

amulets, fetishes and feeders to modern toys, toothbrushes and tongue scrapers. While the ancient artifacts are illuminating, and serve to remind us that child care is the business of every age, the chief interest of the collection lies in the objects and treatises dating from the early modern European period, the sixteenth to the early nineteenth centuries.

For most of us, the artifacts and the writings require interpretation. They belong to a bygone way of thinking about child-rearing and health care. Who in our day can sympathize with procedures such as rubbing newborn babies with salt, or wrapping them from head to toe in swaddling cloths, or dipping them in the cold waters of the nearest river, or, in case of illness, purging, even bleeding them? Or the most deadly of all practices, the putting out of infants to wet nurses? Yet such things cannot be dismissed, much less condemned, out of hand; they must be understood, and this understanding can be achieved only within the context of their own times.

The value to the public of Dr Drake's collection has been greatly enhanced by the appearance of the companion book, *Nurturing Yesterday's Child*. As the preface to the book explains, the text does not claim to be a comprehensive history of child care. It is guided by the contents of the collection. The artifacts and prints themselves fall into different groupings, following the original interests of the collector. Each grouping forms its own chapter: on maternal, "wet", and "dry" nursing; on the care of foundlings; on the raising and education of children; on the nursing, bleeding, purging and dosing of invalids; on magic medicine; on touching for the King's Evil. Every chapter is accompanied by illustrations taken from the collection. But the reader recognizes that the usual procedure is here reversed: the real illustrating is done by words, for the purpose of better understanding the pictures. The authors have achieved a solid work of information and interpretation within a highly readable text.

For those interested in the subject of yesterday's children, a visit to the Drake collection would be time well spent. Whether or not they visit the collection, this book will leave their minds informed and their imaginations enriched.

Elizabeth Rapley
University of Ottawa

Walter Struve — *Aufstieg und Herrschaft des Nationalsozialismus in einer industriellen Kleinstadt. Osterode am Harz 1918-1945*. Essen: Klartext Verlag, 1992. Pp. 634.

Since the 1965 publication of William S. Allen's pioneering study of Norheim (a substantially expanded edition of which appeared in 1984) and especially in the wake of a burgeoning interest in *Alltagsgeschichte*, or the history of everyday life, during the 1980s, the archives and citizenry of German towns and villages have been inundated by researchers, amateurs and professionals alike. Among the latter, English-speaking historians — often with a familial connection to the locality they chose to examine — have made significant contributions to what has been the pre-eminent subject of this scholarship: namely, the rise, rule, and (to a lesser extent) aftermath of National Socialism at the grassroots level. Walter Struve, who teaches at the City University of New York and whose grandfather was born in Osterode, has now presented the fruits of a decade and a half of investigating that small industrial

center (its population did not exceed 10,000) in the Harz mountain region, 100 kilometres southeast of Hanover, between the world wars. Not only his conclusions but also his *modus operandi* are certain to modify our understanding of the Hitler era and how best to approach studying it.

First of all, the book is informed by a wide-ranging familiarity with the general literature on Nazism. This enables the author constantly to relate developments in the town to those of many other communities in Germany as well as the broader national polity, thereby avoiding the sterile antiquarianism characteristics of some products of *Alltagsgeschichte*. Struve argues, for example, that although the assumption of power in Osterode by the NSDAP and the policies of the dictatorship it established resulted from the effective interaction of indigenous with external forces such as the provincial Party headquarters and subsequently Hitler's government in Berlin, the "decisive impetus" nevertheless came from "above" (520). This interpretation contradicts, among other things, the view that local units of the Nazi movement were self-financed rather than the recipients, whether directly or otherwise, of the Party's material support from "big business" which Osterode lacked. It explains, too, why anti-Semitism, though scarcely an issue during the numerous election campaigns before 1933 in a town with only about 50 Jews (slightly below the average proportion for the country as a whole), still ended up claiming more than one-third of them in the Holocaust.

