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# BOOK REVIEWS

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*The Worlds of Children, 1620–1920. Annual Proceedings of the Dublin Seminar for New England Folklife, Volume 27.*

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*Edited by Peter Benes* (Boston: Boston University Press, 2004, pp. 243, paper, \$25.00).

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Since 1976 directors of the Dublin Seminar for New England Folklife at Boston University have preserved the memory of New England's traditional culture by stimulating and publishing new research on everyday life and material culture in the past. *The Worlds of Children, 1620–1920* is the seminar's twenty-seventh volume of proceedings and a testament to the success of the project under the leadership of editor Peter Benes. It is also the second volume with a focus on childhood, following *Families and Children* (Dublin Seminar, 1985).

*The Worlds of Children* includes twelve essays related to the history of childhood in New England, plus notes on Boston's Pope Day, which involved young participants, and an extensive bibliography. Ever since the French historian Philippe Ariès proved that childhood was a fitting topic for professional historical inquiry in his landmark work, *Centuries of Childhood* (1962), social historians have debated the qualitative changes in the experience of childhood, when those changes took place, and the historical consequences of different child-rearing practices. Authors in this volume, specializing in history, American studies, religion, and material culture, contribute to that debate by exploring the socialization of children through focus on games, sport, schooling, literature, performance, and social policy. They use a variety of evidence, from

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journals, lithographs, picture books, and dolls, to newspapers, association records, and public documents. Three of the essays explore aspects of eighteenth-century childhood while nine cover nineteenth-century topics, making the 1620–1920 era identified in the title a bit misleading.

In essays based on boys' journals, Douglas Winiarski and Rebecca Noel address questions about adolescence. Winiarski's exploration of Joseph Prince's commonplace book from early eighteenth-century Massachusetts not only reveals the quality of Prince's home-based education but also how adolescent reading could become a form of subtle rebellion. While his father sought to prepare Prince for his future social position through religious and legal texts, the boy devoured accounts of celestial sightings, astrological wonders, and romantic poetry. Eventually, he became a sailor of sorts himself, plying his merchant sloop in the coastal waters of New England. More than a century later when school-based education predominated, Noel's subject, James Edward Wright of Montpelier and Boston, struggled to balance the demands of Boston Latin School with his parents' concerns about his health. Driven by commonly held fears of adolescent death from consumption and their desire for upward mobility, Wright's parents ensured that he would participate in typically middle-class exercise and sport activities. While both youths struggled through a period of adolescence, their educations and parental influence differed markedly.

Other than James Wright, who left Montpelier in 1852 and returned to minister in its Unitarian Church, the mathematical prodigy Zerah Coburn of Cabot is the only other Vermont example in this collection. In an essay on child performers, Peter Benes concludes that Coburn's parents, like some others in the early nineteenth century who could not afford private education, exploited their child's precocity by displaying him as a public spectacle in traveling shows.

In addition to boys' experiences, the volume provides good examples of girls' education and play, revealing some of the ways gender made a difference. In an essay on girls' play with dolls, Sarah Anne Carter explores how play reinforced women's healing and nurturing roles. Two essays based upon girls' school journals from the early nineteenth century uncover the social and psychological aspects of girls' educational experiences away from home. At Litchfield Female Academy, Charlotte Hopper Newcomb learned skills that helped assure her success in the middle-class marriage market. Mary Ware Allen, on the other hand, struggled with the tensions inherent in a transcendental education; scrutiny of Allen's school journal limited her ability to achieve the school's goal of developing students' freedom of expression. In an impressive, longitudinal study of the treatment and lives of Boston's orphan and

poor children, Susan L. Porter shows how the ideas and values of separate male and female benevolent associations resulted in better long-term outcomes for girls than for boys, who were often apprenticed in obsolescent farm trades in the countryside.

Other essays on the socialization of nineteenth-century, middle-class boys and girls through picture books, didactic prints, and singing schools suggest that class made as significant a difference in childhood as gender. Boys pictured in sentimental prints, either at play, prayer, or reading, portray a leisured childhood far removed from the physical labor demanded of poor boys or even from the kind of apprenticeships common for boys a century earlier. In an essay on carrier boys and post-riders, Vincent DiGirolamo details the labor of youths who speeded political newspapers and mail to an eager public and in the process participated in the print revolution of the late eighteenth century.

Indeed, some readers may conclude that children were largely instruments in the hands of manipulative adults, whether through pampering or sweated labor. As transcendentalist Amos Bronson Alcott remarked, “Our children are our best works” (p. 78). That said, *The Worlds of Children* provides not only a delightful smorgasbord of topics for further investigation, but also sufficient proof that the experience of childhood varied significantly through time and culture.

MARILYN S. BLACKWELL

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*Land and Liberty: Hudson Valley Riots in the Age of Revolution*

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*By Thomas J. Humphrey (DeKalb, Ill., Northern Illinois University Press, 2004, pp. ix, 191, \$37.00).*

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Thomas Humphrey's *Land and Liberty* focuses on the land rioters in New York's Hudson River Valley from the 1750s to the 1790s. Its themes of class conflict, socioeconomic struggle, and agrarian warfare place it in the New Left tradition of American Revolutionary-era historiography. The work's noted authorities reveal the strong influence of prominent Neo-Progressive (and “proto-Marxist”) historians: Staughton Lynd, Edward Countryman, Alfred F. Young, and Allan Kulikoff. Accordingly, the book's overall socioeconomic frame of reference is

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that of “possessive individualism”: a term for the transition of peasant farmers from feudalism to yeomen farmers, and thence to rampant American capitalism. To these motifs Humphrey adds an overlay of radical, multicultural political activism, embracing ethnic, racial, and even gendered riotous participation.

Humphrey’s thesis is that landless, “cash-poor” migrants to the valley (though forced into oppressive manorial tenancy) really sought yeoman freeholder status to provide their families a respectable competency and used riotous violence to possess the land throughout the period. The protagonists of this class struggle are an amalgam of marginalized British (Welsh, Irish, and Scots), Dutch, Germans, and Indians. Developing dialectically, the thesis progresses through five chapters: 1) “Landlords and Tenants before American Independence”; 2) “Property and Power in the Northern Valley”; 3) “Discontent in the Southern Valley”; 4) “Land in the American Revolution”; and 5) “The Revolutionary Settlement.” Their organization flows logically: chapter one, on the core socio-economic argument; chapters two and three, developing the multicultural themes; and the last two, pursuing the story through the Revolution and early National period.

