

complexity of the eugenic movement during the 1930s. More importantly, they do a service to readers by showing that even as eugenicists endured a widening public critique, they never lost their general sense of racial and class superiority or bias. In many ways, even as the movement changed, it stayed remarkably the same. That eugenics moved so quickly from its Indiana start to its eventual status as a mainstream nationwide movement

is a very unsettling fact that the book's contributors display for all to see.

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Republican Women

Feminism and Conservatism From Suffrage Through the Rise of the New Right

By Catherine E. Rymph

(Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006. Pp. xi, 339. Illustrations, notes, index. \$24.95.)

Catherine Rymph has produced a tightly focused monograph on the role of Republican women in shaping the political culture of the party over the course of the twentieth century. Rymph is concerned with describing the moral crusades of GOP clubwomen—women who operated outside the party structure and who concerned themselves with advancing an agenda of female consciousness. She also suitably describes the activism of party women who operated within the party structure and sought to shape its internal policies and platforms.

The book is focused mostly on the tensions between clubwomen and party women in constructing policies, both within and outside the party, that

might maximize benefits for women. Rymph has done a solid job contextualizing the disputes between women's factions and documenting how these disputes, typically over issues of full integration within the wider party, or issues of morality and "women's concerns," fit within the wider GOP landscape.

The book works best in detailing the varied attitudes of clubwomen and party women on a variety of different topics, from suffrage to abortion. Rymph explores the political tumults over control of the National Federation of Republican Women, particularly over the controversial dispute between conservative Phyllis Schlafly, who lost the presidential election of the organization in 1967,

and the more liberal delegates to the convention.

One of the author's more interesting stories concerns those GOP women who remained committed to feminist causes including abortion rights and the Equal Rights Amendment, even as the party shifted to the Right on such issues during the 1970s. As the overall party became more conservative, the women within the GOP became more liberal; one result of this shift was the election of liberal activist Mary Louise Smith to the leadership of the Republican National Committee in 1976. Conservative women like Schlafly, who still remained a Republican delegate, focused their attention on grassroots activism outside the party (such as STOP-ERA and Eagle Forum).

In the end, as Rymph relates, the conservative factions would prevail and drive feminists away from the GOP. Rymph concludes that "what was required for women finally to become a force in the party was the context of the social movements of the 1960s and 1970s (both on the left and the right)" (p. 249).

This book makes a contribution to understanding women's limited

roles within party politics before the "second wave feminism" of the 1970s. It is a well-researched example of how gender concerns can be integrated with political history. But it leaves one hungry for a more encompassing explanation of how activist women—on both the Right and the Left—increasingly operated outside of party politics.

Increasingly, the history of women's grassroots activism, as it has been treated in books like Donald Critchlow's *Phyllis Schlafly and Grassroots Conservatism: A Woman's Crusade* (2005) and Lisa McGirr's *Suburban Warriors* (2001) tells historians far more about how party activism, religious beliefs, and social issues affected women's activism in politics than does Rymph's complex study of the internal dimensions of women's politics in the GOP. That does not make her study any less important. But *Republican Women* is limited in what it sets out to examine and, in the end, unsatisfying in its conclusions.

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The New Town Square Museums and Communities in Transition

By Robert R. Archibald

(Walnut Creek, Calif.: AltaMira Press, 2004. Pp. viii, 224. Illustrations, index. Paperbound, \$24.95.)

Robert Archibald is well-known in his role as president of the Missouri His-

torical Society as well as for his prior book, *A Place to Remember: Using*