

herence to 'fact' " (p. xvii). "This 'fictive people,' . . . saw the world of print itself become a surrogate for community on a national scale. The desire to maintain a traditional community existence that so strongly motivated people to become literate ultimately contributed to the destruction of that very way of life" (p. 121). "Nineteenth-century Americans swallowed whole the idea of the fictive people, internalized it, and incorporated it into the identity. The transcendence (or denial or conquest) of time, space, and history became a common American trait. The fictions of nationality fell to the individual to maintain at the common cost of the integrity of personal vision" (p. 194).

Whether one agrees with Mr. Zboray's reasoning or conclusions should not detract from the complete and detailed scope of this work. As with the writings of Lillian Hellman, notions of fact and fiction are not cut and dry. Ronald Zboray has made a readable and thought-provoking study of the subject.

Bad Habits: Drinking, Smoking, Taking Drugs, Gambling, Sexual Misbehavior, and Swearing in American History. By John C. Burnham. (New York and London: New York University Press, 1993. Pp. xviii, 385. \$35.00.)

Reviewed by Timothy J. Gilfoyle, Loyola University of Chicago.

The explosion of research in social history in the past three decades has produced a plentiful literature on the personal habits and social mores of ordinary Americans. Among the most studied subjects have been those activities earlier generations labelled deviant behavior or "vices." Examinations of alcohol, narcotic, and tobacco consumption, gambling, extramarital sexual behavior, and even swearing have dramatically altered interpretations of the American past. This historiography, however, remains scattered and fragmented. John C. Burnham's *Bad Habits* marks one of the first attempts to organize and synthesize this vast and daunting subject matter.

Burnham does not suggest that any of these behaviors were in and of themselves "bad." But by the nineteenth century, a single "social constellation" linked drinking, smoking, gambling, sexual misbehavior, swearing, and drug use. Together these social habits and lifestyles represented a "counterculture" to genteel Victorian mores. Embedded in the values and milieu of the underworld, such behavior was marginalized by the dominant white, middle-class culture. But over time, these activities

persisted as powerful cultural forces, ultimately gaining popular acceptance by the late twentieth century.

The turning point in this process of cultural inversion was the repeal of Prohibition. The repeal partisans, led by Pierre DuPont after 1926, mobilized the urban press, advertising agencies, and corporate interests in unprecedented and modern ways. These forces employed personal liberty arguments and instigated highly negative attacks on older standards of respectability. Ensuing decades, in various degrees and different locales, saw the same techniques effectively legitimize, if not legalize, gambling, drug use, swearing, prostitution, and pornography.

Prior to repeal, the forces that manipulated American culture tended to be from-the-top-down. Thereafter, the reverse proved true. "Lower-order elements" increasingly validated certain behaviors such as short-term serial monogamy, nonmarital sex, gambling, swearing, and drug use. Each of these habits developed momentum independently, but in the end each one converged with the others. Together they formed a dynamic, evolving "vice-industrial complex" based on an inordinate quest for profits and "lower-order parochialism."

Burnham is especially persuasive in showing how proponents of this new culture successfully coöpted their critics. By the 1950s, for instance, beer companies argued that responsibility for problems of alcoholism and drunk driving lay with those who used alcohol, not the producers. Through the skillful subsidization of alcohol treatment research, and by the 1980s even of Mothers Against Drunk Driving, alcohol interests made liquor consumption an acceptable and integral part of American social life.

The legitimation of "bad habits" occurred not through a monolithic campaign or a conspiracy of participating elements, but by a series of concrete coöptations based on simple economic interests and negative rebelliousness. Thus, "legitimate" businesses supplied activities and services for "illegitimate" ones: glass and aluminum for alcohol companies, electronic equipment for gambling and pornographic filmmakers, loans from banks and insurance companies. Liquor and cigarette companies aggressively marketed their products with sophisticated and expensive advertising campaigns. Even women's magazines relied on such advertising for their survival. Tracing the suppliers led to the most "respectable" business elements in society. The champions of "bad habits" thus transformed their products into civic virtues.

Burnham is no apologist for this trend. Indeed, this cultural transformation had a social cost. No advocate, for example, supported a positive, alternative program. The proponents of vices proved to be so negative that they denied not only the utility of older standards of authority, but

even the validity of almost any social standard except fad, fashion, and style. Hedonism was the only positive value they uniformly defended.

Most ironic of the forces contributing to this movement was privatization. As Americans moved to the suburbs, had many children, and increasingly enjoyed their leisure in the privacy of the home, formerly-feared vices were introduced into this family setting. The six-pack and the cocktail hour, *Playboy* and the sex video, cigarettes and marijuana were successfully packaged and sold to the middle-class public as "private," homebound activities. Thus, private market forces, wrapped in the veneer of individual or even "family" behavior, stimulated this cultural transition.

In tackling such a broad subject, Burnham will not please all readers. Why, for example, did World War I provide a trial run for the inversion of values by exposing millions of young Americans to "bad habits," and not the Civil War, which probably exposed far greater numbers of Americans to such habits? Some topics, such as drinking, are given considerably more attention than others, notably swearing and homosexual behavior. Still others will fault Burnham's use of terms like "lower orders" in his analysis. The many and subtle differences among racial, class, and ethnic groups are largely ignored. Social scientists may be unsatisfied with his application of deviance theory, which goes only a little beyond Durkheim's conception of social boundaries. The author calls attention to the social costs incurred with these changing standards, but borders on romanticizing the rigid Victorian norms they replaced. And one wonders if the general constellation of cultural forces that promoted drinking and smoking can be equated with those supporting narcotics' use.

In the end, however, there is more to praise than disdain in this book. No work of synthesis can answer the pet questions various specialists will raise. For the first time, historians can find a thorough examination of this broad and complex subject under one cover. *Bad Habits* will ultimately serve as a starting point for future examinations of cultural inversion.

Independent Intellectuals in the United States, 1910-1945. By Steven Biel (New York, N.Y.: New York University Press, 1992. Pp. xvi, 294. \$40.00.)

Reviewed by Leslie E. Fishbein, Associate Professor of American Studies, Rutgers/The State University of New Jersey.

Ever since the Kennedy era American intellectuals have been preoccupied with their public function, their ability to advise political leaders