Chapter one, concentrating on the terms and conditions of leasehold tenure throughout the valley, contains three interrelated themes. First, Humphrey contends that a united, aristocratic landlord class standardized an expropriative leasehold system, which extracted maximum amounts of tenant services, rents, produce, and land improvements. Hence, in this exploitative manorial economy, oppressive, expensive short leases in combination with the feudal incidents of the *corvée*, quarter-sale alienation fees, and mandatory produce sales to landlords created a frustrated tenant underclass. Stark contrasts emerged between independent yeoman freeholders and poor tenant farmers. Second, agricultural profit maximization from tenant produce provided the capital for landlord ventures in mercantile capitalism. And, thirdly, from these dual foundations arose the landlord class’s domination of New York’s political and legal structures, closing all peaceful avenues for tenants to ameliorate their condition.

In the two multicultural chapters, Humphrey uses introductory ethnic set pieces to set the tone: one on the murdered Welsh riot leader William Rees in the north (Albany County), and another on William Prendergast, the expatriate Irish southern riot leader in Dutchess County. Rees is but a victim in the violent northern struggle of oppressed Dutch, German, English, Welsh, Scottish, and Stockbridge Indians to obtain freeholds by eliminating tenancy, eradicating landlordism, and expropriating manorial property. Thus multicultural unity at once eliminates

Massachusetts' complicity in this movement, as well as any notion of capitalistic Yankee migrant influence. For the tenants cared not what colony gave them freehold land, but only that it remove landlordism.

Here, two caveats are required. First, Provincial Massachusetts' complicity in the northern rioting is an unavoidable historical fact. That government funded the rioters' legal defense purses, issued them land charters on New York lands, provided western Massachusetts sheriffs to arrest New York possemen, and issued the rioters blank militia commissions with which to field their riotous military forces. Second, the old argument about capitalistic Yankee migrants to New York's manor lands and their conjunctive riotous conspiracy with Yankees over the border in Massachusetts comes from an old work by Dixon Ryan Fox: *Yankees and Yorkers* (New York: New York University Press, 1940). Fox's counterfactual thesis of inherent Yankee economic acquisitiveness is not subject to proof or disproof, but is renewed by Sung Bok Kim (see below).

The same motives actuate the unsuccessful southern rioters, led by Prendergast, and whose coadjutors were of the same ethnic makeup, to include the Wappinger Indians.

The last two chapters portray a modified dual revolution and its aftermath. Chapter four reduces the dynamics of patriotism and loyalism to the continuing matter of land struggles in a four-cornered contest. Northern landlords become Patriots to secure landed rule, while allowing the patriotic former southern tenant rioters to expropriate their Loyalist landlords (by Tory land confiscations): a "social revolution." However, Toryism and neutralism adopted by the northern tenant rioters are merely flip-side strategies to maintain landed continuity in the face of their landlords' patriotic stance. And, when forced to embrace the Patriot cause, the recalcitrants merely adopt democratic precepts and exchange allegiance in a futile attempt to get land. Failing that, in Chapter five the northern struggle of former rioters and their descendants and political allies to eliminate landlordism continues with more rioting in the 1790s.

Humphrey's economic argument encounters two critical pitfalls. First, the onerous leasehold brief collides with a previous consensus study it attempts to supplant: Sung Bok Kim's *Landlord and Tenant in Colonial New York* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 1978). Kim's large work argues the reality (versus the theory) of how leasehold tenures worked in actual practice; and in it he methodically deconstructs the effectiveness of all leftover feudal incidents such as those cited by Humphrey. Consequently, Kim argues that tenancy was a viable avenue to advance expectant bourgeoisie plans for freehold acquisition. This fact then presents the dilemma of revisionary engagement with the terms

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set by Kim, one that Humphrey never surmounts. At a minimum, refuting Kim requires a number of counterfactual tables coordinating oppositional matchups: a demonstration of the concurrence of all phases of economic deprivation in oppressive leases with the actual rioters. Quite laudable is Humphrey's use of 2,038 leases for the whole valley, but they represent exactly the theory Kim deconstructs. Lacking the necessary matchups, it is Humphrey's word against Kim's, and the reader in the middle.

Secondly, Humphrey does not prove migrant tenant poverty but, rather, assumes it, an assumption stemming from failure to trace the rioters' geographical and genealogical origins. Family networks of close relatives in New England had heavy investments in New York lands in Poughkeepsie, Hudson, Amenia and the Great Nine Partners Patent, and Queensbury and Kingsbury. And, among the actual rioters, at least 166 held shares in land investment schemes prevalent throughout the region: particularly, Susquehanna Company tracts in Pennsylvania's Wyoming Valley, and New Hampshire Grants in Vermont. Prendergast, himself, held a half share in the Susquehanna Company. Indeed, twenty Quaker lead speculator/dispersers of such shares were either rioters or their coadjutors. Thus, the cash poverty argument depreciates accordingly. Further afield in the same economic vein, Humphrey's claim of former tenant rioters expropriating their southern Loyalist landlords founders on the same matchup problem: only five appear in the text and notes.

My own research (covering over 2,000 land rioters in Maine, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New Jersey, New York, Vermont's Green Mountain Boys, and Pennsylvania's Susquehanna Rebels) suggests an alternative version to economic determinism, one that might have emerged from tracing the rioters' religious affiliations. But Humphrey studiously avoids this route, despite the central clue of Prendergast's Quaker wife, Mehitable Wing. She provides a vital link to the radical New England religious origins of these southern agitators. At least thirteen Quakers, for example, sat on boards of the rioters' political committees, while leaving the execution of ritual violence to their less pacifistic Separate and Baptist kin and neighbors. Moreover, the religious contrasts between north and south were stark. Overall radical religious affiliation for the southern riot party amounted to over 78 percent (290) of the 317 total: New Lights, Separates, Baptists, Rogerines, and Quakers. Their agrarian struggle was a standard, radical religion-induced clubman operation. By contrast, the near reverse existed in the north, where liturgical Lutherans and Anglicans prevailed: among the total northern riot party of 178 men, 127 (over 71 percent) were members or attenders of those churches. Their religious identity unified their opposition to the Presbyterian (or

persecuting Dutch Reformed) manorlords. Palatine Lutherans also recalled their virtual enslavement as indentured workers at the Livingstons' Ancrum Ironworks (ca., 1718). Consequently, their land war against them was, by contrast, a violent frontier, marchland operation: little inspired by clubman tactics, and heavily impacted by bush warfare with the retainer posses of the marcher barons of the Livingston and Van Rensselaer clans. Revolutionary-era Toryism was, on the other hand, mainly a separate political issue in which the few former rioters who embraced Loyalism in both south and north had a conservative or pacifistic religious orientation: in the south, Tories were Anglicans and Lutherans, and/or accused and fleeing pacifistic Quakers; in the north, equally persecuted Lutherans and Anglicans.

