

when it captured the headquarters of the Democratic party. The Democrats posed as the party of repeal, to Franklin Roosevelt's discomfort, and both came to power in the post-1929 economic catastrophe. Kyvig argues that Roosevelt's awareness of the anti-reform ideology of the repealers and the rapidity with which they gained enormous public favor constrained the New Deal to making institutional changes until after 1936, when Roosevelt defeated the AAPA, by then called the Liberty League.

Although this interpretation may attract the most attention from historians, the work has other merits. It clarifies the whole legal and constitutional story of prohibition. It shows the irony of prohibition's reputation as a political failure when, insofar as it is susceptible to measurement, it cut alcohol consumption at least in half. The AAPA concentrated on the lawlessness that prohibition produced and turned the economic benefits argument of dry leaders around after the onset of the Depression.

With the availability of these two well-researched and thought-provoking books on the 1920s and repeal, a number of new questions arise about the prohibition movement itself. They involve what happened to the Anti-Saloon League, so powerful in mobilizing popular sentiment and political action from 1916 to 1919 and so helpless in resisting the AAPA after 1929. The newly available League records in the Ohio Historical Society will reveal answers and provide a fresh perspective on the dry side of the episode.

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*The Politics of Soft Coal: The Bituminous Industry from World War I through the New Deal.* By James P. Johnson. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1979. Pp. xii, 258. Notes, figures, tables, bibliographical essay, index. \$13.50.)

James P. Johnson has made an important contribution to the historical literature on the American coal industry. Despite certain difficulties his book is both readable and informative and provides much more than a chronological narrative of the coal industry from 1914 to 1940. Johnson's purpose is to show how the history of the bituminous industry fits into the debate between the so-called liberal historians such as Charles Beard, Richard Hofstadter, and Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., who have argued that government has regulated American corporations in the public interest, and James Weinstein, Gabriel Kolko,

and Samuel Hays, who have asserted that industrialists "often captured or co-opted the regulatory agency" (p. 3). Another purpose, closely related to the first, is to reveal how the structural disorganization of the bituminous industry helped to determine (if not seal) its fate. Finally, he tests the thesis presented by William E. Leuchtenburg in his article "The New Deal and the Analogue of War" to see whether National Recovery Administration officials used government regulation of the coal industry in World War I as a model for their actions during the Great Depression. All three of these questions are of considerable interest to the historian.

The author demonstrates convincingly that the bituminous industry was never really controlled by the government and that it did not co-opt the regulators—although a degree of both regulation and co-optation did occur as part of the more congenial atmosphere during the war and Depression emergencies. The industry was too fragmented, heterogeneous, and disorganized for either to prevail. And, while evidence supporting Leuchtenburg's "analogue of war" theory appeared in the rhetoric and plans of New Deal administrators, the economic circumstances of the bituminous industry during the 1930s were so different from the wartime experience that controls used to curb wartime inflation and to allocate scarce coal supplies were neither appropriate nor workable. Efforts to raise prices and wages in the 1930s merely aggravated the long-term problems of oversupply and diminishing demand as Americans turned to less expensive and more efficient gas and oil.

Unfortunately, the author's focus on specialized questions of historians blurs key economic and political issues, makes the narrative difficult for the general reader to follow, and obscures the larger importance of the book. In a time of petroleum scarcity and a return to dependence on coal this book would be more usable and appealing as a straightforward economic history of the bituminous industry. As such, it would show more clearly the many factors which worked together to inhibit the industry during 1917 and 1918 and to bring its decline afterwards. The reader, for example, would be able to see at once the effects of such factors as the myth of the "coal trust," the strength of the United Mine Workers organization in northern mines, the advent of petroleum fuels and technology, and the intense individualism and regional divisions of mine operators. Readers also could see that the industry boomed but did not reach its full potential in 1918 because the federal government fixed prices too low. It declined in the 1930s at least in part because of New Deal support for wage and price increases. The

industry (including the UMW) was to blame during both periods for failure to organize itself and to work with government agencies to assure its own survival. All of this material is in the book but tends to be hidden by the author's historiographical orientation.

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*If All We Did Was to Weep at Home: A History of White Working-Class Women in America.* By Susan Estabrook Kennedy. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1979. Pp. xx, 331. Notes, bibliography, index. \$17.50.)

Social history has come into its own. Over the past decade, scholars have abandoned more traditional approaches to the past, which tended to focus on elites, and are now writing about the people often left out of history books. Women, especially, are receiving unprecedented attention. Taking advantage of the flood of primary and secondary source materials now available on the history of women, Susan Estabrook Kennedy offers a carefully constructed synthesis of recent research on white working-class American women. While hardly definitive and holding few surprises for those familiar with the sources, her book provides a useful, compact introduction to the topic for the lay reader or student.

According to Kennedy, white working-class women were not, until recently, conscious of themselves as an identifiable group. Until the industrial revolution, all women connected to a family unit shared in the family work load. Unattached women hired themselves out, but since they had considerable class mobility they did not develop a sense of group identity. With industrialization, home and workplace became separated. Women with families tended to stay home as unpaid domestic workers; those women who went out to work hoped for a future family niche and saw their work as only temporary.

Thus began, Kennedy reminds us, a pattern of exploitation of women workers. Unskilled women, planning a short stay, flocked to the mills. There, without class consciousness, organization, or support from male workers, who saw them as competitors, they accepted tedious jobs with low wages and long hours, believing these to be only temporary. But many women stayed longer than they had planned. The woman who never married, the orphaned older sister who supported younger sib-