

ies, but whether these structures functioned effectively as focal points for remembrance seems doubtful.

One might think that a commemorative gesture as poignant as the Gold Star Mother pilgrimages would have transcended politics. But as Budreau reminds us, remembrance is always political, and she drives this point home with a brilliant account of the many ways in which the pilgrimages reflected exclusions of various kinds. In terms of eligibility, for example, the federal government regarded widows (and, for that matter, fathers) as second-class mourners whose sacrifice did not equal that of mothers. The Jim Crow treatment of African American Gold Star mothers, who were segregated, was hardly the only way in which the pilgrimage program reflected narrow thinking.

Budreau's study comes at a perfect moment, as the United States prepares (one hopes) for some recognition of the 100th anniversary of America's entry into the Great War. This book shows how the politics that underlie any commemorative effort can, unless we are careful, produce forms of remembrance that quickly become silent, irrelevant piles of stone.

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ALEXANDRA M. LORD. *Condom Nation: The U.S. Government's Sex Education Campaign from World War I to the Internet*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press. 2010. Pp. xi, 224. \$40.00.

Alexandra M. Lord examines the role of the federal government in providing and advocating for sex education from World War I through the present. This is in many ways a complex story, but a theme runs through it: the Public Health Service (PHS) has continually struggled to give Americans sex education that addresses their actual sexual behavior (often non-monogamous and outside of marriage) and prevents sexually transmitted diseases (STDs). Many Americans have remained anxious that sex education will promote non-desirable sexual behavior that is causing the disease transmission, and so the PHS has only partially been able to get its message out.

As Lord describes, in its early years, the PHS primarily partnered with local governments and private organizations, producing sex education materials that local groups modified and published under their own names. This approach, which continued for many decades, had the advantage of adaptability to a diverse citizenry, but the disadvantages of minimal central control and no way to measure effectiveness. In the 1920s, Surgeon General Thomas Parran prepared the ground for a more explicit and informative sex education campaign, and in the 1930s, published pamphlets about syphilis and gonorrhea that explained that condoms could prevent their transmission. This was groundbreaking: it was the first sex education from the federal government that acknowledged a way to prevent STDs aside from marital monogamy. World War II gave the PHS more authority and the opportunity to provide

uniform sex education to all armed services recruits. After the war, complacency and public refusal to acknowledge growing rates of STDs and teenage pregnancy meant that PHS sex education was once more underfunded. In the 1960s and 1970s, growing public openness about sex, and growing concern about overpopulation, allowed the PHS to develop somewhat franker materials, and to focus more on teenage pregnancy. The 1980s witnessed the rise of the Christian Right and increasing conservatism in sex education, but in the face of the AIDS crisis, Christian evangelical Surgeon General C. Everett Koop distributed to all Americans the frankest sex education pamphlets yet. Despite the continued urgency of preventing AIDS transmission and growing rates of teen pregnancy, the conservative administrations of the 1980s and 1990s found ways to fund and promote abstinence-only sex education rather than the comprehensive program favored by the PHS. The PHS's struggle to provide comprehensive and frank sex education, addressing Americans' actual behavior, continues.

In Lord's narrative, the PHS are the "good guys." She is careful to qualify her enthusiasm by pointing out that the PHS was conducting the Tuskegee Study at the same time that it was working to distribute sex education across race and class lines; public health work was by no means inevitably progressive. But she implicitly shares a vision of the purpose of sex education as the promotion of health and believes that this can be separated from moral, religious, and social messages about sex. Lord formerly served as the official historian of the PHS, and her book is generally written from inside that perspective. She notes that public health advocates of comprehensive sex education and conservative religious advocates of abstinence-only sex education spend a lot of energy talking past each other, but it is not clear that her approach remedies this problem.

Lord's implicit stance on one side of a heated battle means that her depictions of the opponents of comprehensive sex education are not as informative as they could be. After a nuanced and evocative portrayal of Surgeon General Koop, Lord appears surprised, even skeptical, that when his former conservative evangelical supporters repudiated him, he found more solace in his religious belief than in his new friends on the Left. This would be no surprise to a fellow evangelical, or indeed to many people of faith in the United States, and might have explained how and why Koop successfully held together diverse constituencies for a surprisingly long time. Borrowing from Kristin Luker's evenhanded approach in *When Sex Goes to School: Warring Views on Sex—and Sex Education—since the Sixties* (2006) would have helped (and indeed, Lord's and Luker's books complement each other). It is also possible that a more nuanced perspective might explain why the majority of Americans, when polled, support comprehensive sex education but rarely rally behind it politically. Perhaps many Americans are personally torn, their concern for their children's health vying with their desire to pro-

mote a conservative vision of the role of sex in their children's lives.