Humphrey's multicultural analysis, while intuitively correct, also presents methodological flaws. To begin with, his heavy reliance upon average percentages of ethnic surnames as proof of rioter diversity is on tenuous ground because ethnicity is highly permeable; and British surnames are not place-specific. (See also his recognition of this problem, with various disclaimers and reclaimers of surname evidence on p. 153, n.43 and p. #96 with n.35 found on p. #167.) His surname analysis also, in the main, lacks supporting genealogical documentation and, thus, borders upon speculation. For example, rather than hundreds of marginalized British, my data reveal only thirty-one documented Irish, Scots-Irish, and Scots among the southerners; and only twenty-four Welsh, Irish, Scots, and Scots-Irish among the northerners. Absence of genealogical research thus leads to misidentifications, misunderstandings, and even missed data. For instance, one missed Irish northern riot leader was the inveterate Robert Noble (b. Enniskillen, Ireland, ca., 1722, and married to Lydia Ryd at Zion Lutheran Church, Athens, New York). Noble, one of the chief founders of the Anglican missionary church of St. James Parish in Great Barrington, Massachusetts, was also the major recruiter of persecuted northern German Palatine Lutheran rioters to that church. Likewise, the Welsh Rees family of Claverack was so subsumed by intermarriage into the Palatine German community that they took German Christian names and wed, baptized, and attended Zion Lutheran church. Similarly, James Secord, a southern rioter indicted for treason in 1766, is misidentified as an Anglo, when he was really a second-generation French Huguenot of New Rochelle (p. 77). He, along with twenty-five other southern rioters, escaped to Wyoming, Pennsylvania, where they joined the Susquehanna land rioters against the "Pennamites." Finally, Micah Vail—a mob captain on Beekman Patent similarly indicted—was not Dutch but, rather, of Anglo-Irish descent from a long line of Quaker refugees out of Massachusetts Bay to Long Island in the

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1650s. Vail, in fact, was just one of sixty former rioters who moved to Vermont, joined the Green Mountain Boys, and perpetuated New York's land war further north. Moreover, and in this light, Humphrey's sections (pp. 56–59 and 101–102) on the Green Mountain Boys are so misconstrued that they cannot be unravelled in this space. Similarly, women's riotous roles (pp. 60 and 70–71) appear very strained. Equally unconvincing is the social banditry section (pp. 107–110), with one tried bandit.

In sum, when the loose overlay of unconvincing multiculturalism falls away, Humphrey's relentless economic determinism and the scramble of materialistic automatons seeking land predominate the work.

DONALD A. SMITH

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### *The Other New York: The American Revolution beyond New York City, 1763–1787*

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*Edited by Joseph S. Tiedemann and Eugene R. Fingerhut (Albany: University of New York Press, 2005, pp. 246, \$60.00).*

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Asserting that historiography of the American Revolution in northern states has emphasized events in the major port cities and tends to eclipse the experience of the ninety percent of the population who did not live there, the editors have assembled a volume of essays by nine authors on each New York county beyond New York City. They combined the three counties of Dutchess, Orange, and Ulster, situated astride the central Hudson river between Westchester and Albany counties, in one chapter, and they did not include Cumberland (1768) and Gloucester (1770) counties, which lay wholly within the district that would become Vermont.

The essays vary in the clarity of synthesis, suggesting a light editorial hand. Robert W. Venables on Tryon County, Stefan Bielinski on Albany County, and Phillip Pappas on Richmond County stand out, and Thomas S. Wermuth does a good job integrating the somewhat different experiences in the three central Hudson River counties. Taken as a whole, the essays develop some themes common to these eleven outlying counties and their different revolutionary experience from New York City under control of the British from 1776 to 1783. Generally, the

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strength of Loyalism declined as distance from the City increased, remaining especially strong on nearby Staten Island. In Tryon County, along the Mohawk River west of Albany, settlers on military patents under the sway of Sir William Johnson and his clan created another strong pocket of Loyalism. As the conflict wore on, often with the nasty characteristics of a bitter civil war, the depredations of the British and their Loyalist and Indian allies strengthened the popular support for independence.

Initial disposition to support the Patriot cause or to remain loyal to the British frequently turned on prewar divisions and disputes. Entrenched congregations, landlords, and political oligarchs tended to remain loyal, while “dissenting” and weaker congregations, tenants, and ambitious and rising politicians joined the Revolution. In these years the New York landscape permanently changed, especially under the democratizing influence of the revolutionary experience. A new group of people took control of local and state government, and the break-up of the large estates of Tories and Hudson River landlords redistributed land ownership. While tens of thousands of Loyalists evacuated New York City, the outlying counties tended to integrate those who remained into the new, postwar society.

The treatment of Charlotte County (1772), which included all of Vermont west of the spine of the Green Mountains, the Champlain Valley, and the territory east of the Hudson River from roughly the Massachusetts line north, gets off to a shaky start when the editors declare that “There is no adequate survey of the Vermont-New York controversy.” They go on to cite Dixon Ryan Fox, *Yankees and Yorkers* (New York: New York University Press, 1940) as the best account from the New York vantage point, and “for the Vermont side of the issue,” Frederick F. VanDeWater, *The Reluctant Republic: Vermont, 1724–1791* (New York: The John Day Company, 1941) (p. 14, fn. 25). This uninformed assertion ignores over six decades of scholarship, much among the best of Vermont historiography, by Robert E. Shalhope, Samuel B. Hand, J. Kevin Graffagnino, Charles A. Jellison, Donald A. Smith, Michael A. Bellesiles, Chilton Williamson, and others.

Paul Huey, currently working in archaeology for the Bureau of Historic Sites of the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation, and the author of the essay on Charlotte County, also neglects to cite the latest Vermont historiography. But his perspective on the controversy from the New York side adds texture to the fabric of the understanding of the Revolution there. Early settlement that brought “an explosive mixture of people” (p. 199) to the region, the references to the “New Hampshire Rioters” (p. 203) in preference to the “Green Mountain Boys,” and mentioning the rumor that “New England People”

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(p. 203) started the 1773 fire that began in the barracks at Crown Point, spread to explode the magazine bastion, and culminated in the looting of the ruins, would not appear in the accounts from the Vermont side. But Huey repeats the flawed reports of a spy who claimed that Ethan Allen surreptitiously met with British officials in New York City in July 1780 during the Haldimand Negotiations, curiously citing John Pell's 1929 *Ethan Allen*, which emphatically disproves the juicy rumor that Yorker Governor Clinton and his ilk too eagerly accepted.

