until the Imperial Crisis, when it pushed Virginia and Pennsylvania to join their New England brethren in rebellion. Finally, the war left colonists with permanent feelings of hatred toward all Native Americans, as shown by the Paxton Boys' massacre of a group of peaceful Conestoga in Pennsylvania and a similar but lesser-known assault by the "Augusta Boys" in Virginia.

The war also changed the way Native Americans fought. Besides traditional methods of seizing captives and booty, they added European-style tactics, attacking military outposts and disrupting supply and communication lines. Most horrifying to colonists and soldiers alike was their adoption of psychological warfare. Raiders left behind mutilated women's and children's bodies, heads of decapitated victims displayed on posts, and body parts roasting over fires to demoralize and terrify their enemies.

Backcountry residents were fiercely individualistic with little deference toward the local elite, whom they considered merely their equals. There were no community institutions, other than taverns, where people came together. Thus, justices of the peace, in order to retain power, shielded locals and bowed to their wishes rather than enforce unpopular laws in support of the war. Most backcountry men were reluctant soldiers, and military records show that they lacked both firearms and the ability to use them. When their homes were threatened, they preferred to protect their personal property rather than join an army out of a larger sense of duty. Not that there was much of an army to join; in 1754 Virginia militias were social organizations, and in Quaker-dominated Pennsylvania, militias did not exist. Raising troops was even more problematic because of squabbling among the governors and assemblies, especially in Pennsylvania where political leaders fell into fiercely pro and anti-proprietor factions. The only way to inspire men to join the army was to offer substantial bounties, and the results were not felicitous. In Virginia, provincial forces mainly consisted of convicts and vagrants; in Pennsylvania, indentured servants. Early on, desertion

and insubordination were common. Officers were unskilled, elected by popularity rather than ability, and discipline was lax. By 1757, colonial forces had improved dramatically, though British regulars “still balked at their disorder when serving alongside them” (121).

British policies following the expulsion of the French from Canada and the Ohio Valley in 1760 drove Native Americans to resume hostilities just a few years later. Weary of pouring money into North America, the British adopted a parsimonious attitude, refusing to give Native Americans the traditional gifts and trade goods they expected from their new trading partners. They also reneged on pledges to abandon their Ohio Valley forts after the French defeat. Despite a royal proclamation banning European settlement west of the Alleghenies, colonists saw the region as up for grabs—a just reward for wartime service. The result was the so-called Pontiac’s Rebellion (1763–1765), in which incensed natives hit the backcountry with the same intensity as in the earlier conflict. To the Native Americans, this response was perfectly reasonable since the British had not behaved honorably, but backcountry residents understandably did not share this view.

I found much to praise and little to quarrel with in this book. I would have appreciated some additional detail in the maps, and I would like to know more about the frontiersmen’s lack of firearms. Ward cites Michael Bellesille’s controversial work on gun ownership uncritically, and he does not address the common perception that backcountry people needed firearms to survive. On the other hand, Ward ably explains life in the backcountry, the demographics of provincial armies (including a comparison of Virginia, Pennsylvania, and Massachusetts soldiers), the intricacies of Native American diplomacy, the politics of colonial government, and military actions in the Ohio Valley. Scholars interested in rural life, military and social history, and Native American studies should welcome this book.

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