

in its conclusion; the author falls short of his stated purpose. The typing together of Hoover's actions with his philosophy of American Individualism is unconvincing. Even in the book's final chapter entitled "Conclusion," only a paragraph is devoted to this matter, which seems strange given the title and intent of this work. Also, Best could have done a better job of proofreading; a few obvious errors in the bibliography as well as the text detract from an otherwise well-ordered book. Nevertheless, this volume is an indispensable source of information. Students of Hoover will benefit from this, the fullest picture of Hoover during this most crucial period of his political development. The real value of this volume is Best's coverage of the Hoover "boom and campaign" for the presidency. Perhaps a more appropriate title for this book would be *The Political Education of Herbert Hoover, 1918-1921*. A slim volume, the price of \$13.50 is exorbitant.

—Dennis M. Shockley
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Research in the Administration of Public Policy, edited by Frank B. Evans and Harold T. Pinkett. Washington, D.C.: Howard University Press, 1975. pp. xiv, 229. \$9.95.

In 1970 the National Archives and Records Service sponsored a Conference on Research in the Administration of Public Policy, the seventh in a series designed to increase communications between archivists and the scholarly community. The specific purpose of this conference was to stimulate interest in the study of the performance and history of federal government agencies. Five sessions were devoted to bringing together researchers concerned with the subject, to noting how archival resources had been used in the past, and to suggesting ways in which archives could be used more extensively in the future.

The first session was on "Writing the History of a Federal Agency and Its Programs." Richard Hewlett and Thomas Manning discussed their experiences in writing about the Atomic Energy Commission and the history of science agencies. Some of the problems and dangers in writing histories of federal agencies were: limited access to certain categories of records, security classifications on records, the great bulk of federal records, and the development of too great a sense of loyalty to one's agency. Harold Pinkett outlined the classes of records that archivists are attempting to retain in order to aid those historians who will study the evolving functions and activities in federal administration.

In a session on "Dilemmas in Administrative Policy," James Henry Young and James Johnson provided case studies on the attempt to regulate saccharin and the effort of the National Recovery Administration to raise bituminous coal prices. Jerome Finster provided a detailed and well organized paper on records of the Federal regulatory agencies. John Carson, at the third session, presented arguments that bureaucrats rather than politicians had the most influence in effecting public policies.

Efforts at federal administrative reforms during Roosevelt's New Deal, and reorganization from 1940 to 1970, were discussed by Richard Polenberg and Keith Henderson. A paper by R. Michael McReynolds discussed the nature of the records of the various presidential efforts to achieve reform. The conference was brought to a close with a session on new proposals for research in the administration of public policy. Louis Morton presented his proposal for a government-wide historical office; Francis Prucha discussed new approaches to the study of Indian policy; Sidney Baldwin outlined the problems and opportunities for research pertaining to poverty programs. In addition to these papers, the volume includes reports of the discussions that followed the papers and a bibliography of resources in the National Archives.

As might be expected, there is a wide variation in the quality of the papers that were presented at the conference. They

do, as a whole, present an excellent account of the types of research in administrative policy that have been done and the nature of the records that are available for such research. This volume should do much to decrease the unfamiliarity of researchers with the nature and potentialities of federal archives for research in this field. No researcher studying the federal agencies should proceed very far without first consulting this book. Although the conference was concerned only with the federal level of government, the researcher who has imagination and is interested in public policy at the state and local level should also be able to get ideas of possible types of records and problems he might find at these levels.

—Homer L. Calkin
Arlington, Virginia

The Letters of Bernard DeVoto, edited by Wallace Stegner.
Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1975.
393 pp. \$10.00.

During his lifetime Bernard DeVoto wrote twenty-four books and close to nine-hundred articles. He also wrote thousands of letters, and a precious 148 of them are included in this inviting volume edited by Wallace Stegner. Stegner, author of the highly praised biography of DeVoto, *The Uneasy Chair*, knows his man, and the selected letters richly display the public and private life of a complex literary giant, warts and all.

The letters are arranged under nine topics so that letters on the same general subject may be read together. In order the topics are: Self-Scrutiny; Education; The Mark Twain Estate and the Limits of Patience; Controversies, Squabbles, Disagreements; Certain Inalienable Rights; The Literary Life; The Writing of History; The Nature and Nurture of Fiction; and Conservation and the Public Domain. Helpful headnotes and footnotes are provided by Stegner.

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