Repeated references to Vermont's claims to all of the territory east of the Hudson River including a large portion of the Adirondack region, demonstrates how the view from New York differed from that of the Green Mountains. The "east of the Hudson River" claim does appear in the boilerplate of Vermont assertions of independence and in Governor Chittenden's annexation proclamation, but the fact that the river jogs well to the west of the northward projection of the New York-Massachusetts border did not register in the actions of the Vermont leadership. The short-lived "West Union" of fifteen New York towns that joined Vermont in 1781 did not extend much beyond towns dissatisfied with New York authority that abutted Vermont. Often portrayed by Vermont historians as a ploy, readily abandoned in early 1782, to secure Congress's attention and recognition, the West Union became a deadly serious action to annex New York territory in the view of Clinton—whose dislike of and enmity toward Vermont endured long after it joined the nation in 1791—his henchmen, and Huey in this essay. They also view the military standoff between New York and Vermont militia units facing each other across the Walloomsac River, which Vermont historians tend to treat as a comic opera episode, as very serious business.

Demonstrating a familiarity with recent Vermont historiography would have improved the chapter on Charlotte County. Conversely, greater attention by Vermont historians to the New York experience would give their work more depth. In the end, Huey correctly concludes that "even though most Charlotte [County] residents had been more concerned at the outset of the Revolution with their land disputes than they had been with the imperial crisis, the Revolution did fortuitously help settle many outstanding claims and thus promote peace throughout the region" (p. 215).

*The Other New York* provides a useful synthesis of the events in the New York counties beyond Manhattan Island during the American Revolution, with appropriate emphasis on social, political, and economic matters rather than the more widely understood military history. Local circumstances tended to determine both personal allegiances and how

New York emerged from the revolutionary experience as a very different place.

H. NICHOLAS MULLER III

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*The Blind African Slave, or Memoirs of Boyrereau Brinch, Nicknamed Jeffrey Brace*

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*Edited by Kari J. Winter (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2004, pp. xvi, 244, paper \$19.95).*

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Jeffrey Brace's autobiography is a remarkable story *and* a remarkable book. Born Boyrereau Brinch (the editor's best-guess phonetic spelling) in West Africa in the 1740s, he was kidnapped into slavery at age sixteen and died in St. Albans, Vermont in 1827. Blind and nearly seventy years old, Brace narrated the story of his life to attorney Benjamin Prentiss in 1810. *The Blind African Slave* has been brought out of obscurity and back into print thanks to Kari Winter, who discovered a copy in Special Collections at the University of Vermont Library.

Slave narratives are complex documents, influenced—some more, some less—by their white, usually abolitionist, editors or publishers. An “as told to” autobiography, this one opens in the voice of its white editor, who supplies information on the natural history, geography, and customs of Brace’s homeland (Mali). But Prentiss soon turns the story over to Brace, and the first-person narration builds from there into a strong and distinct voice.

Brace recalls his home in Africa as an Eden from which he was snatched by white demons. Crammed on board ship with 300 other captives, he gives an inside view of the Middle Passage—and of the tremendous physical and psychological toll it took on survivors. His relief at being released from the cramped shiphold in Barbados was short-lived, however, as life in the slave-breaking prison was, if possible, even worse. “We suffered for food in a manner and to a degree of which even a faint description would be considered as fabulous, therefore I forbear to disclose it. I was . . . starved, whipped and tortured in the most shameful

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manner, obliged to work unceasingly in order . . . that the heathen spirit of an African boy of noble birth should be sufficiently subdued, rendered tame, docile and submissive . . . and thereby become a tame, profitable and honest slave” (p. 137).

Brace was sold to English ship captain Isaac Mills (who nicknamed him Jeffrey), participated in several skirmishes in the Seven Years’ War, and sailed from Havana to Dublin to New Haven, where he was sold again in 1763. A succession of Connecticut owners treated Brace with remarkable cruelty. (This section reminded me of *Our Nig*, Harriet Wilson’s story of the abuse she endured as an indentured servant in New Hampshire.) Winter notes in the introduction that “Brace makes it clear he was not a passive victim” (p. 38), suggesting that owners may have been eager to be rid of the proud young African. Brace is quick to criticize the sadism, irrationality, and religious hypocrisy of his owners, adopting an implicitly superior stance in the process.

Finally, Brace’s fortunes changed. In 1768 he was purchased by the kindly widow Mary Stiles, who taught him to read and write and fostered his religious conversion. He passed to her son on her death and soon after enlisted in the Continental Army, which promised manumission in exchange for service, the irony of which was not lost on Brace: “I also entered the banners of freedom. Alas! Poor African Slave, to liberate the freemen, my tyrants” (p. 159).

Having secured his freedom and “Hearing flattering accounts of the new state of Vermont” (p. 166), Brace moved north in 1784. Here he met and married Susannah Dublin, a widowed mother and native African. Although prospering, Brace’s troubles were not over. His wife’s former mistress and a selectman in Manchester conspired to take Dublin’s children as indentured servants. The couple resisted as best they could but were powerless. “I could get no redress—for what lawyer would undertake the cause of an old African Negro against a respectable widow . . . None, for . . . he would have been flung out of business for taking up so dirty a cause” (p. 171).

This incident is only one of several Brace relates that suggest that the “flattering accounts” he had heard were overstated. He was cheated and mistreated repeatedly, once explaining the essence of his situation this way: “The complaint amounted to this, that I was a black man” (p. 170). After a futile seven-year land battle with a neighbor in Poultney, Brace set out once more to find a home, purchasing land in Georgia with his son-in-law. His narrative ends there with the death of his beloved wife in 1807.

Brace adds a final chapter to his brief, episodic narrative to describe his religious stirrings and conversion to Christianity. Although he harbored

a small hope of earning some money from the book, he explains that, “above all it is my anxious wish that this simple narrative may be the means of opening the hearts of those who hold slaves and move them to . . . give them that freedom which they themselves enjoy, and which all mankind have an equal right to possess” (p. 182). Published decades before slave narratives blossomed into a whole new genre of popular literature, *The Blind African Slave* nevertheless shared their abolitionist intentions. Unlike the others, however, Brace’s book slipped into complete obscurity (even the Library of Congress doesn’t have a copy!), and the few scholars who’ve mentioned it have doubted its authenticity.