Besides exhausting the rich resources of Osterode's city, county, church, and court records along with relevant archival holdings in a dozen other locations between Berlin and London, Struve conducted around 100 taped interviews or corresponded with present and former residents of the town, some living as far afield as Britain and the U.S. His study is a particularly persuasive illustration of the irreplaceable value of oral testimony in uncovering the experiences of Germans under Nazism, an historical phenomenon more bedevilled than most with memory "losses" and distortions. The text abounds in telling quotations from participants in the events described, many not yet adults at the time; indeed, several topics, including the fate of the regime's racial and other victims, could hardly be delineated as extensively as they are without this fast disappearing type of evidence. The author shows himself well aware of the potentially apologetic nature of oral sources, as he is of similar pitfalls associated with postwar denazification files (popularly called "whitewash affidavits") upon which he has also drawn. A few readers may nonetheless question his acceptance of statements by contemporaries that they objected — albeit as a rule silently — to Nazi mistreatment of foreign labourers and concentration camp inmates slaving (the word does not seem inappropriate as Struve claims on p. 466) in Osterode's numerous wartime armament factories. Much contrary documentation, which he by no means neglects to present, from there and elsewhere maintains that precisely German workers whose own political parties and unions were the first objects of Nazi repression were all too prone to inflict their ethnic prejudices upon these later persecutees.

This points to perhaps the most controversial theme the author raises. What role did the working class play in the Nazi period and its origins? Struve asserts — correctly, in my opinion — that the NSDAP represented the ultimate weapon utilized by the German bourgeoisie to repulse the claim of the nation's proletariat to political and moral equality with it. Thus, workers were always underrepresented among early members of and voters for the Party. Soon after Hitler became chancellor, Communists and Social Democrats were purged from all positions of governmental and administrative responsibility; while any sign of dissent emanating from

predominantly working-class groups, for instance Jehovah's Witnesses, was vigorously suppressed. However, the argument about the greater or lesser share of "workers" among adherents of Nazism turns, in part, upon one's narrower or else more inclusive definition of the term; and, in this case, on the occupational structure of the community being investigated. Osterode counted a large blue-collar element (but few Catholics), and was correspondingly slower to accord the NSDAP a majority than a predominantly Protestant civil service or upper middle-class electorate would have done. Suffice it to say that the author's frequently reiterated thesis of the relative immunity of workers *per se* to the appeal of Nazi ideology is not always persuasive: the minuscule number and dogmatic fanaticism of the Witnesses probably accounts at least as much as their social origins for their systematic persecution by the Gestapo. Notwithstanding this interpretative disagreement, the chapter on the sect, which happened to have a disproportionately numerous following in Osterode, is one of the book's most original.

It also includes, among many other highlights, a lengthy socio-economic history of the town's Jewish populace stretching from their medieval background to their gradual expropriation in the course of the thirties; and a revealing exposure of the military-industrial complex that emerged in Osterode after 1942 to prop up the German war effort — a prime example of the exploitation by rapacious capitalism of the opportunities for profit offered by the Third Reich. On the other hand, the disappointingly sketchy treatment of Osterode's educational institutions focuses upon personnel changes in 1933, but says nothing about the function of the schools in indoctrinating their pupils for democracy, or fascism. The final narrative chapter on the town's capture by advancing American troops in April 1945 seems intended mainly to satisfy the otherwise unexceptionable right of local history as well to be written for its own sake (26). Much detail in it, however, could be trimmed from a very desirable English version of the book. Not so the appendix of 45 statistical tables which clearly outline the results of each election held in Osterode from 1912 until 1934; the same applies to the fine selection of photographs of the town and its chief personalities, although the portfolio could be placed in a more logical location than (apparently) just dropped into the middle of a chapter. Last but not least, and by no means to be taken for granted in a book published in Germany, Professor Struve has provided an adequate index. All in all, this volume amply attests to the value of applying the historiographical knowledge, resourceful imagination, and analytical skill of a first-rate practitioner "even" to the tale of an obscure German *Kleinstadt*.

Lawrence D. Stokes
Dalhousie University

Whitney Walton — *France at the Crystal Palace. Bourgeois Taste and Artisan Manufacture in the Nineteenth Century*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992. Pp. xii, 240.

Whitney Walton uses the French experience at The Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of All Nations, held in London in 1851 and universally known then and since as the Crystal Palace Exhibition, to focus her exploration of the taste and consumption patterns of the French bourgeoisie in the first half of the nineteenth