

imposed on state and society alike" (13). The modern American state, agriculture, and cooperatives all grew up together and faced the vicissitudes of the industrial marketplace simultaneously. In the case of Sun-Maid, a federal antitrust suit and a disastrous bankruptcy combined to break its dominance in the raisin industry and reduce its market share from nearly 90 percent to 30 percent in the 1920s. By the 1930s, however, cooperatives had become an accepted part of the agricultural scene. They had won the right to use corporate financial and legal methods, but ended up conveying their monopoly power to the state, which intervened in the raisin industry through regulation and marketing agreements. In that way, they not only survived, but, the author argues, won a "far-reaching, if not radical, legal revolution" (235).

It is the legal issues and multitude of court cases that constitute both the core of the author's evidence and analysis and the only real drawback of the book. For legal scholars, this is probably a treasure trove of rulings. Others, however, might find the going very slow at times and the legal discourse tedious and esoteric. I also wished the author had addressed how modern coops, such as Farmland Industries and CENEX, have become much like modern giant corporations. Nonetheless, *The Farmer's Benevolent Trust* is a solid, superbly researched, important work that adds much to our understanding of the centrality of both the marketplace and liberal democracy in modern American culture.

Eating for Victory: Food Rationing and the Politics of Domesticity, by Amy Bentley. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1998. xi, 238 pp. Illustrations, notes, index. \$44.95 cloth, \$19.95 paper.

REVIEWED BY LISA L. OSSIAN, SIMPSON COLLEGE AND DES MOINES AREA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Eating for Victory examines the national policies surrounding the concept of food rationing during World War II. The voluntary programs of meatless and wheatless days during World War I were not sufficient to meet the greater needs during World War II.

Amy Bentley divides her work into six chapters. In the first she examines the concept of rationing as good democracy—a way to keep all food available to all citizens during the war. In the second chapter she examines women's role as "Wartime Homemaker." The war years actually intensified traditional homemaking roles for women (despite the alternate "Rosie the Riveter" image) as symbols of security and

nurturing in a world mad with war. In the third section Bentley notes that in both advertising and real life, homes became "islands of serenity"—characterized by ordered, abundant meals—to maintain morale during this confusing war.

Bentley—director of undergraduate food studies at New York University—used many national and presidential libraries for her primary research, which enabled her to focus on national policies debated and established by government agencies and nutritionists. Baltimore is her main example; she does not address small-town or rural women's contributions to the kitchen front. Bentley's work could have been enhanced by consulting the advice and cooking columns available in most city and small-town newspapers, but the only newspapers she does use—and then only sparingly—are Baltimore publications. She does analyze the conflict between domestic workers and middle-class women in Baltimore, but she divides the issue along purely racial lines. The "Wartime Homemaker" image was certainly a white, middle-class persona, a source of division within the federal government's home front efforts. But many working-class white women labored (and quit) as domestics across the country, and they suffered the same criticisms as African-American women.

Perhaps Bentley's best chapter is the fourth—"Meat and Sugar: Consumption, Rationing, and Wartime Food Deprivation." In that chapter she develops the familiar association of men with red meat and women with sugar and baked goods. Within this analysis, she makes an essential point: meat was viewed as absolutely necessary for winning the war, almost as necessary as bullets. The United States was determined to have the best-fed soldiers in the world, which they were, so American soldiers deserved and required large portions of meat at every meal. The home front needed to make some sacrifices by purchasing less red meat, even though wartime incomes were rising. Sugar, the first rationed item, was used sparingly on the home front to provide comfort and nurturing through home-baked cookies, cakes, and pies.

Bentley's chapter devoted to victory gardening and canning missed one important fact: the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) did not initially (in spring 1942) support increased suburban and urban victory gardens. Government officials believed that amateurs would waste valuable seeds and supplies during wartime. In addition, the USDA did not want to alarm the public about possible future shortages. But, as Bentley details, public support for gardening did expand greatly during the war. Everyone could contribute to the war effort by gardening and canning. Much of the advertising promoting gardening

was directed at men to encourage them to become the battling soldiers of the soil. Canning, which was necessary to preserve garden produce year-round, was portrayed solely as women's work.

In her last chapter Bentley examines in detail a crucial point: why did the United States so quickly dismantle its formal rationing system after World War II instead of addressing overseas famine concerns? Many American citizens supported continued rationing, but the government decided to address overseas concerns through other channels. Winning the war supposedly meant guaranteeing the American Way of Life with its characteristic abundance and security. However, this abundance came at the expense of others.

In her epilogue, Bentley claims that Americans could again rise to the occasion of rationing and other necessary war measures concerning food, just as they did during World War II, if the cause were just and the goals defined. However, she ignores her own facts: Americans are now accustomed to inexpensive, available food supplies and spend half their food dollars in restaurants. A world of 24-hour supermarkets, prepared foods, and amazing variety leads most Americans to expect to spend very little time preparing abundant food. Although official policies might again promote rationing and home production, the majority of contemporary Americans simply do not have the skills—cooking, gardening, and canning—needed to withstand a wartime rationing system based on conservation, production, and preservation.

This book should appeal to anyone interested in World War II, as wartime is not solely about bullets, bombs, and words but also about the scarcity of food.

The Rural West since World War II, edited by R. Douglas Hurt. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1998. 250 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$45.00 cloth, \$25.00 paper.

REVIEWED BY DAVID L. NASS, EMERITUS, SOUTHWEST STATE UNIVERSITY

R. Douglas Hurt has collected ten essays on the rural West, which for the purpose of this study is basically the mountain states and the West Coast. The states included are Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, New Mexico, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming. The area is marked by great diversity of terrain and agricultural products ranging from apples, oranges, and grapefruit to cattle, wheat, and cotton. Although agriculture is still a major part of the West's economy, real estate development, tourism, recreation, and retirement communities are emerging as major economic factors in the region.

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