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Duis, Perry R. *The Saloon: Public Drinking In Chicago and Boston, 1880-1920*. Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1983. Pp. 303. Illustrations, figures

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membership, and public impact. In contrast, Noel examines the reformers' arch enemy, the saloon, one of the most important, and most neglected subjects in urban history. He is interested in such questions as the ownership and patronage of saloons, their number and locations, the services they offered their clientele, and their political, economic, and social influence.

Dannenbaum provides his readers with an insightful and fascinating analysis. He posits three stages to temperance reform in Cincinnati. During the 1840s temperance was primarily a social movement which relied upon fraternal organizations, especially the Sons of Temperance, to accomplish its goals. Moral suasion lost its effectiveness by the end of the decade, as concern over rising social disorder and a belief that alcoholic consumption could only be controlled by regulating the manufacturers began to dominate temperance reform. In order to deal with these new concerns, the reformers plunged into local and state politics, a move which created as many problems for them as it solved. Following the chaotic controversies inherent in political activism, temperance reform after the War entered its third and last stage, "female dominated confrontational temperance." This conceptual framework enables Dannenbaum to make some perceptive observations about the role of fraternal organizations in antebellum urban life; his analysis of the complex interactions between temperance reform, nativism and politics is generally superb; and his discussion of confrontational temperance permits him to demonstrate the continuities between ante and postbellum reform and to make several intriguing remarks about the emerging importance of women in reform movements.

Professor Noel amply demonstrates the saloon's crucial role in Denver. He documents its importance as a community centre for the city's immigrant neighbourhoods, provides an interesting analysis of the saloon as a small business, illustrates how a growing antipathy toward the saloon influenced suburban development and local politics, and chronicles the interrelationship between saloonkeepers, criminals, and politicians. The chapters on saloonkeepers and on suburban antipathy toward saloons are especially well done. Noel's analysis reveals the tenuous conditions in which saloonkeepers struggled to make a living, and how the emergence of brewing syndicates doomed their independent existence. (Noel's analysis of these issues should be supplemented by Perry Duis' excellent book, *The Saloon.)* His discussion of the way suburban promoters used middle class antagonism toward saloons as a selling point for their subdivisions is the only analysis of this interesting strategy we currently have in print.

Neither book is without flaws. Dannenbaum is at his best describing developments in Cincinnati. When he ventures into state politics his impressive analytical skills sometimes falter, as when he attempts to explain Ohio's failure to adopt a prohibition law by curiously referring to Michigan's successful referendum. Noel, however, has even more problems with political matters. He relies on a simplistic view of urban politics as a drama of reformers in conflict with bosses in assessing the role of saloonkeepers in city affairs. This point of view leads him to accept the reformers' assertions that underworld figures such as Ed Chase, in partnership with mayor Robert Speer, dominated Denver in the early twentieth century. While such assertions probably made good press at the time, they also obscure the complexity of urban politics and create false impressions as to the ways a wide range of competing interest groups jostled for influence in local politics. Also, Noel's decision to discuss the rise of brewery syndicates and crime problems associated with saloons in the same chapter seems odd, especially in the absence of any analytical framework which would give credence to such a juxtaposition. Finally, Noel frequently prefers description to analysis, especially in such crucial matters as the reasons for the decline of the saloon prior to the onset of national prohibition.

In sum, Dannenbaum provides an especially important analysis of temperance reform at midcentury which ought to become required reading on the subject. Noel's study suffers from some conceptual difficulties, but he has provided us with a useful and interesting look at one of the most important urban institutions in the nineteenth century.

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Duis, Perry R. *The Saloon: Public Drinking In Chicago and Boston, 1880-1920.* Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1983. Pp. 303. Illustrations, figures.

Evidently booze is a fascinating topic. In the last two decades the consumption of alcohol and its impact on society has become one of the most popular themes in American social history. Historians have examined the role liquor has played in national and state politics, local and city government, working class culture and moral and religious reform movements. While much of this attention has concentrated on the progressive and prohibition years, other eras and aspects have been scrutinized. I.R. Tyrell's solid study of American temperance thought before 1860 is exemplary of the growing historical interest in the social role of alcohol consumption. Perry Duis's *The Saloon: Public Drinking In Chicago and Boston, 1880-1920,* a careful analysis of public drinking in Chicago and Boston between 1880 and 1920, constitutes an equally important contribution.

The Saloon, broad in scope and analysis, is a unique and ambitious study in many ways. Rather than limiting his research to one locale, Duis examines public drinking in two large centres for the forty-year period preceding prohibition.

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 inbalances, *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