

about Mexican culture” and “developed a deep respect and affection for their Mexican neighbors” while living and working at Neighborhood House (NH), the city’s first social settlement founded in 1914 (128). NH organizers created innovative and popular programs for residents of San Diego’s barrio, attracted the first federal funding for childcare in the city through the Children’s Bureau, and eventually became a Works Progress Administration day nursery in the 1930s.

The final two chapters focus on government-assisted programs to address the pressing childcare problems wrought by the Great Depression and mobilization for World War II. Though beyond the temporal scope of this journal, these latter chapters may still be of interest to its readers in revealing how government-sponsored programs of the mid-twentieth century relied on the professionalization of reform during the Progressive Era. Questions of agency and “expert” authority in the narrative aside, *Choosing to Care* is both an engaging community study of San Diego and a useful model for how to analyze the history of childcare reforms elsewhere.

Desire and Desperation: Native Americans and Economics in the Gilded Age

Beck, David R. M. *Unfair Labor?: American Indians and the 1893 World’s Columbian Exposition in Chicago*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2019. xxviii + 299 pp. \$65.00 (cloth), ISBN 978-1-4962-0683-1.

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The seven decades between 1870 and 1940 might be called the Age of Expositions. Every ten years saw an average of thirty-four regional, national, or international industrial and imperial fairs in the transatlantic world. At the height of the phenomenon, between 1890 and 1910, no fewer than seventy-eight celebrations of commerce, industry, science, and art took place—twenty-two of them in American cities. The Chicago World’s Fair of 1893, officially the World’s Columbian Exposition, thus constituted only one iteration of a global discourse on financial, racial, and geopolitical power relations, but it was a significant one: a six-month event that attracted twenty-seven million visitors. Chicago was followed by a series of American fairs that adopted and expanded on its initiatives and assumptions: Atlanta (1895), Nashville (1897), Omaha (1898), Buffalo (1901), St. Louis (1904), Portland, Seattle, San Francisco, and San Diego (1905–16). And like the others, the Chicago World’s Fair was a heavy local investment, a proud statement of cultural arrival and future promise—even in the midst of a withering economic depression.

Hundreds of books have been written about the World’s Columbian Exposition, beginning with dozens that appeared in its immediate aftermath as souvenirs and

memorabilia. David Beck explores, though, a previously unasked question: What did the Columbian Exposition do, materially, for Native American individuals and groups who were in various ways connected to it? The author's query is particularly appropriate because, more than any other exposition before or after it, the Chicago World's Fair was premised upon comparisons between the civilized present of the American Gilded Age and the supposed baseline primitivism first encountered by Christopher Columbus. In short, "400 Years of Progress" became the anthropological watchword in Chicago. What space did this leave for Native Americans living in late-nineteenth-century America? How much did they profit from the celebratory exercise?

The answer is, not surprisingly, very little. Beck first recounts the calamitous effects that post-Civil War settler migration and industrial (e.g., railroad, mining) expansion rendered on the fragile, remnant economies of indigenous communities throughout the country. Deprived of ancestral lands and the foundations for traditional ways of life, by 1890 native peoples also found themselves with dwindling, almost nonexistent sources of cash income. Destitution and starvation were constant companions. Under such circumstances, a major cultural event that featured the indigenous Americas held some potential for native communities—theoretically at least.

Scholars of expositions, including Chicago's, have long bemoaned the difficulty of penetrating the thick hegemonic screen of (mostly white male) investors, sponsors, administrators, and publicists in order to discern the voices of marginalized groups—minorities, workers, women, everyday visitors, and folks on display. Accepting the challenge, Beck has given us a master class in historical research and interpretation. Drawing on an impressive array of previously unseen sources—newspapers, personal papers and diaries, official business records, fieldwork notes, and more—he has assembled a picture of Indian-White interactions that, while notably unequal, nonetheless display Native American agency and determination in numerous directions. He has the numbers, too.

After a brief review of the American Indian displays on the fairgrounds—mainly those in Frederic Ward Putnam's Department of Ethnology in and around the Anthropology Building, and the Smithsonian's Bureau of Ethnology in the Government Building—Beck focuses on five areas of Native American economic involvement: 1) a handful of Indian individuals who were hired to collect native people and objects; 2) Putnam's collecting agents in the field and their economic impacts; 3) government collecting activities and payments in the field; 4) native peoples working in the ethnological displays at the Fair; and 5) native peoples working in commercial displays. In the first case, Beck identifies only four individuals (one of whom—Antonio Apache—was a non-Indian impostor). While the biographical sketches are valuable, the exceptional nature of this small group serves mainly to affirm the scarcity of even modestly-paid Native American employees.

Sponsored by Putnam's Department of Ethnology, the Canadian government, or the Smithsonian and other U.S. government departments, for two years (1891–93) hundreds of collectors spread out through North, Central, and South America in search of indigenous artifacts (in some cases, entire domestic scenes or graveyards) for their exhibits. The instructions were clear: buy as much as possible as cheaply as possible. As a consequence, the dollar benefits to indigenous communities were highly uneven, depending on native experience with marketing and immediate conditions—both the desires of collectors and the desperation of local communities. In most instances, though, the bulk of financial gain accrued to the collectors, not to the creators or sellers. The "collecting frenzy" of the Fair, Beck notes, may have launched some ethnographic and museum

careers, but the benefits to native folks were merely short-term: sometimes they gained “enough cash to avoid more severe starvation than they were already experiencing” (101).

Others earned income at the Fair itself, either as workers or displays. Here again, in captivating chapters, Beck demonstrates the highly differential gains for native peoples. The handful of Navajo Indians who lived and demonstrated in Putnam’s ethnographic village and on the Midway Plaisance, for example, endured homesickness and went home early, cheated of their pay. A determined group of Inuit families, furious over their illness and treatment, seceded and set up their own exhibit outside the fairgrounds—only to be forcibly corralled afterward and sent on to the San Francisco Midwinter Fair. Under the oversight of Franz Boas and George Hunt, the substantial Kwakwaka’wakw (Kwakiutl) contingent fared better, not only earning money for home but making “a cultural and an economic statement of their place in modernizing Canada” (112). Ironically, the best-paid Indians in Chicago were the seventy-four who worked for Buffalo Bill’s Wild West Show—which was rejected by the Fair managers and set up camp just outside the walls. Cody’s Indians earned between 10 and 70 dollars a month. For comparisons, see Beck’s tables of earnings of schoolchildren, Hawaiian musicians, and dozens of others (125–28)—an eye-opening research accomplishment.

Beck has done signal service in exposing the grounded reality of Indian–White economic relations at the height of the Gilded Age. It is not a pretty picture. He convincingly demonstrates that native peoples exhibited agency in multitudinous ways, actively trying to participate in “a cash economy that had become an increasingly important part of their lives.” Still, the final picture is decidedly mixed: “Indians in Chicago had worked hard to be part of the modern economic system,” he concludes, “but they had to face many barriers to achieve success. Though they succeeded in important ways, the same pattern would continue into the future. Indians could only participate in a modern cash economy by portraying their past” (199).

The Ubiquity and Variety of Progressive Era Performance

Shulman, Max, and J. Chris Westgate, eds. *Performing the Progressive Era: Immigration, Urban Life, and Nationalism on Stage*. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2019. ix + 285 pp. \$90.00 (paper), ISBN 978-1-60938-647-4.

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Performances were central to the commercial leisure that was ubiquitous in the Progressive Era. Vaudeville alone, which grew into a national entertainment industry