

tional questions. When these issues ceased to pertain after 1815 "there was no longer any need for a Federal Party" (p. 179). Individuals then drifted away and the party went into permanent decline. The application of modern social science techniques to these important interpretive questions might perhaps have produced more sound and defensible explanations for the existence of a southern wing of the Federalist party and its final disappearance. But Broussard's traditional methodology has not yielded convincing results.

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Patricide in the House Divided: A Psychological Interpretation of Lincoln and His Age. By George B. Forgie. (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1979. Pp. x, 308. Notes, index. \$14.95.)

This title is somewhat misleading. Instead of an *avant-garde* psychobiography of Abraham Lincoln, George B. Forgie has written an old-fashioned study of themes and materials which were the staples of the discipline of American Studies some ten to fifteen years ago. Lincoln does not figure prominently in the work. To say this is not to condemn the book but to inform the potential reader of its true nature.

What is meant by the themes and materials of American Studies is the attempt to capture the national "mentality" or "style" of a "generation" (which Forgie calls the "post-heroic generation") and the search for the key to this in "rhetoric," utilizing such materials as obscure baccalaureate addresses, little-used middle-brow periodicals, the stories and novels of Nathaniel Hawthorne and James Fenimore Cooper, and the forgotten oratory of Edward Everett. Forgie attempts to unify his somewhat discursive book by a vaguely psychological theme: the problem of the leaders of the generation which followed that of Washington and Jefferson was to imitate their virtues without destroying the truly heroic work of America's revolutionary fathers.

Many of Forgie's particular insights are valuable, and some are downright brilliant. Saving Mount Vernon from destruction was a symbolic attempt at saving the Union itself. That Hawthorne's "My Kinsman, Major Molineaux" described a healthy ritualistic patricidal act belongs in the brilliant category. So does the view that Hawthorne shows Holgrave in *The House of the Seven Gables* not to be radical at all, for domesticity completely tames him and makes him the inheritor rather

than the destroyer of his "father's" house. Forgie's interpretation of Cooper's romance *The Spy* as, among other things, a criticism of the character and motives of George Washington is wonderfully humorous.

By contrast, the sections on Lincoln are weak. Analyzing Lincoln's deep depression of 1841, for example, Forgie claims that he suffered from the "Nobel Prize Complex," that is early success bred high ambition and, subsequently, deep depression when success was interrupted. Lincoln, he says, felt "mired in middle-level politics far from the center of important action" (p. 82). Perhaps, but surely Lincoln's broken engagement with Mary Todd on "that fatal first of Jany. '41" deserves more than passing mention. And to cite as proof Lincoln's having "cast his lot with Springfield, a city that was to be eclipsed by Chicago" is absurdly anachronistic (p. 82).

Such weakness is especially ironic, not only in terms of the book's title but also in terms of the psychological nature of Forgie's enterprise. Social psychology exists, all right, but descriptions of whole societies as "regressive" or "patricidal" or "fratricidal" will cause readers to balk. These individual categories do not translate well into social categories, and one's confidence that Forgie is the right person to make such a risky translation is diminished by his inept handling of Lincoln's individual psyche. It is particularly distressing to find that Forgie could write a book about fathers, children, and political loyalty while completely ignoring the most profound mid-nineteenth-century student of nurture, Horace Bushnell.

Read this diffuse book for its individual insights on literary sensibilities, but do not count on finding its overall thesis useful or even intelligible.

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Farmers without Farms: Agricultural Tenancy in Nineteenth-Century Iowa. By Donald L. Winters. (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1978. Pp. xvi, 145. Tables, maps, appendixes, note on sources, index. \$15.95.)

Iowa's first half-century provides a case in which to test ideas about farm tenancy as it has been practiced throughout the Midwest. Some ideas about the institution and its causes and consequences are vigorously debated among agricultural economists and historians. A solid contribution to that debate,