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Reviews of books

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Christian D. Liddy and Richard H. Britnell (eds.), *North-East England in the Later Middle Ages*. Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2005. xiii + 250pp. 12 maps. 1 plate. 13 figures. 7 tables. £50.00/$90.00.
doi:10.1017/S0963926806213798

This collection explores whether there was a 'north-east' identity or a 'north-east' region in the Later Middle Ages, issues which are articulated and discussed in A.J. Pollard's introduction. The approaches taken by the essays are both physical and cultural, that is, different contributors explore first how the north-east was shaped by physical boundaries, how its economy was determined by the emergence of the commercial centres and market towns of Newcastle, Darlington and Northallerton, and how unity and unification were provided by administrative units, and second, the emergence of mentalities or cultures, in which the cult of St Cuthbert was a prime, but not the only, influence. Critical to the collection, too, is the historic relationship between the region and its northern neighbours. In the opening essay Richard Lomas takes up the question of the centrality of Cuthbert, demonstrating how the estates of his two 'trustees', the bishop of Durham and the cathedral priory, were a product of the restructuring of the upper stratum of the border society in the years after the Norman Conquest, and, significantly, how they overlapped the English–Scottish border. Alistair J. Macdonald, moving the discussion to the fifteenth century, argues that the chronicle of John Hardyng, a northerner – he entered the service of Sir Henry Percy in 1390 – and a spy and forger of documents, was designed to uphold English claims to suzerainty over Scotland, but shows that it also reveals 'problems of potentially conflicting local and national identities not resolved' (p. 42). Cynthia J. Neville also deals with identities on the northern marcher lands, through an exploration of border law and legal customs, while Andy King and Christian D. Liddy turn our attention to families of the border regions, the Grays of Heaton and the Pollards of Pollard Hall respectively, to discuss how social and economic conditions of the fourteenth century and later allowed for their social advancement.

Other essays focus on aspects of the history of the medieval city of Durham: its law courts (Peter L. Larson), including the court of the priors of Durham (Constance M. Fraser), and the jurisdiction of the church (Margaret Harvey). Also of particular

interest to urban historians will be the papers on the commerce and the market economy of the region. Christine M. Newman focuses her attention on the towns of Darlington and Northallerton, both of which belonged to the bishop of Durham and both of which continued to function as marketing and trading centres despite the economic decay of the area in the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. Miranda Threlfall-Holmes' study of Newcastle between 1460 and 1520 is based on the obedientiary accounts of Durham Cathedral Priory, and she argues that most of the priory's needs could be met locally, with Newcastle increasingly being the focus for its commercial activities, conducted through a series of agents, who might be priory servants, officials, monks or merchants. The priory itself, as Alan Piper's paper on the size and composition of the community from 1274 onwards shows, suffered a reduction in numbers in the fourteenth century, but the late fifteenth was marked by a resurgence and a 'renewed vitality' of recruitment right until its dissolution in 1539.

Two essays look at estates and agricultural production in the area. Ben Dodds investigates the area between the Tyne and the Tees between 1349 and 1450, utilizing the tithe receipts contained in Durham Cathedral Priory's account rolls for that period, arguing that a long-term pattern of economic change can be discerned for the north-east, while Simon J. Harris examines the bishop of Durham's estates over a slightly longer period, from 1350 to 1480, in relation to the abandonment of land in the wake of the Black Death. Finally, Brian K. Roberts, Helen Dunsford and Simon J. Harris bring together material relating to the medieval landscapes of County Durham, and identify two broad landscape zones, which have implications for economies and social and cultural identities. This stimulating collection has much to interest the urban historian, and is a valuable study of a region in its contexts.

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Elodie Lecuppre-Desjardin and Anne-Laure Van Bruaene (eds.), *Emotions in the Heart of the City (14th – 16th Century)*. Turnhout: Brepols, 2005. viii + 298pp. 10 b&w ills. €59/£46.50 pbk.
doi:10.1017/S0963926806223794

Emotions in the Heart of the City includes twelve case studies of the way emotions as diverse as anger, pity and love functioned in different medieval urban contexts, and its wide-ranging approach enables it to investigate urban emotions outside disciplinary boundaries. Its editors outline the relevance of their object of study to urban history in particular: 'the town concentrates in its heart a public space where both delicate and strong emotions are repeatedly enacted' (p. vii). They discuss the division of the essays into three sections in terms of 'urban social "spheres" where divergent emotions were publicly expressed, manipulated, discussed and represented': urban revolt, justice and theatrical displays. In other words urban history should take the study of emotions to its heart because they are central to the way its communities operate, to their distinctive arrangement of public and private spaces and their peculiar modes of casual and administrative interaction. The book begins and ends with theoretical and methodological reflections by Jeroen Deploige and Walter Prevenier. These usefully outline the historiography of the topic and clarify the main critical issues with which the case studies engage: new approaches to Norbert Elias' narrative of the 'gradual growth of regulated human behaviour,

from. . .a childlike era towards one of self-discipline and mature emotional control', and Barbara Rosenwein's 'emotional communities': 'social environments in which specific assessments of emotions and emotionality are shared within a society' (p. 18). Many of the chapters fail to engage fully with the theoretical complexities of these opening and closing statements, but as groups of case studies they do explore some major themes of the investigation of pre-modern emotions.

