

cance out of items of clothing, occupations, networks of provincial workers, and days of the week as no other historian can.

This is not to say that the study is without weaknesses, for it is bound to raise a number of questions. It is not clear, for example, how the *concierges* of the Basse-Geôle decided whether a body fished from the Seine resulted from a suicide or an accident. To be sure, there were witnesses in some cases, but not in others, and given the social class of Cobb's cadavers, the lack of suicide notes is not surprising (although he does cite one suicide note left by a *cuisinière* in Liège).

What is perhaps the most unsatisfying aspect of the work is the line that is drawn between personal life and social life. There is a suggestion that male suicide in particular might have related to public events — economic conditions, underemployment, war-weariness, and the like — but the suggestion is not followed through, and we are often left with the feeling of personal experiences too starkly insulated from the general. What, for example, of the religious factor in these suicides? It might well be, of course, that the documentation does not allow the historian to see beyond the most personal experiences of the subjects of this study, but the broader social influences on the rate of suicide, and the proportion of women and men among them, are surely compelling questions among others. This study does not answer them, but it is nonetheless a fascinating insight into personal lives and puts life into the statistics of death.

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PETER BAILEY. — *Leisure and Class in Victorian England: Rational recreation and the contest for control, 1830-1885*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1978, Pp. x, 260.

Peter Bailey's interesting and provocative work is one of a number of recent contributions to the rapidly-expanding historiography of recreation and leisure in nineteenth century England. His concern with the inter-relationship of leisure, class and respectability reflects the similar preoccupation of Brian Harrison, Gareth Stedman Jones, Trygve Tholfsen and Helen Meller, in their various explorations of Victorian and Edwardian recreation.

Two themes underlie Bailey's well documented study of the transformation of urban culture: the gradual assumption of control, by the working classes, of the direction of their own leisure from the mid- to late-nineteenth century, consequent upon the failure of middle-class recreation schemes to gain wide acceptance; and a reinterpretation of the concept of respectability itself.

Recent historians, notably Geoffrey Best and Brian Harrison, have replaced a framework of class with one of "respectability" in attempting to explain the apparent cohesion of mid-Victorian society. Vertical attachment to a powerful ethic of respectability generated by a newly-established middle-class hegemony, they have argued, became more important as a behavioural determinant than horizontal class allegiances. As a result of this approach, Bailey maintains, the class perspective has been unduly neglected.

Trygve Tholfsen began the work of rehabilitation by contending that attachment to respectability became an integral part of, rather than a deterrent to, class consciousness. Bailey suggests further that respectability is better understood as a mode of behaviour, capable even of being assumed or discarded if occasion demanded, rather than an enclosed

ideology. Working-class leisure experience, in fact, generally overlapped the respectable and non-respectable boundaries with little sense of contradiction apparent to the participants. Bailey has elaborated on the theme in an article in the Spring 1979 issue of the *Journal of Social History*. His contention that by the 1880s the result of working class pressure was to attach the status of "respectable" to whole areas of leisure activity, without reference to the previously dominant middle-class ideology, is borne out by Helen Meller's recent work centred on Bristol.

The struggle for control of leisure was a drawn-out process. The new industrial discipline which had eroded much of traditional working-class recreation rendered leisure in the early Victorian city both restricted in scope and heavily drink-oriented, although certain forms displayed surprising vitality and potential for survival. Social and political unrest of the 1830s and 40s stimulated both sympathy for the impoverished state of working-class recreation and an awareness of its potential, in improved form, for re-binding the classes in a state of social harmony. Thus were mounted from the 1840s the great campaigns to cleanse and rehabilitate working-class leisure, in which the growth of the temperance movement was of paramount importance. The attempts, however, to reconstruct the atmosphere of the public house without its *raison d'être*, drink, were generally unsuccessful, and by the mid-century rational recreation schemes were competing with a vastly expanded field of both working-class and middle-class leisure activities.

One of the book's strengths is its perceptive analysis of developments in middle class recreation from 1850 to 1880, to-date perhaps the most neglected aspect of this field of enquiry. This material was first published in *Victorian Studies*' 1977 supplement on leisure, but it is sensibly included here to add perspective to the overall study. The improvements in communications, greater free time and increased spending power which transformed working-class leisure also opened up a panorama of activities for middle-class participation. Yet enjoyment of recreation was not unattended by problems, especially, the author suggests, the difficulty of morally legitimizing leisure in a society still heavily yoked to the Evangelical discipline. The segregation of leisure activities also reflected the need to make social distinctions clear, perhaps the best example of which was the proliferation of middle-class clubs with exacting conditions of entry.