This study will be of particular interest to historians of sexuality, public health, public policy, and education, as well as public health professionals and advocates of comprehensive sex education.

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JENNIFER BURNS. *Goddess of the Market: Ayn Rand and the American Right*. New York: Oxford University Press. 2009. Pp. 369. \$27.95.

The life of the objectivist philosopher and novelist Ayn Rand (1905–1982) has cried out for a scholarly biography. This impressive work by Jennifer Burns fills that gap well and will be useful for scholars of the libertarian Right, graduate students, and upper-level undergraduates.

Over the years, many have perceived Rand as an extremist crank. But she was an important figure. Burns comes to several conclusions about Rand and her significance. First, Rand's importance lies in her philosophical defense of unfettered capitalism. Rand's devotion to the free market, Burns contends, arose from her early years in Russia during the Bolshevik Revolution, when Red Guards took possession of her father's shop in 1918. Her father had worked hard to establish it, and Rand never forgot the loss. The incident convinced her of the destructiveness of government action in the name of good intentions, making her certain that destructiveness was fundamental to communism and to most government programs.

Second, as Rand blossomed into a writer, her early novels (such as *We the Living* [1936]) emphasized the themes of capitalism as a creative force and the state as a destroyer. This led Rand to begin to develop her objectivist philosophy, which stressed the primacy of reason along with her view of selfishness as an ethical virtue. Rand's pathbreaking novel *Atlas Shrugged* was published in 1957. Even today, it sells hundreds of thousands of copies per year and represents the capstone of Rand's philosophy. *Atlas Shrugged* was her ultimate attack upon the state, damning government as a ball and chain shackling the ankles of human independence and prosperity. Rand influenced millions, many of whom later traced their move to libertarianism to the time when they first read her works. As Burns puts it, for over fifty years "Rand has been the ultimate gateway drug to life on the Right" (p. 4).

Burns also addresses why Rand failed to gain more influence. Rand was human, not a purely rational being. She was subject to powerful emotions. Rand's extramarital affair with her close objectivist associate Nathaniel Branden proved divisive for the movement. Rand's atheism also meant that there would always be a huge gulf between objectivists and the conservative constituency of William F. Buckley, Jr.'s *National Review*. Whittaker Chambers wrote a scathing review of *Atlas Shrugged* for the *National Review*, denouncing the

book as irreligious and fascistic. The breach between Randians and Buckleyites could not be mended.

There were few individuals with whom Rand could work for long. Time after time, she broke relations with allies if they disagreed with or displeased her. Indeed, one of her last public statements was to urge her followers not to support Ronald Reagan for president in 1976; he was, she claimed, insufficiently principled. Rand's death in 1982 found her largely isolated. But, as Burns argues, this does not diminish Rand's importance. Her writings continue to be read and discussed and have influenced such important conservative/libertarian figures as Alan Greenspan and George Gilder. Burns's excellent book helps us to discover the real Ayn Rand.

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STEPHEN R. ORTIZ. *Beyond the Bonus March and GI Bill: How Veteran Politics Shaped the New Deal Era*. New York: New York University Press. 2010. Pp. xii, 249. \$47.00.

"Veteran politics," Stephen R. Ortiz writes in his new book, "produced the original 'voices of protest'" (p. 98). In this provocative and well-argued work, Ortiz follows the contests over veterans' policy during the 1930s through the awkward leap, too often rendered as seamless or unproblematic, from the Bonus March of 1932 to the GI Bill of 1944; even more significantly, he restores veterans to their place as a key component of New Deal politics. The author's straightforward account is richest in narrative detail in its treatment of the campaign for a veterans' bonus during Franklin D. Roosevelt's first term, waged most vocally by Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) leader James Van Zandt. This popular and populist movement presaged other attacks on the New Deal for not being generous enough, and it was used by some prominent critics, notably Huey Long and Father Charles Coughlin, to bolster their ranks and their legitimacy. The success of Van Zandt's vision and political maneuvering positioned veterans as the "glue," Ortiz argues, or the "common rallying cry" that held the coalition of New Deal dissidents together. Consequently, when bonus legislation passed the Congress in 1936, the common bond among Roosevelt's populist critics dissolved, and the president marched on to re-election in November.

Ortiz's close retelling favors electoral politics, and the author is at his most sagacious and subtle when aligning the Bonus March story (and accounts of other veterans' benefits legislation, including the GI Bill) with presidential elections and grand party strategy. His contribution to the literature devoted to veterans policy is obvious but incomplete. While the author makes a valid argument that the competition between the VFW and the American Legion in the 1930s resulted in a more ambitious veterans' political agenda, he does not address the development and strength of the Veterans

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