

Peiss is wonderfully sensitive to all the class and gender ironies that infuse her subject. The young women of her study embraced these new freedoms with enthusiasm, but the line between sexual freedom and sexual exploitation can be a thin one. As long as women remained economically dependent on men, and therefore were always the recipients of "treating," they incurred obligations that men might expect them to fulfill with sexual favors. As one astute settlement house worker said, "The young men of the big cities today are not gallantly paying the way of these girls for nothing" (p. 184). Picking up a date at a dance hall might seem to be an act of liberation, a defiance of Victorian courtship mores, but it could also entail serious risks.

Middle-class reformers worried greatly about the morals of the working women and tried to provide alternate social spaces for recreation, for example in Working Girls Clubs, that adhered to the homosocial customs and notions of respectability of their own class. But such benevolence was a losing proposition, for the most part. Instead, the pleasurable mixed-sex recreations of the working classes began to attract middle-class participants, and by the 1920s the sex segregation of organized social life was passé. But middle-class versions of entertainment toned down some of the rules: cabarets often prohibited unescorted women and insisted on prearranged coupling for admission; "tough dancing" was stripped of its most explicit sexual expressions. Thus some of the overt peril for women was blunted, but without any change in the overall pattern of obligation and sexual dependency.

*Cheap Amusements* is an important book of social and cultural history. The research is thorough, the analysis is sound and perceptive, and the writing is lively. Peiss has found a way to recover the voices of working-class women themselves and to see them as agents of their own cultural forms. The book will have wide use as a classroom text in courses on urban, labor, and women's history; the publisher should bring out a paperback edition as soon as possible.

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*Eleanor Roosevelt: A Personal and Public Life* by J. WILLIAM T. YOUNGS. Boston and Toronto: Little, Brown, and Company, 1985; xiii + 246 pp., prologue, photographs, bibliographical note, index; cloth-bound, \$15.95.

*Eleanor Roosevelt: A Personal and Public Life* is a new and welcome addition to the Library of American Biography series which began under the editorship of Oscar Handlin. As such, J. William T. Youngs is less interested in presenting new interpretations of Eleanor Roosevelt's life than he is in producing a readable, synthetic work; in this, he is quite successful.

Youngs takes us through Eleanor Roosevelt's life in the traditional way: the early years which are filled with painful shyness, the loss of

both her parents, the feelings of inadequacy; the emotional growth of her young adult years as she marries, bears children, and runs a household; her relationship with her mother-in-law, Sara Delano Roosevelt; the Lucy Mercer affair; Franklin Roosevelt's polio and eventual paralysis; Eleanor's growing independence and interest in politics and a rekindled interest in social reform; and her personal and public relationship with Franklin Roosevelt, her second cousin and husband of forty years, and the 32nd President of the United States.

Eleanor Roosevelt's story has been told by many people over the years since she became First Lady in 1933; she has told it herself in a three-volume autobiography. Youngs has made good use of the best of the material on Roosevelt, including recent works which interpret the Eleanor Roosevelt-Lorena Hickok relationship. He has done an excellent job of placing Roosevelt's life and that of her family in the context of their times. Youngs' chapters on Roosevelt's parents and her own early upbringing are some of the best that have been written on those subjects, bringing together facts and interpretations of Roosevelt's life within the historical context of Victorian America.

If there is a weakness in Youngs' synthetic biography of Eleanor Roosevelt, it is his introduction. Youngs begins his work with Eleanor in the South Pacific during World War II, and describes the emotional turmoil in her life as she reflects on her past, the terrors and pain of war, and her unfulfilling relationships. But he does not really prepare the reader for the biography; he does not tell us why he is writing this book on Eleanor Roosevelt. A stronger introduction would have improved this book. Youngs does, however, provide excellent Notes on the Sources, which compensate for the lack of footnotes throughout the book.

*Eleanor Roosevelt: A Personal and Public Life* is well-written and thoughtful. Youngs has produced a readable volume on Eleanor Roosevelt's life which should delight all audiences interested in the lady and her times.

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*Public Domain, Private Dominion: A History of Public Mineral Policy in America* by CARL J. MAYER and GEORGE A. RILEY. San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1985; xi + 340 pp., index; clothbound, \$25.00 plus \$4.50 for postage and handling.

*Public Domain, Private Dominion* introduces a historical perspective to the debate over the adequacy of the Reagan administration's mineral policy. The authors, Carl Mayer and George Riley, see this administration's policy of expediting mineral exploitation on public lands as the central problem with current mineral policy. They view with alarm an already poor policy being taken to an extreme, as regulations governing public lands are further weakened. This book also raises an interesting question about the relationship between policy advocacy and scholarship.