The first section on urban revolt picks up on the volume's general interest in the role of emotions in mediating between individual psychologies and public knowledge. The writers are at pains to stress the logical and meaningful structures behind collective action. Spontaneity and individual grievance are rejected as explanatory causes, and the authors insist on the self-consciousness with which patterns of inversion and theatricality were employed by rioters. Peter Arnade, for instance, points to the comic potential of inversion as a means of desacralization in iconoclastic activity: 'Lodewyck Caenen entered a church at Buyscheure, climbed atop the altar, and turned all the statues backwards so that their back side faced forward' (p. 106). The second section on urban courts and their attitudes towards the display of emotion focuses most closely on the methodological problem of the relationship between the experience of emotion and its representation in different kinds of document. Writers consider how emotions might be deployed as strategies within systems of justice revealing, for instance, the relationship between individual desires and the common good or between prince and people rather than the actual feelings of historical subjects. Examining the potential conflict between justice and emotion in the move away from private vengeance as a way of settling disputes, they explore how emotions worked within a variety of power dynamics including the gendering of the use of emotion words.

Although curiously uninterested in the urban nature of their material, essays in the section on entertainment do explore a variety of audiences for emotional representation. In doing so, they clarify the issue of response to its display which has been a more or less implicit concern of previous chapters, raising thought-provoking questions for the way all the groups considered in the volume tried to achieve their ends through the display of strong feelings.

'Emotions are situated on the interface between mental life and physical reaction' (p. 124) – the statement suggests the satisfactions this volume offers, but it also indicates the difficulty of pursuing and interpreting evidence for emotions. In some ways this remains very obviously a set of conference proceedings: as a volume, it fails to resolve the methodological problems set out at the start and does not advance the theories of 'emotionology' greatly. Many of the chapters are narrative-led because, one suspects, the evidence is just so hard to read in these terms. Nevertheless, the volume does provide a thought-provoking set of examples which consider the role of passion in medieval town life and, in this way, it makes a wider case for the centrality of the study of emotions to urban history.

Catherine Richardson
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Sue Berry, *Georgian Brighton*. Chichester: Phillimore, 2005. xi + 212pp. 83 illustrations. £25.00.
doi:10.1017/S0963926806233790

Sue Berry has been working for nearly 30 years on the early history of Brighton as a seaside resort, and this book gathers together the fruits of her accumulated

labours, including research on archives that have only become accessible during the last few years. It is of variable quality, tailing off noticeably towards the end, and petering out in a brief and almost invisible conclusion; and, after a brief engagement with the historiography and context of the emergence of seaside resorts in Chapter 2, it refers only in an intermittent and highly selective (or random) way to developments outside Brighton and reflections on them. Corbin's work on the revolution in perceptions of the sea in the eighteenth century figures in the bibliography but not in the text, while discussion of what is evidently the resort product cycle on p. 18 proceeds without any mention of the extensive debate around this concept initiated by Butler. The book is beautifully illustrated and clearly written, but it is essentially a detailed work of local history, which provides some useful wider insights as it goes along.

The most original and valuable sections are those that explain why the growth of five early seaside resorts outpaced the rest during the second half of the eighteenth century, discuss the positive and negative importance of eighteenth-century wars for the early development of south coast resorts and assess the role of public road transport in bringing visitors to Georgian Brighton, demonstrating by implication the important part played by private carriages in making up the numbers. It is depressing that it is still necessary to devote space to debunking the role of the Prince of Wales in the early development of Brighton, but these myths are hardy creatures. Useful topographical points are made about the importance of crumbling cliffs and gently sloping beaches in providing ready access to the sea for bathing-machines and bathers, and about the ways in which Brighton's distinctive landownership and field patterns of laines, furlongs, paul pieces and leak ways made an enduring impact on its street plan. There is a great deal of painstaking and useful detail on the building and development process, and the disruptive impact of the Prince of Wales' Pavilion on the surrounding area is made clear. The case-study of local government in Chapter 14 offers an implicit reminder that we still know too little about this in the context of the Georgian 'leisure town' as an urban type, but the endorsement on p. 169 of a contemporary comment that the town lacked any sign of local government in 1811 is completely out of line with what has gone before.

The strength of this book is in the local detail, but there are also weaknesses here. On p. 29 the proffered table does not show convincingly that Brighton had more amenities than its competitors in 1780. On pp. 137–9 there are problems with the presentation of demographic data, and the age structure for 1821, taken from a local directory and presented without comment, is completely implausible. Some percentages in tables are inaccurate. Context is often lacking, as when cricket is mentioned as an attraction without reference to Underdown's book on its origins in Sussex, Kent and Hampshire and its early migration to London under aristocratic and commercial patronage. This is urban history cast firmly in the Phillimore local history mould. It provides isolated insights and bases for comparisons, and it is generally scholarly and in places splendidly thorough. But it is long on accumulated detail and short on intellectual excitement.