Although fear of the blurring of such distinctions deterred wholesale middle-class involvement in the continuing rational recreation campaigns, the latter increased in number and scope in the 1850s and 60s, and were largely responsible for the greater provision of public amenities. They were also in some measure effective: elements of self-control and organization were assimilated gradually into working-class recreation, but the activities which had triumphed by the 1880s were those either anathema in content to, or which had shaken off the influence of, their middle class, rational recreation-dispensing founders.

Bailey illustrates this progression with three case studies: the workingmen's club movement, the rise of organized sport — especially football, and the growth of music-hall culture. Students of music hall will appreciate both the use of provincial material and a study of the transition from small, informal entertainment to the structured, more impersonal culture of the 90s; similarly much new material relating to cricket, football and athletics is included. But if the author demonstrates effectively that the working classes gained firm control of the direction of their leisure by the 1880s, one is left questioning the value of the triumph. Any qualitative assessment of the content of working-class recreation leaves an overwhelming impression of political and intellectual impoverishment. Although Bailey feels he has found in the assumption of control "more than simply the refusal to comply", and that "the cultural politics of the 1880s indicate a capacity for assertiveness... that goes beyond the simply conservative or defensive" (p. 180), the material presented overall reinforces Stedman Jones' picture of a culture of consolation. Certainly, for example, the workingmen's club movement was aggressively democratized, and grew dramatically when

members eschewed the patronage of the movement's founders by introducing drink and reforming the C.I.U. council, but many members also complained of decreasing intellectual content of any kind.

An assessment of the quality of leisure, however, is not the point of this book — it is concerned primarily to explore the segregation of leisure along class lines. With a welcome and stimulating reappraisal of the concept of respectability, Bailey has presented a sensitive study of many themes to be discerned in the expanding recreation of the period.

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MARTIN KITCHEN. — *The Political Economy of Germany 1815-1914*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1978. Pp. 304.

R. J. EVANS, ed. — *Society and Politics in Wilhelmine Germany*. London: Croom Helm, 1978. Pp. 305.

The interest in German history has shifted during the last decade. The nearly exclusive concern with the Third Reich, especially with its political and ideological origins, has been changed to a concern with the nature of German society. A social-historical approach is slowly emerging. Both of these studies reveal aspects of that shift as well as the degree to which political issues still infuse German social history.

Kitchen's first attempt at economics and social structures is not as successful as some of his previous studies. This book is written at a high level of generalization, lacks a comparative perspective and asserts rather than demonstrates the main arguments. It is a competent, but not engagingly written, text which can serve as a guide to a senior honours or beginning graduate student as opposed to the researcher or those whom Kitchen wanted to reach, namely those concerned "with the debate on the question of why German society evolved in its own particular and unique manner" (p. 7).

In pursuing the question why "economic modernization did not lead to social modernization" (p. 7) Kitchen reviews Germany's economic development, especially the process of industrialization. The accounts of the state of agriculture, serf reform, the guild system or transport in the early nineteenth century provide little novel information. The development of the Zollverein is traced in a familiar manner with special emphasis placed upon the railways as the "major stimulus to the Industrial Revolution" (p. 55), and economic unification. If Kitchen's major contribution might be expected in the impact of economic developments upon social relations, one looks in vain for a schematic outline or numerical delineation of the country's social structure, or for an explanation of the 1848 Revolution which encompasses, challenges or goes beyond Hamerow's brilliant essay of 1967. (It is not mentioned in the bibliography which also omits Kemp, Kollmann, Landes, Stearns, among others.) Similar criticisms could be offered for much of the book even though it does contain some striking illustrations of the extent to which economic interests underlay political decisions.

Most questionable in Kitchen's study are the general assertions. For instance, after recounting Böhme's familiar story of the "feudalization" of big business, Kitchen claims "A social order that was no longer adequate to the needs of a modern industrial society was thus not only able to survive but was supported and strengthened... by those elements