

state visitors, bore the burden. Yet the true end of the Dixie Highway came in 1926, when parts of it and other marked and unmarked roads were assumed by the numbered federal highway system.

Though brief, Ingram's history of the Dixie Highway is an important, useful, and readable addition to the history of the modernizing South. In the numerous debates and squabbles that accompanied plans for the highway, she exposes the complicated relationship that southerners had with the federal government and the means by which the South might become more fully integrated into the national economy. Ingram's scope is limited; her focus is on the debate in Georgia, drawn from the records of politicians, associations, and government agencies interested in the state's road-building program. Yet the larger themes that inform Ingram's research demand more attention. In *Dixie Highway*, she raises important questions about modernization and development, the ways that southerners debated the merits of growth and the manner in which they mobilized to make such growth happen. Those scholars interested in the South's transformation across the twentieth century, and particularly those interested in the modernization of the southern economy, will want to take note of these questions and build on Ingram's work in order to seek answers for them.

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Carolyn M. Goldstein. *Creating Consumers: Home-Economists in Twentieth-Century America*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2012. xi + 412 pp. ISBN 978-0-8078-3553-1, \$52.50 (cloth), ISBN 978-1-4696-2214-9, \$36.95 (paper).

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Over the last two decades, historians have moved past earlier, feminist critiques of home economics to reveal it as a complex movement that often served multiple agendas. Yet we have had no comprehensive survey of the movement that integrates it into the burgeoning literature on American consumer capitalism and business history that has emerged since the 1990s. Carolyn Goldstein's *Creating Consumers* takes up that challenge and fulfills it admirably.

*Creating Consumers* covers a vast scope, from the origins of the American Home Economics Association (AHEA) at the turn-of-the-century Lake Placid conferences to the decline of the movement in the

1970s and its eventual rebranding as “family and consumer sciences” in the 1990s. Goldstein focuses her narrative on two institutional sites: the Bureau of Home Economics (BHE) in the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the home economics departments established in many American companies from the 1920s into the postwar era. Yet her account stretches beyond these locations, encompassing the growth, shifts, and debates within the AHEA and the place of home economics in the broader American culture.

Goldstein’s decision to concentrate on the BHE and home economists in business reflects her emphasis on home economists’ roles as mediators in the new world of twentieth-century consumer capitalism. On the one hand, home economists aimed to help Americans, especially women, navigate the transformations in daily life wrought by the rise of mass production and mass distribution, as well as novel technological infrastructures such as electrical systems or natural gas. For home economists, that meant not only teaching women how to evaluate and use new kinds of products (such as washing machines, mechanical refrigerators, gas ovens, or electric stoves) but helping them embody what Goldstein calls “rational consumption” (p. 3) – bringing finances, purchasing decisions, and domestic chores under rational control as informed by scientific knowledge. In this regard, Goldstein argues, home economists played a central role in forming white, middle-class, consumer culture in the United States.

At the same time, even as home economists sought to educate housewives, they also positioned themselves as representatives of those women in government and business. Drawing on their specialized training, their contact with housewives, and their status as women, home economists claimed a particular form of gendered expertise that allowed them to be both distinct from other women and yet to speak on their behalf within male-dominated spheres of civic and economic life. That move enabled home economists to construct professional niches for themselves in realms where other women were often excluded, but it carried its own inherent limitations.

The tensions within and between these roles drive Goldstein’s narrative. Her opening chapter tracks the rise of home economics in the early twentieth century through its “watershed moment” (p. 46) during World War I as home economists secured a place in American public consciousness by collaborating with Herbert Hoover in efforts to promote voluntary rationing and to help families cope with shortages. The next two chapters explore the formation of the BHE in 1923 and its work during the interwar years. Created to improve the lives of rural families and to bolster American agriculture, the BHE embarked on an ambitious program of research and

education encompassing nutrition, textiles, household appliances, child-rearing practices, and finances. Led and staffed primarily by women, the BHE gave home economists an institutional base within the federal government and connection to a network of extension offices throughout the country. Yet the agency had an official focus on rural families at a time when the rural population was declining; it tested products to inform consumers but was barred from mentioning specific brands; and its mission rested on the assumption that the interests of consumers and the goals of American agriculture would always coincide. After World War II, those tensions would undermine the bureau.

Goldstein then turns to the rise of home economists within American corporations and trade associations during the interwar years as home economists fashioned themselves into channels for public outreach and education while also claiming to speak on behalf of the typical American housewife to inform product design and marketing. Here, Goldstein's narrative provides an important corrective to numerous highly critical accounts of home economists in business, many of which have focused on a few isolated individuals such as Christine Fredericks (who, ironically enough, had limited connections to home economics). Over three chapters, Goldstein describes the ambivalent relationship between business-oriented home economists and the rest of the AHEA, the creation of home economics departments within American retail and manufacturing firms, and the crucial function of home economists in helping utility companies persuade Americans to adopt new appliances powered by electricity or natural gas. Goldstein captures the diversity in outlook and goals among home economists as they confronted the inevitable tensions between education and sales, between loyalty to the consumer and loyalty to the company. Yet her account also emphasizes how important home economists became in shaping American culture, technology, and domestic life as they simultaneously introduced Americans to new practices (such as baking at constant temperatures or following "scientific" recipes) and helped companies re-design or re-package their goods.

Goldstein's final two chapters chart the decline of home economics through the 1970s. From a postwar high, home economics soon began to struggle, increasingly spurned by students and its former institutional supports. The union of gender and technical expertise that had sustained home economics during the interwar years crumbled as the broad functions that home economics had claimed for its own were siphoned off by other (often male-dominated) specialties: new market research departments, soft-sell advertising, or independent product testing agencies such as Consumers Research

or Consumers Union. Meanwhile, postwar feminists attacked the ties binding femininity to domesticity; the links that had underwritten home economists' professional identities now chained them to a rejected past. The symbolic end came in 1994, when the AHEA renamed itself the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences.

A brief summary cannot do justice to the richness of Goldstein's book. Drawing on a wide range of archival sources and extensive study of published documents, Goldstein covers an impressive breadth of individuals and topics while managing to weave them into an overarching narrative that is both engaging and illuminating. Many of the individual case studies about home economists in business are fascinating in their own right and could warrant deeper exploration, and inevitably (given the scope of the book) some topics are short-changed: we learn relatively little about home economists in academic settings, for example, whether universities or secondary schools. In this latter respect, Goldstein's work makes an excellent complement to Megan Elias's *Stir it Up: Home Economics in American Culture* (2008), which covers a similar time-frame but gives greater space to academic settings, individual biographies, and broader cultural conversations about home economics. Together, these authors have created a broad portrait of the home economics movement that will set the standard for future scholarship in years to come.

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Sue Fawn Chung. *In Pursuit of Gold: Chinese American Miners and Merchants in the American West*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2011. xxii + 258 pp. ISBN 978-0-252-03628-6, \$55 (cloth).

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Sue Fawn Chung's *In Pursuit of Gold* shifts our attention from California—the region that has been a focal point of considerable study on Chinese immigrants in America—to three little-studied mining towns in the American West. Through the examination of these relatively isolated, predominately Chinese mining towns—John Day, Oregon; Tuscarora, Nevada; and Island Mountain, Nevada—this study sheds fresh light on how local milieus could shape the experience of