John K. Walton
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Tammy C. Whitlock, *Crime, Gender and Consumer Culture in Nineteenth-Century England*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005. xi + 244pp. 5 figures. Bibliography. £45.00.
doi:10.1017/S0963926806243797

If there is one thing that no retailing historian can fail to notice, it is the fact that retailers did like to complain, with customers and competitors being, perhaps unsurprisingly, favourite targets. To be fair, they were not unique: they were just as often the objects of condemnation themselves. Reading Tammy C. Whitlock's book, *Crime, Gender and Consumer Culture in Nineteenth-Century England*, will soon dispel any lingering doubts about this: few retailers and even fewer consumers avoided at least some form of contemporary censure. Complaints are in fact at the heart of Whitlock's book. Her aim is to explore debates over retail crime, in order to gain insights into the consumer culture of the first half of the nineteenth century, and particularly women's involvement within it. Yet as Whitlock shows, it was not always clear to contemporaries who the criminals were. The first half of the book concentrates on retailers, the second on customers (or, more accurately, female customers), both groups receiving their share of negative press. On the one hand, outlets such as the ostentatious 'monster shops' and bazaars were demonized, their supposed propensity for defrauding unsuspecting customers condemned. On the other hand, plenty of commentators also lamented many customers' seemingly tireless attempts to defraud and rob shopkeepers. Middle-class female thieves proved particularly problematic: a range of arguments – some even less credible than others – were developed in order not to brand these women as criminals, and punish them accordingly.

This book unearths much fascinating material. Whitlock usefully concentrates on retail formats that have hitherto received little attention, but which clearly were of considerable interest to contemporaries. The most intriguing examples are perhaps charity and commercial bazaars, with their mixture of risqué and worthy reputations, and their roles as leisure as much as shopping sites. Whitlock also uses a mixture of case studies (mostly drawn from court cases) to shed new light on to women's active involvement in contemporary consumer culture. She shows them not only shopping and shoplifting, but also taking advantage of the opportunities provided by shopkeepers' willingness to supply goods on credit to respectable-looking women. That said, more quantitative evidence – even guesstimates – to put the debates over crime and the case studies of theft into perspective would have been useful. How widespread were controversial shops like emporia or bazaars, particularly outside London? How extensive was retail crime? How much was hype and how much reality? The reader is also rather left wondering about who (and how many) were the participants to the debates, beyond the fact that they were overwhelmingly male and middle class. Certain assumptions also run through this book. In particular, Whitlock seems to have little doubt that nineteenth-century retail development occurred in a linear way, with shops such as linen drapers acting as 'transitional forms' (p. 4) in the evolution from 'traditional' to 'modern' retail formats. She is also confident that women were society's main consumers, and that this period saw a 'feminisation' of consumer culture. The problem with these assumptions is not simply that they are questionable, but also that they risk acting as a barrier to the development of perhaps more complex and nuanced

understandings of retail innovation and of the relationship between gender and consumer culture.

Finally, a further and thorough revision of the book before publication would undoubtedly have been beneficial, particularly in order to weed out repetitions and the occasional odd statement – can the nineteenth-century economy really be defined as 'post-capitalist' (p. 11)? That said, there is much in this book that will be of value to anybody interested in the cultures associated with nineteenth-century retailing and consumption. And for anybody wishing to test whether retailers both complained and were complained about as much as I have stated at the start of this review, there really is no better place to start.

L. Ugolini
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Frank Towers, *The Urban South and the Coming of the Civil War*. Charlottesville and London: University of Virginia Press, 2004. xi + 285pp. Map. Appendix. Notes. $45.00.
doi:10.1017/S0963926806253793

Frank Towers promises to reset the compass of our understanding of the sectional politics and secession dynamics of the American South by arguing that the South's three largest cites – Baltimore, St Louis, and New Orleans – influenced the course of southern secession. These southern cities caused secessionists to worry that they were going the way of northern cities with their mob rule, contentious `democratic' politics and misplaced loyalties. According to Towers, the economic, social and political changes occurring in these cities during the late antebellum showed that white workers advanced their own interests regardless of, and sometimes in opposition to, the South's dominant states rights and pro-slavery ethos. Secessionists consequently viewed the free labour politics in these cities as an immediate threat to the hierarchical society of racial slavery and the necessity of white unity. Thus, the timing and urgency of secession emerged from fears that slavery's enemies were already advancing within the urban South.

Much of Towers' argument derives especially from his microscopic focus on Baltimore, which as the largest city in 'the South' and its largest industrial centre, posed particular problems of demographic and economic orientation. With a diverse population and diversifying economy, Baltimore better fitted a border-state pattern of 'national' loyalties, commerce and social allegiances than a 'southern' direction of urban development. So, too, in varying degrees, did the large and culturally idiosyncratic port of New Orleans and the vigorous and ambitious St Louis with its lines of interest extending in all directions and with its German population tilting toward free soil politics. Smaller southern cities such as Savannah, Mobile and Charleston, Towers argues, were extensions of the agricultural South and remained less threatening to secessionists. Even industrializing cities like Richmond posed no immediate threat to 'southern rights' advocates because they had large free black and slave labour populations working in key areas. For Towers, size matters. The three largest cities had crossed a threshold of 150,000 residents and each had a critical mass of immigrant, free black and non-slaveholding workers necessary for the creation of competing ethnic and workers' cultures.

