Kyle E. Ciani. *Choosing to Care: A Century of Childcare and Social Reform in San Diego, 1850–1950.* Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2019. 342 pp.

The one common belief that runs through Kyle E. Ciani's history *Choosing to Care* is that children cannot take care of themselves. A second historical reality central to this story is that many parents need help at some point in administering supervision and providing for the material needs of their progeny. Those living in San Diego created a variety of informal and formal mechanisms to address these concerns. However, not all children received access to the same types of care. Who is a child? What type of attention does he, she, or they deserve? Who is the parent asking for help, and why? *Choosing to Care* examines how biases related to a person's age, social status, gender, race, and ethnicity shaped the contours of care.

Ciani structures *Choosing to Care* around categories of care: indentured, maternal, court-appointed, professional, neighborhood, emergency, and wartime. These different categories also match roughly with changes in time. Hence, while not strictly chronological, Ciani is still able to develop stories of historical cause and effect. Also, while some groups figure more prominently in some sections, they never fall out of the picture altogether. In the mid-nineteenth century, for example, the law indentured Native American children under the guise that Anglo supervision would serve as a civilizing influence. The removal of Native peoples in California to reservations explains why they do not remain the central focus of San Diego's story. At the same time, Ciani never forgets to include them as part of the larger story of marginalized groups denied access to developing services.

Parts of this story will be familiar to those who have read works on the history of social reform, maternalism, and social services at the turn of the twentieth century. As a new industrial order emerged, previous ways of coping with economic and social uncertainties became inadequate. When people migrated to San Diego, it was usually without extended familial networks. Wealthier members of the community, typically women, constructed institutions to help poorer families weather times of insecurity. These elite and middle-class women often embedded their prejudices about deserving and undeserving poor into their programs. Their beliefs reflected and helped perpetuate notions about paternal and maternal rights and responsibilities that built the economic and social fabric of society. They viewed men as breadwinners and women as homemakers. Thus, the idea that childcare should be an employment benefit never gained serious traction. Even during World War II, when significant numbers of women entered the paid labor force, and the federal government, as well as

a few employers, developed childcare programs, these were never more than an experiment and had limited reach.

Ciani reshapes this recognizable story in two ways. First, she demonstrates how personal interactions, mainly while living and working in immigrant neighborhoods, helped transform preconceptions held by some middle-class managers, and she documents their self-recorded epiphanies. Second, Ciani shows how fathers attempted to maintain custody of their children when their wives died or deserted the family. Ideas about gender roles typically blinded middle-class managers to the concept that fathers could and should tend to the emotional and intimate needs of their children's daily lives. These men defied gender stereotypes.

In terms of the history of education, Ciani reveals the instructive nature of the various childcare institutions created in San Diego. Similar to other cities, San Diego's childcare services were initially constructed through elite and middle-class female volunteerism. The Children's Home and Day Nursery is an example of this. Founded in 1888, it provided mothers and fathers with daily and longer-term care based on individual needs. It viewed its work as protecting the morals of vulnerable populations as much as providing real sustenance. Much of the day was regimented: children attended school, a church (Methodist), and conducted their daily routine under staff supervision. Nevertheless, the staff prided themselves on creating a homelike environment, including providing each with a shelf to keep and display personal items, that allowed students to express their personalities in a variety of ways.

The Neighborhood House serves as another example of the overlap between childcare and education. Created in 1914 by women interested in reform, Neighborhood House served as a community center for San Diego's working classes, especially for those of Mexican descent. In addition to English, cooking classes, and baths, it housed a kindergarten and a day nursery. The nursery school movement, which started in the mid-1930s, became a vehicle through which to deliver ideas about appropriate early childhood education, address health concerns, and provide a resource to working parents.

In the early twentieth century, social services became professionalized. Ciani details the benefits and drawbacks this change had on childcare programs. In the end, Ciani found that professionalization led to more significant government support that expanded the dimensions of assistance. This expansion continued throughout the twentieth century. During World War II, for example, public schools provided supervision before and after school as well as on Saturdays and during the summers.

Drawing on a diversity of sources, Ciani tells the story of childcare from multiple perspectives. Using institutional sources, autobiographies, published oral histories, and newspapers, among other archival sources, Ciani gives voice to those who created, managed, used, and were cared for by these various organizations. She is particularly adept at finding the voices of the mothers, fathers, and children in institutional records. When administrators wrote about runaways from their institutions, especially when they attempted to return to a family member, they inadvertently told a story of deep attachment.

*Choosing to Care* is comprehensive in its conception and execution. Ciani demonstrates how and why working people have always been judged for needing help tending to their children. She reveals how and why San Diego's working-class parents were often asked to make impossible choices between their economic security, health, and children. At the same time, this is a story about how some people, especially elite and middle-class women, recognized a problem and attempted to solve it, first on their own, and later by developing the capacity of government to provide support. In doing so, Ciani demonstrates that childcare has always been a societal responsibility. It is incumbent upon us to recognize that fact and treat it as a right, not a privilege, in the present.

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Roger L. Geiger. *American Higher Education since World War II: A History.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2019. 400 pp.

With the publication of *Research and Relevant Knowledge: American Research Universities since World War II* (1993), Roger L. Geiger emerged as a leading scholar of the American research university. His subsequent work, most notably, *Knowledge and Money: Research Universities and the Paradox of the Marketplace* (2004), helped to deepen our understanding of the university and its relationship to American capitalism. His latest project has been a two-volume history of American higher education, whose final volume, *American Higher Education since World War II*, is a deeply researched work of historical synthesis that brilliantly illuminates many of the central trends in the history of American higher education.