

content pertaining to the tumult in the Middle East during the Cold War, where one would expect to yield much for discussion in the context offered by this work.

As a whole, *Race, Ethnicity, and the Cold War: A Global Perspective* provides many concrete examples to advanced undergraduate students and graduate students of the value of examining international subjects through the lens of race, ethnicity, and sexuality. The endnotes alone in each of the essays provide a view to the immense and rich variety of primary and secondary sources that are available to scholars. The collection is a valuable addition to the historiography of the new international history.

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OSTERUD, Grey — *Putting the Barn before the House: Women and Family Farming in Early Twentieth-Century New York*. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2012, Pp. 277.

Building on her 1991 book *Bonds of Community: The Lives of Farm Women in Nineteenth-Century New York*, Grey Osterud returns to the Nanticoke Valley of south-central New York State, this time with a focus on the early 20th century. In *Bonds of Community* Osterud challenged the concept of “separate spheres” as a way to understand rural women of the 19th century, arguing that they did not retreat to their own sphere and create a distinct woman’s culture, rather rural women pursued “strategies of mutuality,” striving to forge common culture and co-operation between women and men. *Putting the Barn before the House*, that develops this argument further, asks and answers the question: “What was responsible for the remarkable degree of gender equality and neighborly cooperation that [Osterud] discovered alive and well in the Nanticoke Valley?” (p. 5). The answers are complex and include the structure of an economy based on dairy farming where the labour of all household members was required. Sociological factors include the networks of kin and friendship that forged connections across lines of ethnicity and religion. But most important was the “mutuality” within farm families, reinforced by cooperation, and a culture of reciprocity among neighbors. Women were constrained by male dominance and by poverty, but they were not helpless, they were “authors of their own lives and agents of change in the economy and polity” (p. 23). Personal narratives, interviews with two dozen women over many years, are at the core, and are the greatest strength, of the book.

Part I, “Gender, Power and Labor,” scrutinizes the widespread view that rural women were deprived and degraded by domineering husbands who put the needs of the farm before those of the family. Drawing on the remarkable story of one impoverished woman farmer she interviewed, Osterud challenges this stereotype, arguing that Nanticoke women “did not think of themselves as hapless victims of fate, whether it took the shape of a domineering husband or grinding poverty” (p. 46). Part I also examines how women came to live, work on and sometimes own farms. Osterud concludes that despite class and ethnic differences, and regardless of whether they inherited, married into or founded farms, women were not downtrodden and marginalized, but “respected partners in farming families” (p. 66).

The focus of Part II is how farm families coped with two interconnected socioeconomic trends: the shift toward specialized, larger-scale agriculture, and an emerging pattern of families combining farming with wage-earning. Two distinct classes of landowners

emerged: large-scale specialized farms that hired labour, and small scale diversified farms sustained by families and wage-labour off the farm. Part III analyzes the division of labour and relations of power in farm families through extended personal narratives. Family patterns varied considerably; in some men held the off-farm jobs, while women cultivated the land, and in other families these roles were reversed. Yet whether on or off the farm, women continued to participate in income-producing labour, and they exercised considerable power and influence as business managers, and in making decisions about the intergenerational transfer of the enterprise. Immigrant (Ukrainian, Czech) families purchased small scale farms, and Osterud interviewed women from these as well as “native-born” families. All found ways to create “partnerships characterized by mutuality rather than marginality” (p. 170). A commitment to the family farm counteracted the “gender divisions and hierarchies of power that seemed to prevail outside their rural culture” (p. 169).

Part IV deals with how rural men and women organized to solve the economic and social problems they faced. They rejected capitalistic solutions and business models, in favour of producers’ cooperatives, drawing on the strong tradition of the Grange, and undertaking new forms of collective action. The result was a revitalization of rural society. The influx of newcomers of varied ethnicities and religions was accommodated through new and old forms of social organization that accommodated diversity while avoiding controversy. Gender integration continued to be a characteristic of farm organizations, and the foundations of cooperative work and mutuality remained secure, as did the mutually beneficial ties between generations. All of this had changed however, by the mid twentieth century, when the mutual –aid ethos and male-female partnerships collapsed, along with the economic viability of small-scale farming.

Osterud makes a compelling case that gender flexibility and integration, reciprocity, mutual aid, social equality and collective action were the core values of the rural way of life in the Nanticoke Valley for generations. The personal narratives provide fascinating evidence of this. It would be interesting to compare this community with others in the U.S. and North America. In many respects it echoes the situation in Western Canada for example, but in other ways it seems worlds away. Farm women on the Canadian prairies made common cause with farm men on many issues, but departed from and challenged them on others. Women contributed to market-oriented production, but only men legally profited from that production. They coped with profound legal inequalities, and fought for the vote to acquire dower, married women’s property, homestead and other rights. Western Canadian activists sought legislation that would recognize farm women’s labour as central, not subsidiary. It is striking that there are few signs of such activism in the Nanticoke Valley of the early 20th century. It was a world of great harmony and accord, inclusiveness and cooperation.

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RAY, Arthur J. — *Telling it to the Judge: Taking Native History to Court*. Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2011. Pp. 260.

The pursuit of history, it seems, involves greater self-awareness now than a generation ago. Autobiography, whether in book form or in the pages of leading journals, is a recognized