Timing matters too. The collapse of the second American party system in the 1850s coincided with the rise of workers' associations, collective action, nativism and ethnic violence, and the three big cities became battlegrounds of immigrant/ethnic, racial and class identities amid shifting loyalties to party, city, region and nation. Working-class gangs and election riots gave violent notice to secessionists that their brand of Democratic politics and public life was in retreat in the big cities. When the war came, the partisans of urban politics readily adapted their organizing strategies to the contentious world of wartime mobilization, dissent and military occupation, and, one might suppose, of Reconstruction. Conversely, Towers downplays the importance of northern-born capitalists in shaping urban economies and society and the decline of slavery in cities during the 1850s as the cotton boom drew off slave labour, and opened places for immigrants and native-born whites. He also understates the extent and energy of industrialization, social change and class- and ethnic-based politics in other southern cities. Such attention might suggest that the concerns of secessionists from Alabama, Georgia and Virginia, and elsewhere, were as much responses to urban changes underway in their states as any worries about the internal goings-on in big cities on the southern periphery. That said, Towers shows that southern fears of enemies without and subversion from within led to more than controlling the slaves and bullying the abolitionists. In doing so, he pulls the urban South into the centre of the old question of why secessionists rushed to leave the Union and provides a new algebra for understanding urban transformations in Dixie.

Randall M. Miller
Saint Joseph's University

David W. Gutzke, *Pubs and Progressives: Reinventing the Public House in England 1896–1960*. DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 2006. xi + 360pp. 8 tables. 3 charts. 27 figures. Bibliography. $45.00.
doi:10.1017/S096392680626379X

To date Progressivism is a concept that has tended to be associated with the attempts to remove corruption and vice from the American city. However, as this new study by David Gutzke of the British public house shows, the movement was visible in the old world as well. Building on his previous work on pubs and drink and drawing on an impressive range of source material, the author demonstrates that one of the targets for Progressivism in a British context was the public house which had developed a poor reputation amongst the reforming middle class by the end of Victoria's reign. The pub was an institution which had been incorporated into a working-class lifestyle whilst the middle class increasingly abandoned it (possibly as part of their flight to the privatized suburb).

This well-presented and very readable book provides insights to a variety of aspects of the way Progressivism tried to change drinking and drinking venues, from the largely unstudied Gothenburg system which promoted disinterested management of pubs, to the attempts by pub owners to promote a more family-based image for the venues in the years after the Great War. In an attempt to make pubs more enticing to the middle class, pub owners attempted to build family pubs in the suburbs, a good example of this being in the city of Birmingham which is the focus of chapter 4. Here, stylistic changes to the exterior and interior of public

houses are examined, for it is from the 1920s and 1930s that many of the 'improved' pubs date. Incorporating a beer garden, improved decor and often catering for the car with parking facilities, they were promoted by companies such as the Midland brewer Mitchell and Butler. One of the appealing facets of this book is that it is well supported by photographs of the pubs' internal decor. I particularly liked the picture on page 229 which shows a group of 'old-guard' working-class men in an improved Staffordshire pub looking distinctly uneasy in their new surroundings. The improved pubs of the inter-war period were intended to entice women into them, the idea being that they would provide some restriction on excessive drinking and encourage more refinement. Another feature of the improved pub was the appearance of food and the development of the lounge-bar which, taking its cue from the room which could be found in most hotels, gave the opportunity for the mixing of the sexes in a relaxed atmosphere. This room was 'superimposed on the previously prevailing status hierarchy of saloon bar, private bar, and public bar' (p. 158). It was an attempt, in the author's view, to establish a measure of social control by instilling middle-class values amongst working-class drinkers. The continued presence of the working-class inner city 'snug' in the 1960s might suggest this project was incomplete.

Brewers also diversified into the construction of on-site dance halls as a response to the increasing demand among the middle classes for this leisure pastime. Much of this effort by pub owners is classified by the author as the 'gentrification' of the pub. In his final chapter the author considers the legacy of the improved inter-war pub. Not surprisingly every action provokes a reaction. By the post-1945 era, critics of the architectural design were increasingly heard and the Victorian pub was recollected with increasing fondness. Here there was undoubtedly an element of nostalgia. Some critics thought that the new improved pubs were too vast and anonymous, too alien to an 'English way of life'. What we inevitably return to is an aspect of inter-class friction in the twentieth century, with its roots in the nineteenth. Overall, Gutzke has produced a super work that uncovers a much under-studied aspect of British social history. Progressivism has its place in Britain's twentieth century as well America's; a fact that should be acknowledged and used as a platform for further inquiry.

