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Couvares, Francis G. *The Remaking of Pittsburgh: Class and Culture in an Industrializing City, 1877-1919*. Albany: The State University of New York Press, 1984. Pp. viii, 187. Map, index

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describes the roles played by extremists on the right and left. They entered the fray, but more important than their activity, as he explains, was the problem of housing defense workers. "As in Harlem during the Depression, Blacks used Communists and fellow travellers," Capeci notes, "as catalysts, organizers, and recruiters — to advance their protest." There were genuine Black grievances, and to redress them the more traditional NAACP gained far more recruits than the Communist Party.

In seeking democracy for themselves, Detroit's Blacks recognized the value of patriotism. "Drawing on rhetoric and principles that pitted egalitarian democracies at home against racist dictatorships abroad," Capeci observes, "they embraced a Double V strategy — Victory at Home, Victory Abroad." They applied that strategy directly to the housing dispute, but it was likewise applicable to such other affronts as racially segregated Red Cross blood banks, twenty-five per cent Black unemployment in 1943, and continuing racism that "relegated Blacks . . . to nonindustrial or low-paying industrial work." Morevoer, Washington seemed unconcerned. With regard to the Sojourner Truth controversy, President Roosevelt left its resolution to subordinates rather than intervene directly.

Eventually the Blacks won their battle and moved into their homes, but their war in Detroit was not over. "The fuse ignited by the Sojourner Truth fight led to several explosions over the next year and a half — most devastatingly on June 20, 1943, when Detroit burst into the worst race riot of the war." Based mainly on archival sources, *Race Relations in Detroit* is an important study with implications that extend to the present.

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Couvares, Francis G. *The Remaking of Pittsburgh: Class and Culture in an Industrializing City, 1877-1919*. Albany: The State University of New York Press, 1984. Pp. viii, 187. Map, index.

This is a slender but well presented volume in the SUNY Series in American Social History which appears under the general editorship of Charles Stephenson and Elizabeth Pleck. The author is an Assistant Professor of History and American Studies at Amherst College. The volume itself consists of several related essays on the cultural evolution of a major American industrial city from 1877, a year of major labour unrest to the end of World War I. The heart of the book concentrates on the decades on either side of the turn-of-the-century. The dates isolate a basic reversal in the city's response to labour organization. During the year of turmoil, 1877, Pittsburgh was pro-labour. By 1919 the city fiercely repudiated the labour movement. En route, Pittsburgh became transformed from a "plebeian community" of industrial workers and petty citizens who held and shared power over their own lives to a "grim metropolis" where the people had been completely mastered and intimidated by big steel. The earlier work of historians such as Herbert Gutman is evident as Couvares probes popular culture and local community in his effort to define the shape of class consciousness during the period under consideration. He addresses temperance, leisure and local politics, all successfully but some more so than others.

The most important change during the period was technological; Pittsburgh ceased being an iron city and became one of steel. The implications were revolutionary. Craftsmen virtually controlled the production of iron. Skilled "puddlers" presided personally over the critical stage in the production of iron. The technology of the day prevented them from being replaced by machines or unskilled labourers. Therefore, as long as iron remained king, the craftsmen ruled regardless of the views of ownership. As for management, the puddlers obscured the dividing lines by being the organizers of their own production teams. These units frequently consisted of the puddler's sons and nephews, young men being prepared for leading roles in this "craftsmen empire."

What was true in the mills, we are told, was likewise true in the city. Plebeian culture and politics reinforced working-class power and solidarity. With the Bessemer process Big Steel swept all of this away. Massive immigration, the proletarianization of the work force, and the reorganization of urban space, shattered Pittsburgh's sense of itself as a community. These technological clauses and the over-supply of foreign (non-union) labour diminished the status and income of skilled workers, provided greater opportunities and income for the unskilled (from their point of view), created a managerial class, and made masters out of owners. In the process came suburbia, redevelopment, and reform impulses. The last took the form of enforcing restrictive laws upon the lower class, thus replacing the old plebeian struggles for self improvement. In the end, middle-class Protestants persisted in trying to impose their views on the working-class Catholics. Though the story is a familiar one, the clear explanation of technology's role provides additional insight.

