

comprehensive view of politics and economic impact, although these difficult questions resist synthesis more stubbornly.

Throughout this volume the importance of the canal era in American development is reaffirmed, if not aggressively argued. Readers who doubt this premise will likely not be persuaded, but scholars inclined to agree with Shaw's assessment will appreciate the convenient package he has assembled. Ironically, these "canals for a nation" were not built for a nation. Even projects receiving federal support served primarily local competitive interests, and their integration into networks was inadvertent at best. This raises tough analytical questions that Shaw recognizes but does not resolve. Scholars will find much here on which to build.

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*American Historical Pageantry: The Uses of Tradition in the Early Twentieth Century.* By David Glassberg. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990. Pp. xvii, 381. Illustrations, notes, note on sources, index. Clothbound, \$45.00; paperbound, \$14.95.)

Glancing at David Glassberg's near 300-page account of American historical pageantry during the Progressive era, this reviewer initially reacted, "Surely the author has told us more about historical pageants than we want to know!" Initial skepticism quickly fades, however, as Glassberg unfolds yet another interesting variation on the seemingly never-ending story of how individuals find ways to make use of their own past.

Gracefully interweaving local historical pageantry into the broader context of American history, Glassberg makes a major contribution by demonstrating how various groups and organizations used the pageant to further their own cause. Whether patriotic boosters looking for community identity, progressive educators who hoped to expose the masses to a bit of history, or entrepreneurs spotting the value of commercial entertainment, they all jumped on the pageantry bandwagon during the early years of the twentieth century. The movement reached its zenith just before World War I, culminating in the creation of the American Pageant Association in 1913.

Tracing the rise of the movement from America's enthusiastic interest in local history in the late nineteenth century—state and local historical societies more than doubled between 1870 and 1890 (pp. 13-14)—the author describes how the pageant became a democratizing tool for the moral reformers of the Progressive era who hoped to use it to combine mass recreation and patriotic education. Though the pageantry movement was influenced by the British

arts and crafts movement (which itself had borrowed heavily from aristocratic medieval and renaissance motifs), Glassberg emphasizes how it quickly developed uniquely American historical themes, which were often a mirror image of the public imagination. Much of the focus is on patriotic and hereditary societies, educators, and social workers of the playground movement, all of whom "considered this new form of civic holiday celebration peculiarly suited to advance their goals in public" (p. 52).

Although the reader sometimes founders in a sea of local detail, Glassberg prevents total submersion by ultimately connecting the story to broader historical themes. Even class, race, and gender wend their way into his story. A women's suffrage pageant in Washington, D. C., in 1913, for example, "depicted women in the professions as well as in domestic work" (p. 136), while W. E. B. Du Bois wrote and directed his own black history pageant in the same year. For the most part, however, blacks, as well as Native Americans, were presented in stereotypical roles—blacks as comic buffoons, Indians attacking helpless whites.

Twentieth century American historians—especially those with an interest in the Progressive period—will find this book rewarding reading.

LOUIS CANTOR, Department of History, Indiana University–Purdue University Fort Wayne, has just completed a history of the country's first all-black radio station entitled *Wheelin' on Beale* (1992).

*Galloping Bungalows: The Rise and Demise of the American House Trailer.* By David A. Thornburg. (Hamden, Conn: Archon Books, 1991. Pp. 197. Illustrations, selected bibliography, index. \$25.00.)

*Galloping Bungalows* focuses on an American subculture of year-round trailer residents that flourished from the midthirties to about 1960. The book's main interest is the "true" trailerite, defined by David A. Thornburg as someone who had no other residence but the trailer, had willingly chosen a nomadic lifestyle, and moved regularly from place to place. Americans too poor to afford any other form of housing, as well as the many forced into trailers during World War II because of a lack of housing, are not included in his definition, for it was not wanderlust but a more basic need that forced them to take up trailer residence. Allen Wallis's recent *Wheel Estate: The Rise and Decline of Mobile Homes* (1991) emphasizes the history of the trailer or mobile home as a flexible, low-cost alternative to conventional housing.

Thornburg narrows his story to what is actually his own story, for he was the only child of Ohio natives who lived and moved about in house trailers from 1940 to 1955. He describes his parents as archetypal trailerites who were never "entirely comfortable in