transportation. For such historians, this book is certainly recommended. Yet different groups of historians can also benefit from parts of this study. Students of the early American economy could profit from his account of the political debates that characterized the drive for river improvements and the constitutional battles that resulted. Students of the history of technology could also draw a lesson from his emphasis on the smaller, less dramatic accidents that befell steamboats. Read in conjunction with other works on the antebellum government and transportation, such as Robert Angevine's *The Railroad and the State*, Paskoff's work places historians in a better position to assess the mix of private, state-level, and federal funding that helped drive the massive transportation improvements of the antebellum era.

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Citizen Employers: Business Communities and Labor in Cincinnati and San Francisco, 1870–1916. *By Jeffrey Haydu.* Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2008. x + 268 pp. Bibliography, notes, index. Cloth, $39.95. ISBN: 978-0-801-44641-2.

Reviewed by Daniel Brunsvold

Class formation is a tricky business. Scholars of various disciplines have long accepted that even when the motivating factors for class formation are similar, the process itself varies from group to group and from place to place. In *Citizen Employers,* Jeffrey Haydu persuasively argues that the formation of an American business class is no different. Haydu's book explores the disparate rationales for business-class coalescence in Cincinnati and San Francisco, from the Gilded Age through the Progressive Era. While these two large cities shared little in common, the business leaders of each city were guided to class consciousness by similar, path-dependent influences of the institutions they themselves created.

Cincinnati, the city whose local business leaders receive the lion's share of Haydu's pages, followed a relatively mugwumpish path from republicanism to what Haydu terms "business citizenship." Cincinnati's proprietary capitalists organized in order to stave off the problems associated with the burgeoning class divisions found elsewhere in the

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United States, as well as in response to perceived governmental corruption. Cincinnati's business owners pushed aside older producerist thinking, and the concomitant vertical class alliances that such thinking fostered, in favor of a more exclusive "common identity as good citizens" (p. 91). These citizens became more clearly united "by the presence of the same businessmen atop the three hierarchies of economic position, cultural refinement, and civic worth" (p. 91). This "realignment of solidarities," while partially a reaction to local class-based conflicts, was for Haydu the result of a path-dependent social movement (p. 28). The purportedly anticlass social, commercial, and cultural clubs and organizations Cincinnati businessmen founded and maintained, "by virtue of their manifest purposes and their social composition . . . [favored] some ways of drawing boundaries over others" (p. 93). Membership in various institutions moved Cincinnati's business leaders along a developmental path from producerist republicanism to business citizenship with a "class identity [constructed] around standards of good citizenship" (p. 207). Critical to Haydu's argument is his view that Cincinnati's business-class consciousness was shaped by many newly formed civic and social organizations, rather than by a shared economic situation. In the end, institutions and organizations that were initially formed to avoid class divides and promote good government for all became agents of class definition and division.

Where the nascent business class in Cincinnati became quite exclusive and, later, strongly antiunion, business interests in San Francisco started as an inclusive group and remained largely so. Wrapped in a "combination of racist and pro-union rhetoric," San Francisco's "practical corporatism" was a way for business interests both to achieve their own goals and to promote the larger public interest (p. 112). San Francisco's corporatists reacted to "civic threats posed by unfit races and unchecked monopolies," rather than to the class strife feared by Cincinnati's business citizens (p. 112). Haydu argues that "by pitting whiteness, civic virtue, and economic worth against the Chinese and the large corporations," business and labor interests in San Francisco were able to achieve a sense of unity and stability between labor and proprietors (p. 120). This created "balanced class organization and peaceful negotiation of the class conflicts that would inevitably arise," which in turn "served the public interest" (p. 122).

Haydu's work contributes to debates on the nature of Gilded Age and Progressive Era liberalism. His effort to "take employers' professed principles seriously" (p. ix) leads him to conclude that nascent cultural scripts of selflessness created as a part of business-class formation in both San Francisco and Cincinnati are strong evidence that business interests at the time were guided by much more than laissez-faire liberalism. By

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focusing less on issues of economics and workplace control, and more on the argument that business-class formation was shaped from the outside by institutions and the cultural scripts those institutions created, Haydu has made a real contribution to the literature with this well-written and well-documented work. Informed by a thorough bibliography on social movements, identity, and institutional theory, and by a skillful mining of archival sources, *Citizen Employers* succeeds in making the neoinstitutionalist point that "institutions selectively group individuals and construct common interests among them" (p. 204).

Some weaknesses warrant discussion. Haydu uses whiteness to show that it was an important part of the cultural self-identification of both business and worker groups, and therefore served as a cross-class unifier. However, as whiteness comes before, and is external to any institution, it clashes with his overall thesis. In addition, while his focus on proprietary capitalists is an integral part of Haydu's argumentative success, he largely neglects the emerging corporate economy. In making almost no reference to larger capitalists of the day, Haydu problematically downplays their importance. Surely, the National Association of Manufacturers and the United States Chamber of Commerce meet Haydu's useful definition of class formation, in that their members shared an "increasing alignment between economic hierarchies" while also sharing "cultural practices or collective action" (p. 6). Additionally, Haydu casts the threat of the railroad monopoly in cultural and civic terms, eliding the economic threat to local business posed by the Southern Pacific. Although this was not the main subject of *Citizen Employers*, the omission is glaring. Still, these weaknesses speak to the specific nature of Haydu's work and do not detract from its significance.

The ways in which institutions shape culture and, in turn, affect class are important areas of historical and sociological inquiry. As such, Haydu's work, while not the final word on the subject, is a welcome addition to the literature on American class relations. *Citizen Employers* should become required reading for scholars interested in questions of how and why business interests in America began to take shape as an identifiable group.

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