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Teaford, Jon C. *The Unheralded Triumph: City Government in America, 1870-1900*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984. Pp. xi, 365. Tables, index. \$28.50 cloth; \$14.95 paper, U.S.

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This early starting point enables him to explore the various and often valuable functions of the urban saloon before their demise. More than a den for thirsty pursuits, the saloon served as an ethnic, working class and neighbourhood recreation facility. Information on employment, accommodation, politics and gossip could be given and received in its convivial environment. Saloons permitted temporary escape from crowded tenement living and offered opportunities — many of them of dubious value — for profit.

The comparison of public drinking in “tightly controlled” Boston and “wide open” Chicago demonstrates Duis’s talent for analysis. Wending through a formidable maze of statutes and regulations, Duis ponders the impact changing lifestyles, marketing techniques and distribution methods had on saloons in the two different cities. Until the onslaught of prohibitionism, maximum fees and limited licenses in Boston allowed for relatively stable public drinking patterns in contrast to Chicago’s less regulated system. Comparative work of this calibre significantly defines our understanding of the variations that existed in American drinking habits.

To Duis’s credit, he does not cast his narrative as one long bitter battle between the liquor dealers and their reformist foes. Several related factors, he argues, contributed to the decline of the saloon: alternative forms of public amusement created rival attractions; inexpensive meals and accommodations were offered by other institutions; and private entertainment helped promote private consumption. At the same time that the growth of suburbs redefined urban geography, concerned interest groups were emphasizing the saloons’ nefarious operations and unsanitary conditions. Well before World War I, saloons were displaying symptoms of a terminal illness. The progressive impulse inflamed by the War delivered the death blow to public drinking with the establishment of national prohibition. Interestingly, throughout the turbulent pre-prohibition years, the liquor industry hardly acted like the image of the hydra-headed monster prohibitionists were eager to propagate. Indeed prohibitory legislation was partly the result of a highly insular and competitive industry failing to act collectively.

Given the magnitude of Duis’s subject it is not surprising that, at times, the book is lopsided. Chicago receives the bulk of the attention. This is probably because originally the study was a Ph.D. thesis for the University of Chicago and Duis is a staff member of the University of Illinois. Moreover, the last decade of the study was not adequately explored. Only the last chapter — twenty-eight pages — is devoted to the 1910-1920 period and only five pages of this are on World War I. Further research might indicate that war-time reform enthusiasm played a greater role in the extinction of the saloon than Duis indicates. Also, one senses that Duis is much in favour of public drinking; “lament for a pub,” could have been a suitable sub-title. It must be kept in mind that the quaint neighbourhood saloon, whose virtues he admires, was also often the base for questionable and illegal endeavours.

Indeed, Duis neglects to explore the behaviour of the saloon clientele after a bout of drinking. It is difficult to accept that falling-down drunkenness, fist fights, petty thievery, vandalism and domestic violence never occurred after hours.

Even with these minor imbalances, *The Saloon* is the most astute historical dissection presently available of public drinking in American urban life. It should serve with distinction as a sound model for future comparative work on the subject.

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Teaford, Jon C. *The Unheralded Triumph: City Government in America, 1870-1900*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984. Pp. xi, 365. Tables, index. \$28.50 cloth; \$14.95 paper, U.S.

In 1890 Cornell University President Andrew D. White wrote that “the city governments of the United States are the worst in Christendom — the most expensive, the most inefficient, and the most corrupt.” Social Gospeler Washington Gladden called American cities the “smut of civilization.” In his widely read *The American Commonwealth* (1888), British pundit James Bryce concluded: “There is no denying that the government of cities is the one conspicuous failure of the United States” (p. 1). As Jon Teaford makes clear, contemporaries portrayed American cities as abysmal failures — a verdict left largely unquestioned by subsequent generations of historians. Teaford takes exception to this picture, claiming, as the book’s title suggests, that the story of American municipal government in this period was actually one of remarkable, if overlooked, achievements. Critics, he maintains, have committed two fundamental errors: first, they assert that corrupt, venal bosses exercised autonomy in the cities and seriously misgoverned as a result. Second, they dwell only on the shortcomings and deny the successes of city governments, thus providing an inordinately negative assessment.

