

Foley, William E. and C. David Rice. *The First Chouteaus: River Barons of Early St. Louis. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1983. Pp. xii, 241. Illustrations, maps, bibliography, index*

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[Aller au sommaire du numéro](#)

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to test generalizations about colonial dependence and to ascertain whether the cities in the South differed from those in the West in this respect. Since strong family ties are among those rural values said to persist in southern urban populations, these should be reflected in sex ratios, age data, and patterns of intermarriage.

On the positive side, Goldfield's synthesis is likely to stimulate such studies. It is based on current research on the urban South, discussed in an excellent bibliographical essay. It is original both in its "regional" emphasis and in its effort to demonstrate the influence of the countryside on the city rather than to define one milieu by opposition to the other. Finally, it is itself, in the tradition of Wilbur Cash's *Mind of the South*, an example of the literate introspection by liberal southerners on the nature and the flaws of their civilization, the counterpart, incidentally, to the traditional, constrictive culture criticized in the book.

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Foley, William E. and C. David Rice. *The First Chouteaus: River Barons of Early St. Louis*. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1983. Pp. xii, 241. Illustrations, maps, bibliography, index.

The Chouteau family played important roles as Empire Builders in the Mississippi and Missouri river valleys. *The First Chouteaus: River Barons of Early St. Louis*, by William E. Foley and C. David Rice, both professors of history at Central Missouri State University, analyzes the careers and accomplishments of two leading members of a North American economic dynasty family. For over half a century, Auguste Chouteau (1749-1829) and his half brother Pierre Chouteau (1758-1849) acted as merchants, Indian traders, bankers, land speculators, government advisers, public officials, community leaders, and fur traders. Operating out of St. Louis, a city they helped to found and raise up, the two Chouteaus prospered under French, Spanish, and United States rule. In addition, they fostered close relations with the Indians, especially the Osages in Missouri. No matter what the government or tribe, the two suave and diplomatic Frenchmen quickly gained acceptance and influence, always advancing their commercial fortunes at the same time.

Accommodation was the two Chouteaus hallmarks of strength. They were as comfortable with the rich and famous, including Marquis de Lafayette, as with Indians and French *coureurs de bois*. While they never mastered a language other than French, the basic integrity, negotiating skills, and busi-

ness acume of the two Chouteaus overcame many obstacles. According to Foley and Rice, "By combining a facility for dealing with people from differing social and cultural backgrounds with shrewd judgment, sound business practices, and a unique understanding of frontier mercantile operations, the Chouteau brothers earned for themselves personal fortunes as well as lasting places in the history of disparate societies experiencing a fateful rendezvous in the heartland of the North American wilderness at the turn of the nineteenth century" (p. xi).

The far-flung activities of the two Chouteaus involved Canada. Business realities more than their French antecedents were the primary consideration. Whether under Spanish or United States rule, French voyagers continued to trade in the upper portions of the upper Louisiana Territory. The two Chouteaus not only dealt with them, but shipped large quantities of furs north via the Montreal route to Europe. This cost less and resulted in less spoilage than sending furs through New Orleans. Sometimes, the northern arrangement had its drawbacks; at the start of the War of 1812 United States' authorities confiscated a large consignment of furs at Michilimackinac, an exchange point for the northern fur trade. The two Chouteaus closely followed events in Europe, particularly the impact of the Napoleonic Wars on the fur trade. However, they cared little about the plight of the French in Lower Canada. What concerned the two Chouteaus was, first and foremost, their vast trading empire. Foley and Rice note: "Through decades and political change and through years of enduring the fragile economic fortunes of a dangerous frontier, the Chouteaus had mastered not only the skills of the survivor, but they had developed an intuition about the marketplace which led them to be alternately aggressive and cautious. Usually this acquired reflex served them well. By their old age, they had become consummate practitioners of the art of American politics and business, capable of holding their own with the best of their hard-driving Yankee fellow countrymen" (p. 181). The two brothers were true international businessmen.

Foley and Rice have done an excellent job of researching a very difficult topic. The two Chouteaus frequently operated in very circumspect ways. Their entrepreneurial activities were such that untangling them obviously required skill and patience. Moreover, the family had complicated roots. A genealogical table in the back of the book is of major help. In the course of the research, Foley and Rice used a wide variety of primary and secondary sources, including the Chouteau Collection at the Missouri Historical Society in St. Louis.

