

Philips, David. *Crime and Authority in Victorian England: The Black Country*. London: Croom Helm, 1977. Pp. 321. £ 8.50

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Altick carefully documents those three that are still considered as basics: Westminster Abbey with its royal effigies and tombs as its main attractions; St. Paul's Cathedral with its magnificent dome for a commanding view of the city; the Tower with its menagerie, armoury, and crown jewels.

The history of the moving picture, especially the panorama, is treated at length in what is easily the most fascinating part of Altick's story. Not only is the reader treated to a fullsome account of the variety of such shows beginning with Thomas Horner's panorama and the building of the Colosseum to house it, but it is here that one gains the first detailed insights into the nature of the competition faced in the entertainment business for the entrepreneur competed not only with like exhibits, but from other exhibitions such as picture gallery and scientific shows. The fickleness of the public, the importance of good management, the need to anticipate demand--all of these had to be kept firmly in mind were he to succeed in the exhibition world. The success of this part of his book rests on yet another factor. In addition to its being the best history of the panorama to date he is able to show the impact of this exhibition on other parts of the entertainment world, notably art and theatre.

By the beginning of the nineteenth century the exhibition had become as central an institution as the theatre and increasingly the major exhibits reflected the basic conflict between what was felt to be "useful" and "improving" and what was called "frivolous" and "carefree." In the mind of most exhibition-goers in these years instruction seems to take precedence increasingly over mere enjoyment. The first decades of the nineteenth century witnessed a host of "educational" enterprises: William Bullock's Egyptian Hall (1812); Regent's Park Zoo (1828); the National Repository at the King's Mews (1831); the Polytechnic Institute; the Crystal Palace Exhibition (1851).

Altick's study is one that the social, cultural and urban historian will find most useful and the subject itself should open up a wide range of possibilities for similar studies for other cities.

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Philips, David. Crime and Authority in Victorian England: The Black Country. London: Croom Helm, 1977. Pp. 321. £ 8.50.

David Philips has made a valuable contribution to a field that has recently become of great interest to social historians. His aim is to place crime and law enforcement in as rich a social context as possible and this leads him to deal of necessity with a limited area:

national figures would be useless for the kind of study he has in mind. He has broken free, however, from the restraints that the judicial system might seem to impose and he has tackled not a county but a region with a natural social and economic coherence--the Black Country, an area that was industrializing rapidly in the period 1835-1860.

The book rests on evidence derived from the courts that dealt with serious offences--the assizes and quarter sessions--and one of its strengths is Philips' discussion of the issues and the problems that the use of such material raises. Of central concern is the relationship of the crime prosecuted in the courts to the 'real' crime actually being committed. Philips' general discussion of this problem is brief though very valuable; and his analysis of the judicial evidence in the body of the book provides a sensitive demonstration of how such data can be exploited. He includes interesting chapters on the (limited) effects of the rise of the 'new police' in the second quarter of the nineteenth century and on the system of judicial administration. Among other subjects touched on here is the question of who mainly prosecuted crimes against property. This is an important matter for in a system that still depended on the initiative of the victim to bring the offender to justice the identity of the prosecutors provides evidence about the attitudes of various groups in the community towards the law and the courts. It is of interest that Philips finds numerous workingmen among the prosecutors and he takes this as evidence that the legitimacy of at least large areas of the criminal law must have been widely accepted.

The centre of the book lies in the four chapters on the offenders who appeared before the courts and the offences they were charged with. Philips reports very briefly the trends in indictments for several offences over his twenty-six year period. In the case of crimes against property, he is able to show that some changes in the level of prosecutions can be explained by administrative developments. But other aspects of the fluctuation of property offences charged in court seem to him to reflect actual behaviour and to suggest that there was a relationship between crime and economic conditions. The evidence for this is, however, presented sketchily and the discussion is curt and undeveloped. Philips also analyzes the sex, age and occupation of offenders brought before the courts and concludes that the vast majority of those accused of property offences in this period were not, as Tobias would have it, members of a 'criminal class' but were, rather, indistinguishable from the ordinary working population. Besides the evidence derived from indictments (or calendars of offenders), Philips uses for a number of sample years the rich material about crimes to be found in depositions and newspaper reports. This leads to two chapters on the character of property offences and one on violence. These are invariably interesting, though too often the discussion is briefer than the material seems to warrant. And in some areas Philips surely presents a misleading picture by basing his arguments entirely on the offences indicted before the quarter sessions and assizes. In the case of common assault, for example, indictments cannot give anything like a true picture of the numbers of offenders charged since so many cases were dealt with summarily by magistrates.

Philips neglects one other aspect of this vast subject more perhaps than might have been expected--punishment. It is true that he reports and occasionally discusses the numbers imprisoned or transported for various offences. But there is no discussion of the punishments themselves, and this in a period when penal methods, especially imprisonment, were subjects of passionate debate. This is another area in which the book is briefer than the richness of the material would seem to deserve. But this suggestion is also a measure of how valuable Philips' work is. He has presented a great deal of fascinating data and his analysis of it is intelligent and clear-minded. One can only hope that he will take up some of the questions not fully explored here in his further work.

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Hunt, Lynn Avery. Revolution and Urban Politics in Provincial France: Troyes and Reims, 1786-1790. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1978. Pp. viii, 187. \$11.50.

This is an exasperating book to review: the reviewer cannot find anything wrong with it. It examines by nearly every procedure known to modern historians the urban revolution that occurred in two French industrial towns, Reims and Troyes, from 1786 to 1790. At the beginning of the period the towns were governed by the agencies of the French administrative monarchy: the intendant of Champagne residing at Châlons; the subintendants at Troyes and Reims; town councils, composed of a mayor, a procureur-syndic, and councillors, including in Reims clerical deputies; police magistrates, officials of the rural gendarmerie, baillage courts, taxation courts, and local masterships of water and forests. The town councils were staffed and controlled by a patriciate of a few families, nobles and well-to-do merchants who were bound by kinship ties of birth and marriage.

The events of the calling the Estates-General, the election of deputies and the concurrent preparation of cahiers of grievances, the municipal uprisings in the summer of 1789 paralleling that of Paris, and the election in each town of revolutionary governing committees politicized the entire urban population. Economics (the price of bread, for example), social, and political issues were now fought out in the political arena of open committee debate. This fluid period of political activity when old structures were dissolving, new ones were emerging, and no one knew what was coming next was temporarily closed when the municipal legislation of the National Assembly installed throughout France elective town councils and executive and judicial officials. In securing election to town office kinship with important people was less significant than demonstrated ability to lead the crowd through tumultuous events.