Less fully developed is the political dimension. The presumed masters of plebeian politics are neither clearly identified nor defined. That someone ran things is assumed because political events took place. Couvares projects a wholesome character upon the undefined political functionairies, apparently because the environment in which they operated was wholesome. Perhaps the difficulty in coming to grips with those who performed political functions stems from the amorphous nature of life in the plebeian city. In

that case it may be reasonable to project upon politicians the characteristics of their society: but, the absence of any inductive proof will not breed certitude.

Footnotes and bibliography are extensive. Research into primary and secondary sources is extensive. With the exception of an occasional lapse (p. 125, last paragraph), the writing is clear and direct.

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Englander, David. *Landlord and Tenant in Urban Britain, 1838-1918*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983. Pp. xviii, 342. Tables, index. $64.25.

It is always disappointing when a book which promises to be good and which ought to be good turns out, in the event, to fail in its promise and to be less than it could have been. This, unfortunately, is the case with David Englander's revised doctoral thesis, *Landlord and Tenant in Urban Britain, 1838-1918*. By the time one has completed a close reading of his study, attention has turned from the subject to the book itself and to a quest for answers to the question of what went wrong with the analysis.

The very idea of focusing, not upon the formalities of housing policy and administration, but upon the relationship between landlord and tenant is significant. It is important to be reminded that housing serves to determine the political behaviour of both owners and occupiers. It has often been suggested that the North American labourer's access to home ownership goes far to explain his aversion to radical political movements. Englander, on the other hand, provides a salutary reminder that the nearly uniform condition of English and Scottish common labourers as renters had a radicalizing effect upon them. In mid-century Leicester, only 4% of all houses were owner-occupied and in Ramsgate, 80% were for rent. Englander's treatment of the contribution of politically active working class tenants to the movement from free market housing, first to controlled rents and, ultimately, to state-subsidized housing promises an analysis in which the rent-strikes in England and Scotland assume new significance.

Alas, the promise does not reach fulfillment. The temporal and spacial dimensions of the study serve more frequently to confuse than to enlighten. Englander has little to say of the period from 1838 (the year of the Small Tenements Recovery Act) to the 1880s, which, as he said, "mark a turning point that failed to turn." His discussion is disjointed and does not allow the reader to develop a sense of process. Similarly, Englander's decision to draw his evidence from all parts of England and Scotland adds another level of complexity. One bounces about the kingdom, for the most part ignoring the different economic, social and political circumstances and traditions of the urban centres from which examples are taken. Englander, himself, pointed to the weakness of this approach in discussing the housing crisis during the war; he distinguished between those locations effected by the expansion of munitions manufacturing and those which were not. Finally, he has added unnecessary confusion by too often burying general discussions of background material in the midst of detailed example. His insightful discussion of the problems of organizing a rent strike in the context of the free market, for example, occurs in the middle of a description of the activities of F. W. Soutter in Bermondsey.

A second unrealized promise has to do with Englander's emphasis upon both landlords and tenants — a duality which suggests that he has in mind an analysis of the system in which both were caught. Indeed, early in the study, he observed that: "Property owners were, in fact, the victims of an inequitable system of local taxation that was increasingly unable to shoulder the burden of social and civic reform heaped upon it by central and local government. Much of the conflict examined below arose from this predicament." One is struck immediately by the idea that the study will, finally, move away from the moralistic conflict model of social interaction which all too frequently passes for social history, and in its place undertake an analysis — or at least a substantial recognition — of the economic structure within which the conflict took place.

As before, however, the promise is essentially unfulfilled. Despite the title and the stated recognition that landlords, too, reacted to stimuli, it is soon apparent that the landlords are the forgotten characters in the drama (except insofar as Englander required an object for the renters to strike against). There is no analysis of the pattern or system of ownership, no distinction between individual owners and housing agencies and no analysis of rating and assessment schemes or of urban expenditures. Not only is there little effort to recognize system (and one should not too harshly criticize an author for not writing the book he didn't intend), Englander was not as consistently careful as he should have been in accounting for the finer divisions amongst either the landlords or the tenants. Neither were as homogeneous as he too often assumes.

In sum, the book may be taken for a well-researched and lavishly documented initial foray into a part of the British experience which has been too frequently ignored. Englander, too, can be credited with several suggestive insights and stimulating flashes of understanding which are reward-