Winter’s impressive detective work should help put those doubts to rest—she has documented every name and place Brace remembered. Her introduction, however, is uneven, veering off on some odd tangents, the imagined influence of witchcraft on Mary Stiles, for example. She overstates Brace’s role in what she calls at one point an “emerging mixed-race abolitionist matrix in Vermont,” of which there is little evidence. But she is frequently eloquent in her understanding of Brace and his life, and these complaints in no way obscure the importance of this book for Vermont history. To those who wish to understand the lives of Vermonters of color in the past, *The Blind African Slave* is a gift.

JANE WILLIAMSON

*Jane Williamson is the director of Rokeby Museum, a National Historic Landmark Underground Railroad site in Ferrisburgh, Vermont.*

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### *Bound for Canaan: The Underground Railroad and the War for the Soul of America*

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*By Fergus M. Bordewich (New York: HarperCollins, 2005, pp. 510, \$27.95).*

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An old joke goes, who won the American Civil War? Answer: the American Book Sellers Association. Each year a large number of titles examine some new aspect of the old war that has become our national epic. Should it give us pause that the average reader of history may be conversant with the Confederate chain of command at the Battle of Gettysburg, but has only vague notions concerning the Underground Railroad?

During the antebellum period, hundreds of men and women—free and fugitive blacks, Quakers, evangelical Methodists and Baptists, social

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reformers, and eccentrics—acting individually and in groups and networks, took part in an extraordinary, decades long act of civil disobedience against federal law and the institutionalized racism of their communities. Most took part out of deep antislavery convictions, and were inspired by the actions of the fugitives they aided.

*Bound for Canaan* shares the recent focus in Underground Railroad studies on the contributions and experiences of free black activists David Ruggles, George DeBaptiste, and William Still, and fugitives-turned-activists Louis Hayden, Josiah Henson, Jeremiah Loguen, and William Parker—along with familiar figures Fredrick Douglass and Harriet Tubman. There are also memorable portraits of white activists John Rankin, Levi Coffin, Calvin Fairbanks, Jonathan Walker, and others. The initial section of the book provides a history of slavery and the Quaker abolitionists of the young American republic. The next three sections describe the progress of the UR, decade by decade, from the 1830s to the Civil War.

*Bound for Canaan* is neither an exhaustive history nor a complete catalog of regional activities. Rather, it captures the everyday workings of the UR, its defining moments, and the experience of different races working together in a common cause in the Midwest, border states, and the Atlantic seaboard. America saw tremendous change during the antebellum era and the UR both drove and was an effect of this change. Urbanization and the increase in free black populations allowed fugitives to “disappear” into cities like Albany, Detroit, Boston, and Philadelphia. Immigration and industry encouraged the free labor movement. The pace of the UR literally accelerated as steamships and railroads accommodated more fugitive traffic. Just four days after his dramatic rescue from Boston Courthouse in defiance of the Fugitive Slave Act on February 15, 1851, Shadrach Minkins was safe in Montreal, having traveled by rail through New Hampshire and Vermont.

A dramatic subtext to the history of national transformation is the story of individual transformation. Slaves transformed themselves by seizing their freedom; whites became abolitionists as they witnessed acts of courage or cruelty.

Fugitives stood at the crux of agonizing and fateful decisions. In 1830, Josiah Henson, having evaded being sold South, determined to escape from Kentucky and, most dangerous of all, to take his family with him. He purchased weapons. He and his wife practiced carrying their two youngest sons, who would not be able to keep up. *Bound for Canaan* captures the daunting position and do-or-die commitment of the Henson family: “Escape from the Ripley (Kentucky) plantation had been imperative: had they not run away, they would have been sold and separated

from each other forever. But flight was a psychological, as well as geographical, odyssey, a journey of self-discovery and self-realization” (p. 117).

Similarly, major UR veterans and unnamed bystanders, boatmen, and tradesmen, experience their moments of epiphany. A Lake Erie barge captain, aggravated because fugitives hid aboard his vessel, watched the group kneel to pray and kiss the ground in Canada: “I thought to myself, ‘My God! Is it possible that human beings are kept in such a condition that they are made perfectly happy by being landed and left alone in a strange land with no human beings or habitations in sight . . . Before I stepped upon my deck I had determined to never again be identified with any party that sustained the system of slavery”(p. 256).

White activists displayed the innocence of their social standing. In 1835, John Rankin, pelted with eggs and street gravel while speaking in Ohio, could face down the young street toughs who accosted him. Black fugitives and activists could not afford to take such chances. Readers familiar with post-Civil War reminiscences of frightened and “panting” escaped slaves, will here meet fugitives armed with knives, pistols, and a steely resolve not to be taken alive. The Christiana “Riot” of 1851 ends with a brawling shootout when slave hunters demand entrance to the UR house of William and Eliza Parker—themselves escaped slaves. The book notes the growing polarization and acceptance of violence by white activists. By 1849, John Rankin vowed to protect himself by any means necessary after an attempted bushwhacking.

Underground Railroad history runs the risk of hagiography. Passing notice is given to the racism of white activists, bitter infighting that be-deviled the abolition movement, and a growing acceptance of violent resistance, but these are viewed as minor issues.

Vermonters will appreciate the significant mention of Rowland T. Robinson, fellow Quakers Joseph Hoag, Timothy Rogers, and Oliver Johnson, and Delia Webster.

RAYMOND PAUL ZIRBLIS

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*The John Deere Story: A Biography of Plowmakers John & Charles Deere*

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By Neil Dahlstrom and Jeremy Dahlstrom (DeKalb, Ill.: Northern Illinois University Press, 2005, pp. xix, 204, \$24.00).

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The name John Deere is known to anyone familiar with the green and yellow farm and yard equipment by that name. Yet *The John Deere Story* is neither merely about John Deere, the man, nor a comprehensive corporate history. The subtitle gives a clearer picture of the nature of this book. In the acknowledgments, the authors state that the book started out as a biography of John Deere's son, Charles, who "has clearly been an overlooked historical figure," but they soon realized that "the story of one could not be told apart from that of the other" (p. ix). In fact, the Dahlstroms have given us a clearer portrait of Charles Deere and his impact on the development of Deere and Company than of his more famous father.

