

ball team), and they ultimately had eight children. Hart entered politics at the local level after discovering that practicing law was not fulfilling. After serving as United States attorney and before being elected lieutenant governor of Michigan, he was adviser to and protégé of G. Mennen Williams, governor of that state. In the United States Senate, his major post was chairmanship of the Antitrust and Monopoly Subcommittee of the Senate Judiciary Committee. He also was responsible for passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and the establishment of the Sleeping Bear Dunes national lakeshore.

A thoughtful individual who experienced bouts of depression, he could see both sides of an issue with ease. His foremost concern was that the power centers of America, the corporations and government, had lost contact with the average American and were thus thwarting democracy. He felt that if the federal government acted properly on behalf of the consumer, racial minorities, and the poor, it could restore the balance and at the same time fend off communism abroad. In the event, of course, this was a huge challenge that in addition to social reform resulted in racial turmoil and the failure in Vietnam.

Michael O'Brien's biography accomplishes in full what it sets out to do. Drawing on the Hart papers, published sources, and interviews, his account, although brief, is detailed, well organized, and engaging. The author allows his subject's life to unfold and provides a balanced interpretation of it in a way that makes his book indispensable reading for anyone who would understand Michigan and midwestern politics along with the origins, strengths, and weaknesses of federal policy during the Kennedy-Johnson-Nixon-Ford years.

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Henry Clay and the American System. By Maurice G. Baxter. (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1995. Pp. [viii], 261. Illustrations, notes, index. \$34.95.)

Maurice G. Baxter has performed a valuable service to American historians by compiling this brief history of Henry Clay's promotion of his "American System" for national economic development. Although Clay's pet project has earned due attention from historians of the nineteenth century, a monograph focused specifically on the issue has been long overdue.

Naturally, historians have devoted enormous attention to Clay's career and political philosophy. The Kentucky statesman has been the subject of a number of excellent biographies as well as a leading character in other histories of the period. Perhaps the

“Great Compromiser’s” contributions in resolving various sectional disputes (in 1820, 1833, and 1850) have received the greatest attention, but his Whiggish prescription for national economic progress has not been shortchanged.

Despite this previous work, Baxter presents new information about Clay’s economic agenda and in the process manages to offer new insights about Clay the politician and the man. Of course, there are numerous details about how Clay formulated and promoted his program for economic expansion. Serious readers will probably enjoy yet another rendition of the debates over tariff policy and internal improvements and, not least, another account of the Bank War. Clay’s efforts during the Nullification Crisis, his battle with John Tyler, and his unsuccessful presidential campaigns are also analyzed.

Often, a familiar story well told brings renewed satisfaction. Yet Baxter’s version of Clay’s record is not at all dated. He presents, for example, an updated view of the Panic of 1837. Baxter is especially adept at showing the evolution of Clay’s positions; oftentimes Clay’s personal experiences in raising hemp or traveling over bumpy roads provided convincing justification for his favored proposals.

Clay partisans may not find their hero celebrated as much as expected. Indeed, Baxter can be rather hard on the famous Kentuckian, albeit not because of Clay’s position on black bondage or sectional politics. The portrait presented is not that of a careful, calculating politician. Clay is criticized for lacking “practical statesmanship” (p. 107) during the Bank War with Andrew Jackson and likewise scored for his dictatorial stance opposite Tyler (although Baxter also admits that Tyler too was out of touch). At times Baxter verges on presenting Clay as a committed ideologue and a somewhat naive one at that!

Clay’s economic nationalism certainly warrants the closer look Baxter provides. While little revolutionary material may be revealed, the author successfully refines our view of Clay’s program and his participation in Jacksonian-era political disputes. Undoubtedly a labor of love, this well-researched and well-argued volume deserves a careful reading.

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Glorying in Tribulation: The Lifework of Sojourner Truth. By Erlene Stetson and Linda David. (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1994. Pp. [xii], 242. Illustrations, notes, appendices, bibliography, index. \$28.95.)

One of the most exciting recent developments in black history and women’s studies is the scholarly interest in Sojourner Truth. It is about time that a historiography developed on this fascinating,