

explanation could be made for late twentieth-century agriculture, in which mining the soil and destroying it with pesticides and herbicides pass for advanced arable farming, and ensuring dairy cows a foreshortened lifespan by milking them thrice daily passes for efficient animal husbandry.

Colonial husbandmen and their families, Carr, Menard, and Walsh assert, were wisely following an economic imperative, which they were wise enough to divine. They ignore that, in contrast to the aboriginal system, which always allowed hunting and fishing to flourish along with agriculture, Robert Cole's "achievement" contributed directly to rapid overpopulation and over-cultivation, first destroying much of the habitat for wildlife and then threatening the soil itself. That seems to me to be a truer legacy of early and later North American agriculture than the one set forth here.

The authors also claim that "Chesapeake tobacco planters created a new style of agriculture" (p. xviii) and hence deserve our admiration for making a virtue of necessity. Settlers made few advances on the methods of clearing and cultivation used for centuries by aboriginals. Their two principal crops, corn and tobacco, were both highly destructive of soil fertility. Obligated to use a fallow cycle of up to 20 years and avoiding the use of manure, as it gave an unwanted flavour to tobacco, they erected neither fences nor barns for their livestock, nor did they even provide them with winter fodder. Still, their neglected animals, whether measured by slaughter weight or rate of successful calving, appear not to have been seriously inferior to the typical puny specimens that passed for livestock in North America as late as 1800.

Even if their main thesis is worth debating, the authors have written what is unquestionably the finest book yet on colonial American agriculture. From a wide range of recent research, to which they have already made substantial contributions, they draw a sophisticated and quite believable picture of the mid-seventeenth century. Robert Cole's was a brief era of yeomen-dominated farm households with the aid of their white male indentured servants, before the societal transformation to the great plantation and its black slaves and white indentured female servants. Writing in unadorned language, the authors have been able to make remarkable sense of the Cole account books and allied documents, all lovingly reproduced and intelligently annotated.

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Harvey Chisick – *The Production, Distribution, and Readership of a Conservative Journal of the Early French Revolution: The Ami du Roi of the Abbé Royou*. Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1992. Pp. xiv, 262.

Historians have recently devoted a great deal of research to the role of the press in the French Revolution. Jeremy Popkin's recent work, *Revolutionary News: The Press in France, 1789–1799* (Duke University Press, 1990), argues that the newspaper political press was key both to allowing revolutionary representatives to claim the sanction of public opinion and to defining revolutionary events into a compre-

hensible form that allowed citizens to understand and take an active part in the political process. It was uniquely important as a forum for revolutionary debate and for helping to polarize that debate. Yet in the development of the revolutionary press, questions of profit and business organization could be as crucial to the success of a journal as was its ideology. These factors are discussed in general terms by Popkin. Harvey Chisick extends this concept with a narrowly drawn, in-depth portrait of the business organization of the *Ami du Roi* and a study of the social composition of its readership.

Abbé Royou's *Ami du Roi* appeared from September 1790 to May 1792. It has often been cited as one of the most important conservative journals of the period. Chisick portrays Royou as less extreme than many historians have in the past, locating him firmly within the constitutional monarchist camp in 1790. The events that drove the Revolution to the left, he argues, including the papal condemnation of the Civil Constitution of the Clergy and the King's flight to Varennes, left Royou exposed as a Catholic monarchist. However, Chisick refers those interested in more discussion about the political ideology expressed in the paper to recent studies by Jean-Paul Bertaud (*Les Amis du Roi : journaux et journalises royalistes en France de 1789 à 1792*, Paris, 1984) and William J. Murray (*The Right-Wing Press in the French Revolution: 1789–1792*, Exeter, 1986). Chisick's interest is to relate the ideology of counter-revolution to the business of publishing. He does this, as his title indicates, by analyzing the origins of the paper, the methods of its production and distribution, and the difficulties presented by the revolutionary police, and by assessing its profitability as a business exercise.