Those who have seen the historic marker in Middlebury, Vermont, know that John Deere learned the blacksmithing craft in that town. John Deere was born in Rutland in 1804. Raised by his mother after his father disappeared on a trip to England, Deere apprenticed to a blacksmith and, at majority, began a less than successful blacksmithing career in various Vermont towns.

In 1836, one step ahead of the debt collector, John Deere headed west, leaving his pregnant wife and four children in Vermont until he was established. Ending up in Grand Detour, Illinois, he experimented with steel plowshares that worked much better than iron plows in heavy prairie soils. By 1840, Deere had focused his efforts on plow manufacturing, producing forty plows that year. In 1848, the transportation handicaps of Grand Detour and conflict with his partner caused him to relocate to Moline, Illinois, on the Mississippi River. Moline was ideal for his purposes as it had waterpower, abundant coal, and water navigation. In partnership with two former employers, Deere, Tate, & Gould, with twenty workmen, produced 2,300 plows in less than a year. Moline's prospects improved when the railroad arrived in 1854. In 1856, the company, now known as John Deere & Company, produced 13,400 plows, recognized as among the best made.

The Panic of 1857 found the company sound, yet creditors' demands for cash and customers' inability to pay on accounts "continued to squeeze the company's finances" (p. 35). As the company grew, Deere invited his son, sons-in-law, and nephew to join the firm. In 1857, his son

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Charles, age twenty, was made a partner. From this point on in the narrative, Charles Deere increasingly comes to the fore and John Deere recedes into the background.

The company advertised and marketed under several names, sometimes as the Moline Plow, or the Moline Plow Works. As the firm's reputation grew, a competitive challenge arose that had to be faced. A disgruntled former employee went to work for another Moline manufacturer, Candee, Swan & Company, which began marketing plows that were exact copies of Deere plows, including part numbers and paint job, advertised as "the Moline Plow." The competitor even changed its name to the Moline Plow Company. After years of litigation, a court ruled that "the Moline Plow" was not a Deere trademark.

Despite this setback, Deere & Company continued to prosper as the nation experienced cycles of boom and depression, farmers faced a financial squeeze, and industrial workers began to organize. The Dahlstroms sympathetically relate Charles's efforts to juggle the conflicting demands of his customers, his workers, and the financial interests of himself and the company. Cutthroat competition caused Charles to contemplate establishing a trust in the agricultural implement industry, against both his long-held belief in competition and the platform of the Republican Party, which he supported. In the end, consolidation of plow manufacturers came to nought. All these stresses adversely affected Charles Deere's health, eventually contributing to his death in 1907.

It is refreshing that the biographers make it clear that John Deere was not the first to produce a steel plow, which the company publicly acknowledged in 1913 when it changed the slogan "Inventor of the Steel Plow" to "He Gave to the World the Steel Plow." This more appropriately acknowledges the contributions of father and son in developing an idea and marketing it to a dominant position in the industry.

The reviewer wishes that the authors had acknowledged Charles Deere's Vermont nativity. They identify neither where nor when he was born, which was apparently in Vermont in 1837, after his father had removed to Grand Detour, but before his mother and her other children followed.

In the end, the Dahlstroms succeed in their original intent of resurrecting the story of Charles Deere. Yet by including the context of his father and the origins of this important industry, the authors help readers appreciate that not only do the founders of an industry deserve credit, but often a subsequent leader also contributes greatly to the success of the firm.

ALLEN R. YALE, JR.

*Allen R. Yale is recently retired as associate professor of history from Lyndon State College.*

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*Envisioning New England: Treasures from  
Community Art Museums*

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*Edited by Pamela J. Belanger (Hanover and London: University Press of New England, in association with the Consortium of New England Community Art Museums, 2004, pp. 79, \$24.95, paper).*

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New England has a rich and unique museum heritage. Many towns have small galleries, libraries, historical societies, and other repositories treasured and appreciated by their citizens. Like most cultural institutions, museums and other art centers operate with meager resources and work hard to raise the funds they need to survive. In 1993, fourteen community art museums and cultural institutions in five states in New England banded together to form the Consortium of New England Community Art Museums. The consortium has served as a forum and resource for repositories that contain some exceptional collections and has no doubt aided in their growth and survival. Now, ten years later, this group of institutions has pooled items from their collections in a traveling exhibition and accompanying catalogue, *Envisioning New England: Treasures from Community Art Museums*.

Drawing from artwork produced between 1850 and 1950, *Envisioning New England* is edited by Pamela Belanger. The traveling exhibition was curated by Nancy Grinnell (curator of the Newport Art Museum, Rhode Island) and Jack Becker (former curator of the Florence Griswold Museum, Connecticut, now director of the Cheekwood Museum of Art, Tennessee). With forty-seven works from all fourteen institutions, the exhibition is a beautiful selection of New England-made and New England inspired painting. Both catalog and exhibition not only highlight the importance of New England's art repositories, but also emphasize the relevance of these collections to national history and culture. As the catalog and its essays prove, New England's culture and history at times represent a microcosm of the history and art of the United States.

The catalog's introduction, by William Truettner of the Smithsonian Museum of American Art, nicely places New England's community museums within their national context. Truettner describes New England's strong influence on the presentation and celebration of United States history, and how New England images were "the models for history-making" even for other very different parts of the country. Nancy Grinnell's essay on the evolution of New England's community art museums is an overview of the development of the cultural institutions that form

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the consortium. She describes the diverse and sometimes idiosyncratic origins of these repositories, from the Fitchburg Art Museum in Massachusetts (founded in 1927 by Eleanor Norcross, one of the first women to found an art museum) to the growth of the Bennington Museum from the Bennington Historical Society in Vermont (founded in 1875). Jack Becker's essay on the American artist in New England explains New England's special place in American art. Major (and minor) artists were drawn to the New England wilderness, its coastline and mountains, and its picturesque towns and diverse inhabitants. Artists with connections to many major movements from the Hudson River School to the Ashcan School lived or worked in New England, and their work reflects their experience in everything they paint, from celebrations of the virtues of rural life to dramatic seascapes and intimate portraits. The proliferation of artists' colonies in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries drew more artists to the area. Nineteenth-century fascinations with wilderness and human interactions with nature (covered bridges, fishing shacks, church steeples) continued into the 1900s, culminating with a new focus on urban and industrial scenes. Artists such as Albert Bierstadt, Eastman Johnson, and George Bellows are among those represented in the catalog.

