

In the end, Leavitt downplays the charge, derived from her own thesis, that domestic mavens such as Stewart are propagating an unattainable ideal. Instead, she argues that Stewart and her predecessors are "connected with the most important cultural dialogues of their day" (205). Leavitt might have stressed even more what seems to be her most potent historical intervention. Her evidence shows that we ought not to limit our reading of domestic products and designs as reflections only of women's desires, for upon both real and imagined homes are inscribed the fantasies and anxieties of a changing American society. This argument should open the home to historical analysis of topics beyond those traditionally regarded as belonging only to women's history. Given nineteenth-century adviser Eunice Beecher's exhortation that "the household . . . is an inexhaustible theme," Iowa historians might turn with a new eye to the nineteenth-century farmhouse, the midwestern ranch home, or to domestic science programs at their own universities (7). These places might prove to be more than separate spheres or women's fantasy worlds, and be regarded instead as testing grounds for nationalist nostalgia, pop psychology theory, technological innovation . . . or even economic empires.

Un-American Womanhood: Antiradicalism, Antifeminism, and the First Red Scare, by Kim E. Nielsen. Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2001. x, 219 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, appendix, index. \$54.95 cloth, \$22.95 paper.

Reviewer Catherine McNicol Stock is professor of history at Connecticut College. She is the author of *Rural Radicals: Righteous Radicals in the American Grain* (1996) and *Main Street in Crisis: The Great Depression and the Old Middle Class on the Northern Plains* (1992).

One of the most auspicious developments in the "new political history" is the incorporation of analyses from women's and gender studies into the study of civic society. Likewise, one of the most intriguing developments in women's and gender history is the renewed interest in the public lives of women, including conservative women. Kim Nielsen's refreshingly slim yet intellectually solid volume demonstrates that these new approaches are beginning to generate excellent results.

The disappearance of women's radicalism from the American political stage just after the heady success of the suffrage movement is a historical mystery that until now has had no concrete explanation. According to Nielsen, anticommunist and antifeminist groups coalesced in the immediate postwar years to attack all manner of women's organizations, even those that did not consider themselves feminist, and

to force their leaders into exile or retreat. Ultimately, their purpose was to question the efficacy of the role of women as citizens.

Nielsen organizes her work around several potent antiradical and antifeminist campaigns launched between the end of World War I and 1925, when *Collier's* magazine published an account of the domestic lives of former activist women titled, "Rebels in Retirement." The campaigns attacked women's pacifist, internationalist, feminist, and progressive organizations, many of which supported social welfare legislation such as the Child Labor Amendment, the extension of the Sheppard-Towner Act, and the establishment of a federal Department of Education. The antiradical organizations included the Daughters of the American Revolution, the Citizen's Committee to Protect our Homes and Children, and the Women's Constitutional League of Virginia, among others. Conservative women often held leadership positions in these organizations, which, ironically, sought to decrease women's political participation. Conservative women, however, did not sense any contradiction between their political behavior and their political agenda. As Nielsen puts it, "Women, they believed, had the ironic civic duty of guarding patriarchy, and when patriarchy was threatened, women were to respond strenuously and visibly in the political sphere" (63).

Antiradical and antifeminist women shared ideological and practical concerns about their progressive sisters. First, they conflated almost all peace activism and state-building activities with Bolshevism. They believed that social welfare programs such as the Child Labor Amendment, for example, would replace the authority of the family with the authority of the centralized state. As Nielsen astutely points out, conservative women believed that Bolsheviks sought to abolish private property. They also believed that women and children were the private property of men. "The assumption that women would then become the property of the state revealed the inability of antiradicals and Red Scare antifeminists to imagine women belonging, not to men or to the state, but to themselves" (135). Conservatives also argued that women, because they were women, could not be trusted to understand the complexities of the world, and thus could be easily duped into supporting radical activities that were orchestrated from afar. Importantly, Nielsen implies that it was not the radical but the conservative women who may have been duped—by the "self-serving motives of manufacturing and military interests, who stood to lose money and influence owing to women's political effectiveness" (130). As the Special Committee on Attacks on the Women's Joint Congressional Committee reported, "As long as women's organizations con-

tented themselves with work . . . of a philanthropic sort, no criticism was encountered, but when they sought to discover the causes and remedies for poverty, sickness, unequal opportunity, and war, the opponents shouted: 'radicalism'" (130).

Nielsen's book is illuminating and instructive. She is correct to remind us that the politics of gender and family are still "at the very core of our political understandings and discussions" (139). Moreover, she shows us that just as there is no such thing as "pure politics" (politics without gender) there should be no such thing as "pure political history" (political history without gender analysis). At times Nielsen's text is weighed down by too many abbreviations for the various organizations she studies. Furthermore, her rather dismissive explanation of why conservative women took little interest in the politics of birth control raises more questions than answers. Overall, however, *Un-American Womanhood* is an excellent contribution to our understanding of American politics in the modern era.

Rumors of Indiscretion: The University of Missouri "Sex Questionnaire" Scandal in the Jazz Age, by Lawrence J. Nelson. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2003. xv, 323 pp. Illustrations, notes, index. \$39.95 cloth.

Reviewer Susan Ohmer is the William T. and Helen Kuhn Carey Assistant Professor of Modern Communication in the Department of Film, Television, and Theatre at the University of Notre Dame. She has published articles on George Gallup and the social history of survey research in *The Journal of Film and Video*, *Film History*, and *The Velvet Light Trap*.

In this fascinating study of a controversial social science project at the University of Missouri in the 1920s, Lawrence Nelson demonstrates how what began as an undergraduate paper became linked to contemporary debates about the nature of adolescence, the role of a university in students' lives, the use of survey research, and the concept of academic freedom. Nelson's delineation of the links among these topics makes the book a model for historians of the social sciences and of college life in this period.

The questionnaire that launched a national debate originated as part of a sociology class taught in spring 1929. For his senior research project, Orval Hobart Mowrer mailed surveys to 700 male and female undergraduates, asking their reactions to several hypothetical situations. Mowrer wanted to know whether women would break their engagement to a man if they learned that he had indulged in illicit sexual relations, and whether men would associate with women who accepted money in return for sexual favors. Other questions asked

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