The question of who governed the city can not be quickly answered, Teaford suggests. Bosses did not wield unchecked power, nor did graft-prone city councils determine most important decisions. While the alderman remained a powerful figure in his own ward, during the late nineteenth century he surrendered much of his city-wide influence to others. A host of individuals and commissions, some elected but most appointed, vied for control. Mayors, representing the better elements of society, appointed men of similar background to the posts of comptroller, corporation counsel, and to several independent boards and commissions. Apolitical professionals such as civil engineers, librarians, and

public health officials increasingly held sway over city agencies. Also overlooked has been the influence of city delegates to the state legislatures, most of which deferred to the desires of these urban representatives. As a result, pluralism characterized urban decision-making with power vested in the hands of several competing factions.

While these various administrators sometimes governed ineffectively and occasionally abused their positions for personal gain, they also recorded notable triumphs. American cities produced some of the most magnificent engineering feats ever, including the Brooklyn Bridge, Central Park, and the New Croton Aqueduct. Moreover, Teaford asserts, American cities' record of service purveyance compares quite favourably with that of their supposedly superior European counterparts. Admittedly deficient in caring for the poor and in providing police protection, U. S. cities excelled in such areas as water and sewerage facilities, streets and bridges, mass transportation, fire protection, parks, and public libraries — and at a cost not out of line with the boom-and-bust national economy of the late nineteenth century.

If American cities performed so admirably, then why the nearly universal denunciation of their efforts by a disgruntled citizenry? The author suggests that dissatisfaction hailed from the "balanced system of municipal decision making" (p. 308). No single person or group achieved hegemony, so compromises resulted from the often-bitter wranglings of several competing interests. These groups fiercely disliked having to work with each other but reluctantly did so out of necessity. The constantly critical middle class frequently approved of the ends but not the means of city government, finding dishonourable the work of the plebian city councils. In short, the system of municipal government accommodated everyone but pleased no one.

*The Unheralded Triumph* is a provocative revisionist argument that will challenge the beliefs about city governance held by Gilded Age specialists and urban historians. Teaford builds a compelling case that, for all their deficiencies, American cities truly stood in the vanguard of technological change. By the turn of the century, he argues convincingly, American city dwellers enjoyed a standard of public services unsurpassed anywhere. Readers may balk at some of his conclusions, contending that the author too quickly dismisses the failures of U. S. cities (as he does in discussing their indifference to combatting slum housing, for example). Nonetheless, his emphasis on the positive would seem essential in establishing a corrective to traditional misconceptions. His trenchant use of statistics comparing American and European cities lends particular authority to his contentions. This is an important book whose findings will have to be considered by historians of the period. One quibble: the notes suggest that the author made judicious use of a wide variety of sources, but the absence of any sort of bibliography is bothersome. Particularly in a large interpretive work of this nature based upon research in sev-

eral locations, a bibliographical essay would be of great value to readers and researchers. This fine book would be even better with such an inclusion.

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Deagan, Kathleen. *Spanish St. Augustine: The Archaeology of a Colonial Creole Community*. New York: Academic Press, 1983. Pp. xxii, 317. Tables, figures, appendices, index. \$39.50 U.S.

This volume presents some of the findings of the historical archaeological program at St. Augustine, which is sponsored by a myriad of organizations including, among others, Florida State University, the University of Florida, the St. Augustine Historical Society, and the Historic St. Augustine Preservation Board. Deagan is associated with the Florida State Museum at the University of Florida. Four of the book's eleven chapters, and one of its three appendices, are provided by six other contributors who have differing institutional affiliations but who have participated in the project over the years. Though primarily a report of archaeological findings, the work takes exceptionally thorough account of a wide variety of historical sources, and its preparation was assisted by a number of historians.

The time period focused on is 1702 to 1763, which is the era between the rebuilding of the city following its destruction by the raid of the English governor of South Carolina, James Moore, to the cession of Florida to the English (who held it for only twenty years before returning it to Spain). Although it was never more than a fortified frontier settlement (presidio) in the Spanish empire, St. Augustine reached its zenith as a colony during this period, with a total population of 3,104. Like all of Spanish America, it was a melting pot for Indians, blacks, mestizos, American-born Spaniards (called creoles in Spanish America), and peninsular-born Spaniards. It is this very special characteristic, perhaps unique among colonial cities in the United States, that Deagan finds more important than the accidental fact that St. Augustine was also the first city in the United States (founded in 1565 by Pedro Menéndez de Aviles). St. Augustine's primary function was to provide defense for the Spanish treasure fleets that passed through the Florida Straits. Never self-sufficient, it was financed (like Santo Domingo, Puerto Rico, and Louisiana) by a yearly grant of cash and goods, called the *situado*, from Spain's colonial treasure house, Mexico.

Concentrating on the social stratification of Spanish colonial society and the process of European adaptation to a hostile environment, Deagan and her collaborators study the