Stephanie Upton's compilation of the histories of the fourteen community art museums that form the consortium is a helpful resource. With their varied origins and diverse collections, all fourteen institutions can be appreciated separately, and the brief descriptions of the histories and collections within each one make visits to them all irresistible. The beautiful reproductions contained in *Envisioning New England*, including fifty-two color plates, present a fine selection of some of the best works from each institution.

As noted in Nancy Grinnell's introduction and Upton's capsule histories, New England's communities have changed over the past one hundred years, as have their community museums. Some institutions founded in the nineteenth century have adjusted their missions and collecting goals, while nearly all have come to emphasize the importance of education and have turned to local community members for support and involvement. Many have coped with aging, beautiful buildings bequeathed by "dutiful daughters" and proud collectors, which have been updated and improved at great expense for the protection of their collections. Projects such as this exhibition, with the production of a catalog that will serve as a helpful guide to some of New England's best collections, remind us of the importance of New England within the history of American art. It is also one of the more public results of organizations such as the Consortium of New England Community Art Museums. Obviously,

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collaborations are not only beneficial for the participants, but for community members, visitors, and readers as well.

MARGARET M. TAMULONIS

*Margaret Tamulonis is Manager of Collections and Exhibitions at the Robert Hull Fleming Museum, University of Vermont.*

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## *Music in Rural New England: Family and Community Life, 1870–1940*

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By Jennifer C. Post (Lebanon, N.H.: University Press of New England, 2005, pp. xiv, 314, CD, \$45.00).

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**M**usic in *Rural New England* is an ambitious book, covering a body of music that has up to now had no such coverage. Taking the years 1870–1940 as a time when rural communities were still dependent on their own music resources, and limiting herself to an inland area of Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont, the author gives us a comprehensive view of the area's oral musical traditions. Earlier attempts at such a view limited their discussions to a specific form of music, notably the ballad or even a special kind of ballad. Post is far more inclusive, extending her discussion to include religious music, dance and social music, and even instrumental music, and she carries it all off very well.

The early chapters are essentially descriptive, covering the various genres named above, but in her chapter 5 (“The Social Landscape: Gendered Spaces”) she cross-cuts general description by taking up the vexed question of gender: Was there a women’s as opposed to a men’s tradition? She shows that the question is more complicated than it first appears by extending the word “song” to include more than text alone, and she ends the chapter with the example of a daughter singing to her children a lumberwoods ballad she learned from her father: “The words may remain nearly the same, yet the ways of singing change” (p. 138).

In “Family Song Traditions” (chapter 8) Post presents still another perspective by examining the memories of one woman (Marjorie Pierce of North Shrewsbury, Vermont) through an extended series of recorded interviews on the part music played in her family some seventy years before. Post contrasts what she found with what earlier collections (notably the Flanders Collection) seemed to imply: “While Flanders’s initial collections of songs from her [Marjorie’s] family . . . created an impression that music in families like Marjorie’s was limited to the ‘old Songs,’

the interviews reveal a considerably more diverse repertoire. A variety of music genres was represented, including locally created songs, religious songs, and a wide repertoire of American popular songs” (p. 158). The point is well taken, and it emphasizes for both fieldworker and scholar the necessity of paying close attention to ill-remembered fragments and even songs remembered by title only. It is further emphasized in the following chapter, “Reconstructing Community Traditions”: “Today people struggle to recall lines or verses of ballads, popular songs, and hymns. Yet they smile as they remember the singers and the way the songs were sung, their stories, and the social times they accompanied” (p. 169).

After a brief chapter on “Landscape and Memory,” the analytical part of the book pretty much comes to an end. What follows is a long (forty pages) appendix: thirty songs with full notes and controlling data. Post describes their two sources in a headnote:

The following is a representative selection of songs and tunes drawn from the repertoires of northern New England residents between 1870 and 1940; many are referred to in the preceding text. The songs and tunes are drawn primarily from the Helen Hartness Flanders Collection, recorded between 1930 and 1965, and field recordings made in New Hampshire and Vermont during the 1970s, 1980s, and early 1990s that document traditions dating to before the middle of the twentieth century (p. 239).

This appendix is more than an appendix: It is a songbook, a work in its own right, different enough in tone and direction to merit being set on separate but equal footing from the preceding part of the book, say as “Part I” and “Part II.” But it’s all right as it is, a good selection of traditional songs, carefully done and well annotated.

Finally, almost a lagniappe, the book includes a CD with twenty-seven sterling examples of traditional North Country singing style, again mostly drawn from the Flanders Collection.

This is a rich and thought-provoking volume. If I have one complaint, it is Post’s frequent use in her musical transcriptions of the bass rather than the treble or g-clef throughout. She’s “right,” of course, but I fear that many interested readers—and readers who should be interested—will find it off-putting. Even so, I have no hesitation in recommending this book to one and all.

EDWARD D. IVES

*Edward D. (Sandy) Ives is professor emeritus of folklore (Department of Anthropology) and director emeritus of the Maine Folklife Center at the University of Maine.*

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*The Essential Aiken, A Life in Public Service*

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*Compiled by Samuel B. Hand and Stephen C. Terry (Burlington: Center for Research on Vermont, University of Vermont, 2004; pp. 111).*

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In 1936 George Aiken reflected on a cellar hole near his home. He remembered the original farm house, identified the farm's legacy plants and shrubs, noted what flora and fauna now claimed the site, and speculated on whether an emerging back to land movement would re-populate Vermont's abandoned hillsides.

Readers may find themselves weaving a similar pattern of memory, observation, and speculation as they read *The Essential Aiken*. Your particular weave may depend on when and where you were born, or, for a sadly shrinking group, on how well you knew the Governor (Aiken's preferred appellation).

Time passes. Thirty years ago the need to introduce George Aiken to Vermont readers would have been inconceivable; but Vermont and Vermonters have changed since the time when George Aiken was not only Vermont's quintessential politician, but also its quintessential Vermonter. George David Aiken was born in Dummerston, Vermont on August 20, 1892. Known for cultivating wild flowers, Aiken established a successful nursery in Putney. After holding local offices, Aiken quickly climbed Vermont's political ladder, serving as Putney town representative (1931–35); speaker of the house (1933–35); lieutenant governor (1935–37); governor (1937–41); and U.S. Senator (1941–1975). He died in Montpelier in 1984.

With friend and collaborator Ernest Gibson Jr., Aiken forged a farmer/worker alliance within the Vermont Republican Party. Aiken balanced selective support for social programs and the regulation of certain businesses with opposition to the centralization, expansion, and expense of the federal government.