Chisick notes, as earlier studies of the press have found, that a newspaper could survive in the early Revolution with as few as 300 readers. The *Ami du Roi* at its highest point printed 5,700 copies. By analyzing the costs involved in the production and distribution of the paper, Chisick is able to demonstrate that it was a very profitable enterprise. In fact, it was probably a dispute over profits, not ideology, that motivated the Abbé Royou to break with the original group who had formed the first *Ami du Roi* in May 1790 in order to found a second paper of the same name. (One of the liberating aspects of the Revolution was that writers could escape the privileged publishers of the Old Regime and, for a modest investment, create their own journal with the hope of great financial rewards if it succeeded.) Chisick attributes much of the publishing success of the journal to Royou's sister, Madame Fréron. She had gained experience in publishing by managing the *Année Littéraire* for 15 years before the Revolution. Madame Fréron already had established contacts with printers and booksellers and possessed the business acumen to handle a large number of subscribers. In addition, Chisick is able to demonstrate that the *Ami du Roi* made large profits by publishing single-run pamphlets, such as those by leading conservative deputies Jacques-Antoine-Marie de Cazales and the Abbé Maury, and by publishing over 100,000 copies of the papal briefs condemning the Civil Constitution of the Clergy. Profits on the latter could reach as high as 1,500 per cent and were routinely between 500 and 1,000 per cent. Thus Royou and Madame Fréron played a key role in bringing royalist and Catholic ideas to the public at the same time as they made impressive profits.

Records seized by the police allow Chisick to describe not only the process of publication but also the pattern of subscriptions, their geographic distribution, and the social position of the subscribers. With lists of more than 7,000 names, he is able to make a unique analysis of the paper's readership at a time when both old-regime and new revolutionary terms were being used to describe occupations and status. Perhaps not surprisingly, he finds the aristocracy and the clergy to have been overrepresented among the subscribers to the newspaper (at about 20 per cent each). Among the commoners who subscribed, the elite of the business world (*négociants*), army, and liberal professions were also overrepresented. A large percentage of women subscribed, from 16 to 22 per cent depending on the year of the sample. Chisick relates this broad conservative readership to the events of the Revolution, but also compares it to the readership of pre-revolutionary literary journals. He makes a suggestive, though tentative, link between the elite audience that read Enlightenment literature in the 1780s and the counter-revolutionary elite after 1789.

As this last argument indicates, much of the interest of Chisick's study lies in the broader questions he raises but cannot answer, given the narrow limits of this study. Two certainly warrant further pursuit. One is the role played by pamphlets in communicating ideas after the explosion in numbers of newspapers in the early Revolution. Were pamphlets also crucial for the democratization of political debate, as Popkin suggests for daily journals? The other is the relationship of the Enlightenment to the Revolution. If the elite audience for the Enlightenment was drawn to read conservative newspapers during the Revolution, what does that say about the relationship of the Enlightenment to revolutionary ideology? As far as Chisick's history of the *Ami du Roi*, historians of the press may not learn a great deal that is new about the general orientation of the paper, and they may question his views about Royou's moderation. Chisick, however, has produced a study valuable for the way in which it dissects the operation of one important journal and provides a systematic social analysis of its readers. He also presents a useful discussion of the technical and interpretive difficulties in analyzing the social categories of the early Revolution. It is hoped that Chisick or other scholars will build on this foundation to address the larger questions raised by his work.

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Sudel Fuma – *L'esclavagisme à la Réunion, 1794–1848*, Paris et St. Denis, Réunion, Éditions l'Harmattan et Université de la Réunion, 1992, 191 p.

Slavery was the prominent socio-economic structure of the French plantation colonies prior to the general emancipation of France's remaining 250,000 colonial slaves in 1848. Accordingly, several recent books have developed different aspects of the French colonial slave experience. Christian Schnakenbourg published in 1980 a volume on slavery's role in the Guadeloupean sugar industry in the mid-nineteenth century (*Histoire de l'industrie sucrière en Guadeloupe aux XIX^e et XX^e siècles*, vol. I, *La crise du système esclavagiste 1835–1847*, L'Harmattan), a theme