

Inevitably, the quality of the essays varies. Virtually all are well written and well documented, however, and the bibliographic overview of recent scholarship provided in the footnotes is itself worth the price of the volume. Among the essays dealing exclusively or primarily with United States history, this reviewer found only "The Negro in American History" to be unsatisfactory—largely because it focuses on just a few major monographs. Readers of the *Indiana Magazine of History*, who presumably have special interests in state and local history, are directed to Kathleen Neils Conzen's "Community Studies, Urban History, and American Local History" and Herbert T. Hoover's "Oral History in the United States."

Although it is dangerous to generalize from a volume that ranges so broadly, two trends seem unmistakable. First is the overwhelming impression of the vigor—indeed domination—of social history during the past decade. Peter N. Stearns observes in his essay that although debate continues on the definition of social history, those who share "at the very least a concern for achieving a historical perspective on the everyday activities of ordinary people, have steadily grown in number and expanded the range of their activity" (p. 205). Many of the other contributors offer similar comments. Second, the increasing Balkanization of the profession stands out in bold relief. It is notable that many of the scholarly specialties treated here in depth would not even have been accorded separate-chapter status ten or fifteen years ago. As Kammen puts it, if Clio's house has always had many mansions "it would now seem that History has suburbs and shantytowns, trailer parks and condominiums as well" (p. 45). Many of the contributors put "synthesis" near the top of the profession's agenda for the 1980s.

Thanks are due all concerned for this useful and well-produced examination of what might be called the "Transition Decade" of American historical scholarship. It deserves to be widely read and thoughtfully considered.

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A History of Industrial Power in the United States, 1780-1930.

Volume I, *Waterpower in the Century of the Steam Engine.*

By Louis C. Hunter. (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, for the Eleutherian Mills-Hagley Foundation, 1979. Pp. xxiv, 606. Notes, illustrations, tables, appendixes, index. \$24.95.)

Here and there in America today are men and women who remember a country water mill to which in the early part of this century local farmers still hauled their grain to have it ground for livestock feed. From the beginning of settlement almost every stream-side village had its water mill for grinding wheat and corn. "At the high tide of their usefulness in the mid-nineteenth century," Louis C. Hunter writes, "country mills . . . were reported by the federal census in the tens of thousands" (p. 1). Numerous, too, were waterpowered sawmills and fulling mills (where country-made cloth was prepared for market). Nor was waterpower confined to the rural scene, as numerous remnants of waterpowered industrial sites around the country still attest. Despite a popular tendency to equate the industrial revolution with the application of steam power to manufacturing (a tendency that the title of this volume—*Waterpower in the Century of the Steam Engine*—does nothing to dispel), as late as 1850 waterpower was "the leading source of mechanical power on both sides of the Atlantic" (p. 45). Not until the latter part of the nineteenth century did waterpower gradually give way in America to steam power, while even in its relative decline the older power source was the occasion of a rich technological development.

It is this story that Hunter tells with unimpeachable authority, and there is something in his book for every thoughtful reader in this energy-conscious age. The volume falls roughly into three parts. The initial chapters, concerned with the country mills, will appeal to all students of pioneer life who go beyond the superficial to discover the ways in which our predecessors on this continent managed their economy. The middle chapters chronicle the development of hydraulic facilities for the early industrial revolution, the growth of some of the first industrial cities in the Merrimack Valley of New England and at the falls of St. Anthony on the upper Mississippi, and the management of large waterpowers. These chapters might stand alone as a monograph for economic, business, and local historians, but all readers will profit from being reminded that the United States became one of the great industrial nations of the world without burning a drop of oil. The last third of Hunter's book, largely an account of American adaptation and use of the French-invented hydraulic turbine, "the leading nineteenth-century innovation in waterwheel design before hydroelectricity" (p. 537), will appeal principally to historians of technology. Indeed, the entire book is a treasure trove for this latter group, for while Hunter is concerned with the social, economic, and physical environment in which his

waterwheels turned, it is clearly the machinery itself that interests him most.

This is not a book for whiling away the hours on a warm summer's day. It requires close application. Sometimes lacking in tight organization, occasionally repetitive, it spares the reader no tedious detail. And while some technological descriptions are marvelously clear, others quickly leave the neophyte engineer far behind. The book is worth the attention it requires, however, for like Hunter's earlier work, *Steamboats on the Western Rivers* (1949), it is destined to become a classic. The first of three projected volumes on industrial power in America, *Waterpower in the Century of the Steam Engine* is profusely illustrated with photographs and diagrams. There is no bibliography, but documentation is more than ample. The second volume of the series, on steam power, is promised in the near future. Together the two books will constitute a definitive history of industrial power in nineteenth-century America.

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At Odds: Women and the Family in America from the Revolution to the Present. By Carl N. Degler. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980. Pp. xiv, 527. Tables, notes, index. \$19.95.)

Carl N. Degler's *At Odds* is a valuable survey of recent research in American women's and family history from the late eighteenth century to the present. In synthesizing two often distinct fields, he demonstrates the persistent tension between women's search for autonomy and their family roles. For general readers and historians unfamiliar with these rapidly growing fields, Degler provides a richly detailed and provocative overview of the literature. Specialists, too, will find *At Odds* an exceptionally important study for its discussion and analysis of the numerous controversies that have emerged as historians increase their knowledge of the female experience in America. Degler's inclusion of many interesting, but as yet unpublished, studies is also laudable; the absence of citations for some other discussions, however, is unfortunate.

Degler has not attempted to cover all periods or topics at equal length—a decision that reflects both the state of the two fields and his own expertise. The treatment of the lives of middle-class women in the nineteenth century has a multi-dimensional quality and includes discussions of women's roles as wives and mothers, childrearing methods, sisterhood, declin-