It is, in large measure, the contours of Aiken's political philosophy that *The Essential Aiken* seeks to map. It does so through a sampling of Aiken's own words, frequently, but not exclusively, plucked from his most visible moments: his 1937 open letter to the Republican National Committee (RNC); his 1941 Senate speech against Lend-Lease; his 1964 nomination of Senator Margaret Chase Smith for president; his championing of "Mrs. Murphy" in the debate over the Civil Rights Act of 1964; his 1966 Vietnam proposal, popularized as "declare a victory and get out;" and his charge to Congress to impeach Nixon or "get off his back."

Neither history nor biography, *The Essential Aiken* challenges the reader to identify the philosophic threads of Aiken's progressive Republicanism from his horticultural writings of the 1930s to his 1975 Senate farewell. In doing so the compilers explicitly confront the reader with a question: what is, what became of, progressive Republicanism?

Which goes back to how each of us will read this book. Aiken intimates and scholars will read with an understanding of a selection's context. They will understand why it was "essential" to include remarks on rural electrification (Aiken's 1961 speech to the Indiana Electric Cooperative), or even how that speech is anticipated by Aiken's 1937 open letter to the RNC.

Readers of a certain age, whether Vermonter by birth or choice, will place some selections within their own personal contexts of the civil rights movement, Vietnam, and Nixon. While "Mrs. Murphy" or "impeach him or get off his back" may not personally resonate, they will stir memories and stimulate understanding. The mythic short-hand, "declare a victory and get out" will be more widely familiar. From those personal points readers may begin to unravel the threads that hold the selections together; they may well perceive the thread connecting the values that underlie the selections from the 'Sixties and the 'Thirties.

But this book is not an insider's game. Even if you have no background in Vermont history or knowledge of Aiken, some selections will give you pause; that was the compilers' intent. They want you to read Aiken's farewell address and think about the evolving health care debate. They defy you to read Aiken's open letter to the RNC and not think of Howard Dean and the need for a competitive national party that can give Vermont's perspectives an effective voice. And they invite you to read Aiken on Lend Lease and think of Iraq.

Having said that, the compilers' invitation to read Aiken's words largely unencumbered with accompanying explanations may not work well for the causal reader. Other readers, more familiar with Aiken's career, may question the selections; why the 1937 open letter instead of Aiken's 1938 Lincoln Day address, for example? Thus it always is with compilations.

Beneath all of this is a question beyond the scope of this short review: how do we capture the essence of an individual? Can it be exclusively drawn from the individual's own words, extracted from texts specifically created for public consumption? Does part of that essence lie outside the individual in the thoughts, memories, and perspectives of contemporaries? And, for modern public figures, who may be documented in a variety of media and formats, from written text to news footage to recorded recollections, where does one turn for what is essential?

Again, such questions are beyond the scope of this review. Most of us will appreciate the offerings and challenges of *The Essential Aiken* and anticipate the fuller treatments promised by the Aiken biography being written by Steve Terry and Bill Porter.

GREGORY SANFORD

*Gregory Sanford is the Vermont State Archivist. He was assistant director of the George Aiken Oral History Project from 1976–77 and 1978–79. “Carrying Water on Both Shoulders: George Aiken’s 1936 Gubernatorial Campaign” (with Sam Hand) appeared in Vermont History in 1975 and received the Ben Lane Award. His 1977 Masters thesis (University of Vermont) was “You Can’t Get There From Here: The Presidential Boomlet for George D. Aiken.”*

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*All Those in Favor: Rediscovering the Secrets of Town Meeting and Community*

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By Susan Clark and Frank Bryan (Montpelier: RavenMark, 2005, pp. 87, paper \$9.95)

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The duo of Frank Bryan and Susan Clark has created an unabashed paean to town meeting. Don’t expect to find any criticisms of local direct democracy or praise for the Australian ballot here!

Focusing entirely on Vermont, the book moves from a short history of this uniquely New England institution, with quotes from some of its strongest supporters, to a brief list of its attributes and benefits (for example, of all legislative bodies, town meeting best reflects relative proportions of gender in the population), and finally to some suggestions for its improvement. Without question the last is the volume’s principal contribution to literature on town meeting. In tone, the book reads like a speech intended to motivate, encourage, and convince.

For a mechanism so central to New England’s (and Vermont’s) social psyche, town meeting has received little analysis from political scientists. Frank Bryan’s recent *Real Democracy: The New England Town Meeting and How It Works* (University of Chicago Press, 2004; reviewed in *Vermont History*, 73 [Winter/Spring 2005]: 97–99) has done a lot to fill that void. In comparison, *All Those in Favor* is like the frosting without the cake, and one sometimes wishes for a bit more support between the front and back covers. Saying that “every additional hour of television viewing per day means about a 10 percent reduction in civic engagement” (p. 83) without a footnote to the sources is, well, surprising from

two academics (Bryan teaches political science at the University of Vermont and Clark is an adjunct professor at Woodbury College).

Nonetheless, let's recognize for whom *All Those in Favor* was written: town clerks, moderators, selectboards, high school students, legislators—anyone who believes in town meeting and wants to see it prosper. Involving young people in town meeting, encouraging businesses to give employees the day off, holding town and school meetings the same day, and requiring “democracy impact statements” whenever a new law is proposed are among a host of steps the authors believe are being or could be taken to strengthen the institution.

As Clark and Bryan realize, the threats to town meeting are many: population growth; two-income families; sprawl; dwindling town authority; and the “worse than deadly” (p. 36) Australian ballot. All these reduce civic involvement and town meeting attendance. In fact, the authors recommend that any town with more than 5,000 population consider or adopt representative town meeting, in which neighborhoods would elect representatives to attend town meeting as proxies. As for the Australian ballot, the authors recommend it, if at all, only for election of officers; any other use destroys the voters’ legislative authority and is, they say, like using a sledgehammer rather than a chisel to carve an ice sculpture (p. 36). The greatest asset of town meeting, they suggest, is the ability to amend resolutions from the floor.

Despite its suburban growth, Vermont is still an agricultural state, and Vermonters know that crops must be cultivated to survive. Clark and Bryan remind us that the same is true for town meeting, and they just want to see that happen.

JOSH FITZHUGH

*Josh Fitzhugh is general counsel of Union Mutual Fire Insurance Company and lives in Berlin.*

**Correction:** In William Osgood’s review of Jeffrey R. Leich, *Tales of the 10th (Vermont History 73 [Winter/Spring 2005]: 93)*, the reference to Manchester should be Vermont. Mr. Osgood got it right in his manuscript. The editor regrets this error on his part.