John Griffiths
Massey University, New Zealand

Teresita Martínez-Vergne, *Nation and Citizen in the Dominican Republic, 1880–1916*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005. xi + 256pp. 16 illustrations. 6 tables. 1 map. Notes. Bibliography. Index. $24.95.
doi:10.1017/S0963926806273796

Martínez-Vergne offers a compelling analysis of Dominican national identity formation – and contestation – in this intellectual and social history of elites and workers in two of the Dominican Republic's main urban centres, the capital, Santo Domingo, and the eastern sugar town, San Pedro de Macorís. At the end of the nineteenth century, just as the Dominican Republic entered the international stage as a sugar-producing country and as the United States began to wield its influence over the nation, intellectual elites crafted an optimistic nationalist discourse. Although they disagreed over the details – such as the benefits or dangers of

an economy oriented around mechanized sugar production – Dominican elites reassured themselves that national progress was possible.

The activities of subalterns, however, often disrupted Dominican intellectuals' attempts to cultivate and nurture a modern citizenry. This was especially true in Santo Domingo and San Pedro de Macorís where native-born and immigrant workers pursued their own agendas, violently and raucously defended their honour and resisted attempts by local elites to transform them into 'good' citizens. Martínez-Vergne argues that the contradictions and limits within nationalist discourse became particularly acute in these cities. Political and intellectual elites regarded orderliness and good sanitation in the cities as measures of their and the nation's modernity. As a result, they invested a great deal of energy in progressive reforms such as policing leisure activities and managing public health. Nevertheless, Santo Domingo's and San Pedro's working poor were forced to deal squarely with the realities of urban life in an impoverished nation. Martínez-Vergne paints a vivid and poignant picture of native and immigrant labourers who survived the booms and busts of a precarious economy, who demanded public education for their children and protested against labour regulations, policing and inadequate housing. As a result, Martínez-Vergne argues, non-elites developed their own yardstick to measure progress; they constructed an alternative vision of the national character and Dominican citizenship that reflected their experiences as the urban working poor.

This book makes a significant contribution to two underdeveloped fields of inquiry, Dominican social history, at least that which is published in English, and Caribbean urban history. Martínez-Vergne quite successfully weaves a coherent argument by piecing together an archival base that, as many of us who work in Dominican archives can attest, can be frustratingly incomplete. The author's case is convincing precisely because she places the activities of Dominican elites and the working classes within a broader, Latin American context. For example, she reveals linkages between Dominican intellectuals with the emerging international eugenics movement in the early twentieth century. She also makes comparative gestures towards similarly situated cities, such as Puerto Limón, Costa Rica, to make sparse evidence about the actions, demands and protests of workers in Santo Domingo and San Pedro 'speak' with greater conviction. Ending her narrative before the United States military occupation (1916–24), Martínez-Vergne's valuable analysis of this formative period in Dominican history will undoubtedly direct scholarly attention away from the dominant, political narrative to local archives that reveal the daily struggles and social interactions that have given meaning to and continue to shape Dominican national identity and citizenship.

A.J. Mayes
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Matthew Worley (ed.), *Labour's Grass Roots: Essays on the Activities of Local Labour Parties and Members, 1918–45*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005. x + 267pp. 10 tables. £47.50.
doi:10.1017/S0963926806283792

The last ten years has witnessed a significant revision of the established history of the rise of the Labour party. The Whiggish determinism which predominated

until the 1980s has been softened by a greater focus on language, diversity and contingency, though with the emphasis still focused on 'high politics' and the enduring concerns with issues like 1931, the ILP disaffiliation and relations with the Communists. Studies of local Labour development remain rare, especially for the inter-war period, and so this collection offers an important opportunity to question both the orthodoxies and the revisions of the national picture. The eleven contributions bring together established political historians – Andrew Thorpe, Duncan Tanner, Stuart Ball, Karen Hunt, Stefan Berger, Bob Morley and Sam Davies – and younger scholars like Catriona MacDonald, Nicole Robertson and Gidon Cohen under the editorship of Matthew Worley, whose recently published monograph on inter-war Labour this collection compliments. Though the editor's introduction supplies little more than a map through the book, the opening essay by Worley, Ball and Thorpe, providing a general view of grass-roots activity in all three main parties, offers an excellent template against which the other chapters can be measured. These present a mixture of national, regional and local studies of grass-roots activism in Scotland, Wales, Yorkshire, London, the Midlands, Manchester, Glasgow and Norwich – along with a comparison with the SPD in Germany – and a range of themes including women's involvement in the party, the ILP post-disaffiliation, relations with trades' councils and the co-operative movement, municipal elections and the failure of the party to organize effectively in rural areas.

Although this is largely mainstream political history, the importance of locality, neighbourhood and networks is emphasized often in contrast to the dry procedural conservatism of the trade union dominated party machines. Women emerge as the most active group numerically, organizationally, socially and politically – joining the party in greater numbers than men, creating more active and lasting sections, arranging the important social events which raised money and created collective identity and often proving more willing to use their meetings to discuss policy issues. However, the increasing tendency to see a strong women's presence as necessary to the development of an active interest in social issues is challenged by Duncan Tanner, whose essay on Wales demonstrates that a range of factors could drive welfare policy to the top of the political agenda even in the male dominated mining constituencies of the Valleys.