While the narrative in *The First Chouteaus* is sometimes hard to follow, perhaps, reflecting the problem involved in piecing the story together, the content and analysis overcome any literary shortcomings. This fine contribution should be

of interest to all scholars concerned about the North American fur trade and business history in general.

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Dennis, Richard J. *English Industrial Cities of the Nineteenth Century: A Social Geography*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1984. Pp. xiv, 368. Tables, maps, index. \$49.50.

This is a most valuable addition to the Cambridge Studies in Historical Geography. At the core of the work is Dennis's own research on community and interaction in Huddersfield, but he ranges beyond this to provide a synthesis of the many recent detailed studies of other nineteenth century cities, providing *en route* a sustained critical and theoretical dialogue between the geographer and the historian. The historian is warned against too simple an invocation of spatial determinacy—“from shapes on the ground to shapes in society”—and geographers are alerted to the mediating role of class consciousness and social stratification in testing the ecological variables that pattern their model making. Overall the author seeks to promote a creative liaison between the positivism of his own first discipline and the more humanist, experiential perspective of today's social historian, applying this approach to central themes in the history of his cities: uniqueness and generality; segregation and community.

Thus on the first theme, where modern research emphasises diversities among the new industrial towns, Dennis argues for the continuing validity of contemporary testimonies to their general similarity, since it was these perceptions that governed social relations and decision making among the Victorians (though this is as much the history of ideology as of experience). On the second duality, the book is particularly good. Contemporaries were equally convinced of the great fact of segregation, usually as an explanation for class alienation and urban degeneration. In fact, physical segregation of the classes can now be shown to have been exaggerated, its mythic persistence a function of a more deeply wrought defensive social and psychic separation. Dennis is not arguing the primacy of past or present knowledge but an appreciation of different views of reality.

He takes issue with treatments of the city that remain too static or deal with change by stages rather than process, and his concern to relate temporal to spatial determinacy is considered within the specificities of daily life as well as longer range shifts in social and economic development. Chapters on public transport and the journey to work, the geography of housing, and residential mobility and persistence effec-

tively combine this dynamicism with attention to structure and agency.

The reviewer's test of any book whose range and eclecticism (however properly instructive and discriminating) outruns his own will lie ultimately in its handling of his own speciality. Thus Dennis's propositions on working-class community structure appear questionable by his reliance upon the concept of a labour aristocracy, at a time when many historians seem ready to discard it. (He seems also to award more importance to Neale's formulations of class than historians do). But yet his overall discussion of this area is so well done that it may serve to revalidate the concept. And his general proposition that *gemeinschaft* and *gesellschaft* are co-existing states of experience rather than historically specific and mutually exclusive entities is profoundly illuminating for any historian trying to reconcile views of the late nineteenth century working class as locked into the dense affectivity of the neighbourhood *and* afflicted by the desolations of an anomic mass society.

For all his evocation of the experiential Dennis is most at home with a technical methodology, and here his book serves as a sophisticated primer as well as a critical review to the field, for he illustrates as well as discusses the use of statistical analysis applied to census records, directories and marriage registers. The extensive notation and comprehensive bibliography also add the virtue of the reference handbook to those of an effective synthesis and a provocative analysis. This is essential reading for the modern urban historian.

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Schmiechen, James A. *Sweated Industries and Sweated Labour: The London Clothing Trades, 1860-1914*. Urbana, Ill.: University of Illinois Press, 1983. Pp. xii, 209. Tables, index.

James Schmiechen takes an analytical and chronological view of sweating in London during the nineteenth century. His argument is that sweating was a result of industrial growth, not stagnation. Skilled artisans were replaced not by factories but by mechanised outwork. Effects of the sweating system included “social compression,” by which he means that workers remained to live in the inner city, near their sources of work, and, he argues, sweating “perpetuated many of the preindustrial values of working class women” by requiring women to perform their paid work in their home, spatially integrated with family responsibilities. Women continued their preindustrial responsibility as managers of