Although the book is designed to be broad ranging, the absence of a strong contextual introduction and the variable quality of the essays does weaken the overall coherence of the collection. Furthermore, although it is intended to move understanding of the inter-war Labour party forward, there remains a tendency to valorize the ILP, snipe at the conservatism of the party machine and hint that Labour success in the 1930s would have been greater if the party had adopted a more radical policy and democratic and open structure. But this approach highlights one of the key weaknesses of this collection – the tendency to ignore the electoral appeal of Labour's main opponents in the Conservative party (and to a lesser extent the Liberals). The latter are considered in the essays on Scotland and the south-west of England, but the Tories remain, as they do in so much regional and local political history, largely absent. Yet to really understand the opportunities and constraints facing inter-war Labour much more attention needs to be paid to the dominant party of the period and to explaining why Labour made so little headway against them. Overall, however, this is a worthwhile collection which

helps to advance our understanding of the complexity of urban politics between the wars.

Barry M. Doyle
University of Teesside

Harold L. Platt, *Shock Cities: The Environmental Transformation and Reform of Manchester and Chicago*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2005. xvi + 628pp. 7 halftones. 20 line drawings. 27 maps. 13 tables. $49.00/£34.50.
doi:10.1017/S0963926806293799

More than ten years in the making, *Shock Cities* is Harold Platt's pioneering contribution to the fast-growing field of urban environmental history. The last two decades have witnessed an outpouring of publications concerned with environmental issues in nineteenth- and early twentieth-century cities, but to date few scholars have attempted to explore their complexities from a transnational perspective. Platt breaks new ground by carefully examining a variety of environmental problems – and technical, administrative and legal responses to them – on different sides of the Atlantic in Manchester and Chicago: the classic 'shock cities' of the industrial revolution. Drawing on a wealth of archival material, as well as ideas and data from the social and natural sciences, the author also aims to 'broaden the conceptual boundaries' of urban history by embracing the holism of environmental studies. Platt insists on a primary role for nature in his research model, but 'without losing sight of the central drama played by the city's people, politics, and patterns of settlement' (p. 12). Indeed, environmental politics is the main focus of the book.

In comparing Manchester and Chicago, Platt demonstrates that despite their different cultural frameworks and ecological settings, self-serving politicians in both industrial centres were wedded to low-cost government and pro-growth policies that put increasing pressure on their environments and exposed their poor and immigrant communities to a multitude of hazards. Rapid environmental transformation in these archetypal industrial cities – dwindling green spaces, polluted water supplies, dirty air – had serious ecological and social repercussions, such as: the growth of segregated residential areas; catastrophic floods; typhoid and cholera epidemics; rising rates of respiratory disease; and deadly fogs. While many of these problems will be familiar to urban environmental historians, the author's attention to similarities and dissimilarities in the experiences of Manchester and Chicago, particularly the local power relationships that saw pollution burdens inequitably distributed along class, ethnic and gender lines, sheds new light on the evolution of the industrial city. However, some historians may baulk at Platt's depiction of contemporary urban reformers such as Manchester's Arthur Rowley and Chicago's Jane Addams as fighters for environmental justice.

On the critical side, *Shock Cities* does suffer from some organizational problems. Divided into two parts, 'Creating industrial ecologies' and 'Reforming industrial cities', with chapters in each section paired under the subheadings of 'Land', 'Water' and 'Air', there is an inevitable repetition of material. And at almost five hundred pages, the main body of this bulky study would have benefited from

sharper editing. That said, at only a little over five pages, a fuller conclusion was needed to draw the book's different themes and sections together more effectively. In addition, there are few references in the book to work published after 2000 and it has no bibliographical essay. These concerns aside, urban environmental history has now reached the stage where it needs more transnational studies, and Platt's comprehensive and detailed account of the environmental transformation of Manchester and Chicago shows the value of taking such an approach. *Shock Cities* will undoubtedly inspire others to continue with this challenging task.

Stephen Mosley
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Constance S. Sutton (ed.), *Revisiting Caribbean Labour: Essays in Honour of O. Nigel Bolland*. Kingston and Miami: Ian Randle, Publishers, 2005. xviii + 149pp. $14.95 pbk.
doi:10.1017/S0963926806303793

This is a slim, but useful, publication for any one with an interest in the sociology of labour or labour history. Labour has shaped the Caribbean, in its slave, indentured and wage forms (p. xi) and this collection of articles rightly highlights the centrality of labour to understanding Caribbean history and development. As Bolland points out in his afterword, Caribbean labour was, and remains, on the front line of global trends. The articles are dedicated to Bolland in recognition of his pioneering contribution to the reconceptualization of Caribbean labour history to embrace race, class and gender analysis within a multidisciplinary approach and comparative framework. His influence is evident in the articles selected for this collection that extend the comparative framework to the Spanish-speaking Caribbean. Antonio Lauria-Perricelli provides an interesting discussion of labour struggles in Puerto Rico in the 1930s whilst Constance R. Sutton analyses the Barbados Sugar Workers' strike of 1958. Women in the Anglophone Caribbean are highlighted in Lynn Bolles' piece on female trade union leaders and Rhoda Reddock's study of women workers' struggles in the 1930s, a relatively neglected period in Caribbean history that deserves more attention. Jean Stubbs revisits her earlier research on the Cuban tobacco industry, interrogating links between gender, race, class and nation, and John Tumuli examines the impact of Cuban agrarian reforms after 1959. Contemporary globalization is also addressed in Karla Slocum's study of labour struggles in St Lucia's banana industry.

Perhaps one of the main strengths of this book is the comparative framework that helps us better to appreciate wider developments in labour struggles across the region. Additionally, the articles further develop Bolland' s interrogation of how the legacies of the past have influenced race consciousness and class formation in the Caribbean. If I have a criticism, it is that the volume could have extended the comparative framework further. There were slave communities in Central and Latin America and, as in the Caribbean, the legacies of the past continue to impact upon the life-experiences of the descendants of these communities in a globalized world. The same point applies to Caribbean communities in North America and Europe. Such continuities between past and present strengthen Bolland's position

that we have to revisit Caribbean labour in order to contribute to the ongoing struggle for human emancipation (p. 137).

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Amanda I. Seligman, *Block by Block: Neighborhoods and Public Policy on Chicago's West Side*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005. 320pp. 19 halftones. 8 maps. $65.00 hbk. $25.00/£17.50 pbk.
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Amanda I. Seligman's *Block by Block: Neighborhoods and Public Policy on Chicago's West Side* joins the growing list of urban history volumes examining race relations and neighbourhood change in post-World War II American cities. *Block by Block* is of particular interest due to the scope of the narrative, taking in the coincidental but at times contradictory efforts of residents in three Chicago neighbourhoods – Austin, West Garfield Park and North Lawndale (termed 'community areas' in Chicago's local sociological and city planning parlance) – to forestall white-to-black residential turnover in the 1950s and 1960s. While Seligman's exploration of neighbourhood newspaper materials and local organizational documents, as well as her narrative emphasis on the community preservation activities of rank-and-file residents, marks much of *Block by Block* as an exercise in 'bottom-up' historiography, she also commits her attention to the linkages between local community action and municipal-level policies. By assessing the frequent mismatch of city government priorities to local conditions and resident aims, Seligman seeks to find an underlying explanation for the precipitous physical and social deterioration experienced by all three neighbourhoods after 1965.

Some of *Block by Block*'s richest material concerns the flawed implementation of presumably straightforward municipal regulatory action. In the late 1950s the City of Chicago introduced a new housing code to enforce proper residential building maintenance and interior sanitary standards. On the West Side, code enforcement was, at best, erratic, and, at worst, contributed to neighbourhood deterioration. For example, by the early 1960s the scale of the city government's building inspection-mandated property demolitions was actually reducing the physical desirability of many residential blocks, prompting the out-migration of longtime renters and homeowners. Indeed, *Block by Block* is of principal interest due to Seligman's close investigation of many such public policy 'micro-processes'. Another fascinating instance of this type of analysis is her discussion of local debates over the desirability of large versus small public open spaces. Many West Siders articulated a preference for small municipal parks, which Seligman convincingly proposes was based on the assumption that more confined public areas allowed greater local resident surveillance which might slow neighbourhood racial turnover.

If there is one gap in Seligman's narrative, it is the following. Throughout this volume, the author routinely notes 'West Siders' inability to manipulate public policy in their favor', yet the most accessible lever for shaping municipal action, the network of local Democratic Party ward organizations, barely makes an appearance. Their invisibility is, in itself, suggestive. As the West Side's demographic profile shifted between 1950 and 1970, 'absentee' bosses who

had moved to more exclusive neighbourhoods outside their wards increasingly dominated the local party organizations. These party leaders of ethnically inflected organizations experiencing rapid racial change were not inclined to collaborate with the emergent block and neighbourhood organizations. In short, there is probably a bit more to the West Side story than Amanda Seligman's *Block by Block* presents, but even so, this is a impressively researched, highly persuasive survey of 1950s/1960s-era neighbourhood change.

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Kevin M. Kruse, *White Flight: Atlanta and the Making of Modern Conservatism*. Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2005. xiv + 325pp. 12 halftones. 12 maps. $35.00.
doi:10.1017/S0963926806323796

In the 1950s and 1960s, African Americans in Atlanta increasingly demanded public desegregation. A coalition of moderate whites, led by Mayor William B. Hartsfield, and prominent black citizens worked together for token integration without the kinds of violence that characterized other southern cities, making Atlanta famous as 'the city too busy to hate'. Kevin Kruse's *White Flight* examines how Atlanta's white residents responded to the arrival of blacks in their residential neighbourhoods, parks, swimming pools, public schools and shopping districts. In particular, Kruse argues that while they were just as fiercely segregationist as their contemporaries in other cities, white Atlanta residents' reactions were more peaceful and, ultimately, had more influence on national politics. Quickly realizing that bald-faced expressions of racism were largely ineffective in Atlanta, segregationists modulated their actions and rhetoric. They crafted a new language of rights, asserting that the US Constitution protected their freedom to disassociate themselves from anyone they chose and to dispose of their property similarly. Forced to share facilities with blacks, white Atlanta abandoned them altogether, including the city itself. Ensconced in the burgeoning metropolitan suburbs, they practised a 'politics of suburban secession', the refusal to co-operate in metropolitan initiatives, and birthed the conservatism that ascended to national political power in the form of a newly Republican South at the end of the twentieth century. 'White flight', a term that usually refers simply to the departure of whites from residential areas newly occupied by blacks, signifies for Kruse the broader disavowal of white suburbanites of any relationship to blacks and cities.

The great strength of *White Flight* is its reading of the subtleties of local and national politics. Kruse carefully narrates a multi-sided story. In addition to detailing the significant divides among white Atlanta residents, Kruse notices differences among African Americans, particularly the generational divide separating the city's elders and young activists like Maynard Jackson Jr, Atlanta's first black mayor. But Kruse's identification of Atlanta as the originator of modern conservatism is overstated. Kruse rightly points out that new congressional conservatives like Dick Armey, Tom DeLay and Newt Gingrich all hail from southern suburbs. But several recent studies – by Becky Nicolaides, Lisa McGirr and Robert Self – trace the development of a parallel politics centred around homeownership in California in the same period. It seems more likely that

Atlanta's story is symptomatic of a broader shift in American politics, rather than its source. Moreover, *White Flight*'s portrayal of Atlanta's geography is stark. Readers learn of a sharp urban–suburban divide, without gaining insight into the internal dynamics of Atlanta's places. Why blacks wanted access to public accommodations like schools and stores is obvious, but why they wanted to move into particular neighbourhoods remains unclear. Nonetheless, *White Flight* is an important contribution to the scholarship on the political significance of cities and suburbs in the late twentieth-century United States.

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James R. Grossman, Ann Durkin Keating and Janice L. Reiff (eds.), *The Encyclopedia of Chicago*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004. xxix + 1152pp. 475 halftones. 442 maps. 10 tables. $65.00.
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Few cities are as significant for understanding twentieth-century America as Chicago. The city's importance for architecture, music, politics, social reform, religion, the trade union movement, technology and industrialization, immigration and literature marks it as one of those few American cities with a national and even international significance. The diversity and variety of the city, its impact and importance in the modern era, call out for a reference work that can encompass its many features. The production of an encyclopedia covering Chicago's past and present is a reflection, also, of the maturity of urban history.

The topic – the city of Chicago – is vast. The editors of this splendid volume have clearly had difficulty in squeezing it into a manageable publication yet they have succeeded brilliantly. The entries consist of several distinct types. At one end, the *Encyclopedia of Chicago* consists of basic entries, usually consisting of about 200 words, providing information on an event, say, or an institution. One can read about Wrigley Field, Hull House, the Industrial Workers of the World, Northwestern University, Lincoln Park, the Museum of Science and Industry, Operation PUSH, the Urban League, the Art Institute of Chicago and a great deal more. Mid-level entries provide the context and a comparative analysis for topics included in the basic entries. There is a basic entry for the University of Chicago, of course, an entry that succinctly covers the university's history since its establishment with Rockefeller money in 1892. But there is also a mid-level entry – Universities and their Cities – that expertly analyses the growth and development of Chicago's many public and private colleges and universities. Similarly there are separate basic entries on many of Chicago's most significant buildings; and a mid-level entry that analyses the various schools of architecture that had appeared during the city's history. Politics, religion and ethnicity are just a few of the topics that benefit from an approach that considers both the particular and the general. The third type of entry – and perhaps the most valuable for the reader with little previous knowledge of Chicago – is the broad essay, an entry of between 1,000 and 4,000 words that provides an interpretive overview of a large topic such as medicine and public health, dance or transportation. For the reader who needs a quick understanding, say, of politics in Chicago, there is an excellent essay that wends its way through a subject that would otherwise be impenetrable. For readers who lack any previous

knowledge of the city, such essays provide a way to understand topics that might otherwise seem opaque.

Twenty-one interpretative essays summarize recent scholarship on general topics: these include sports in Chicago, the city as an object of study for social scientists, global Chicago (the city in an international context), entertainment, invention and business and the interrelationship of the suburbs and the city. *The Encyclopedia of Chicago* is a model of its kind that, along with Kenneth Jackson's magisterial *Encyclopedia of New York City*, provides a template for other cities. Each American city is *sui generis*, shaped by idiosyncratic cultural, political, economic and geographical features; yet each city shares a common American experience. Few cities can match the scale and grandeur of Chicago or New York; yet each one has had something important to contribute to the story of the United States. The range and quality of the photographs and illustrations, including many highly useful maps, are exemplary, serving to illustrate and illuminate the text in ways that are more than merely decorative. *The Encyclopedia of Chicago* is a masterly work that reflects not only the ability of its three editors but also the enthusiasm of the many experts who have supplied the entries. Every library should possess a copy and every individual with an interest in urban studies, city planning and the history of the metropolis should obtain this outstanding work.

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