

in mourning. Her research plan is extremely imaginative. She supplements the hundreds of autobiographies and oral histories she has read so thoughtfully with many other sources. Cemetery and vestry records of all kinds are mined on burials and families' desperate efforts to procure private burial plots and to finance commercial funerals; Poor Law records on pauper burials; Medical Officers of Health notes on sickness and deaths.

For her fine-grained reading of the gradations between working-class stoicism and emotional display, Strange is actually indebted to her *bête noire*, David Vincent, who in 1980 wrote an essay titled "Love and Death and the Nineteenth-Century Working Class." Vincent's study is simplistic in comparison with Strange's book, but his bold claims have helped Strange to formulate her own far more nuanced ideas. Throughout her book she is at pains to refute Vincent's position that, because of their material conditions, working-class people, unlike the middle classes, could not indulge in demonstrative forms of mourning; grief was, to them, a "luxury" (p. 12). In Strange's view, tireless care of the deceased when ill and concern with the management of the body were full demonstrations of love and grief, even if the bereaved seemed to say little about their loss. Nor were familiarity with death, pragmatism, and fatalism tantamount to indifference or lack of feeling. Historical actors' grief cannot be disentangled from their practical concerns with burial costs or lost wages. Among the poor, a death could indeed very likely unleash a chain of misfortunes involving more illnesses, or the loss of a breadwinner or family earner—from which it is impossible to isolate "pure" grief.

A book claiming to describe death, grief, and poverty in Britain as a whole over two generations might well be greeted with skepticism. While Strange's study is very gender-conscious, it is not specifically concerned with regional variations, nor is does it explore the epistemological difficulties of describing the emotional lives of a whole population. These weaknesses are very much minimized, however, by the author's geographically and sociologically wide-ranging and thoughtfully chosen sources. She has raided record offices in Bolton, Liverpool, and Wigan as well as two county record offices—Gloucester and Lancashire—to learn about practices in smaller towns. Moreover, she has found interesting and oblique ways of attacking her subject, most intriguingly by scrutinizing burial board and cemetery administrative records along with the case records of two mental hospitals in Lancashire—through which it becomes clear that the loss of a close relative of any kind was the event that often precipitated the acute mental illness of single women in particular).

The author's eye for vivid detail, huge repertoire of examples, and generous understanding of working-class culture lead to many fresh insights. To take just one, Strange demonstrates the cultural emphasis on physical contact with the dead. Laying out the corpse at home, a nearly universal practice, was a valued aspect of this stage of bereavement, and the local women who

specialized in preparing cadavers were often skilled at managing the emotions of loss at this early stage. Knowing exactly where their dead were buried—marked by a headstone—was another form of physical contact with the dead and a passionately desired element of mourning. Thus a burial from the workhouse was abhorred not just as a matter of lost status but also because it meant that the corpse could not be kept in the home, and the grave could not be visited.

ELLEN ROSS
Ramapo College

ANNE CLENDINNING, *Demons of Domesticity: Women and the English Gas Industry, 1889–1939*. (Modern Economic and Social History Series.) Burlington, Vt.: Ashgate Publishing Company. 2004. Pp. xvii, 352. \$109.95.

This book is not about evil household spirits. In Britain between 1889 and 1939, demon was shorthand for demonstrator: an educated, middle-class, middle-aged woman paid to teach other women how to cook with gas. Anne Clendinning's book explores the important roles of these demons, as well as the general roles of women in the growth of the gas industry. While chapters one through three chart the rise of the lady demons, the three final chapters explore post-demon, female replacement workers during World War I and the grand promotional schemes of the interwar period. It is a fascinating, hitherto untold story that touches on a broad range of themes that overlapped in the half century under study: domestic science, professionalization, progressive technologies, consumption, separate spheres, household labor, industrialization, and women's rights.

Clendinning's approach, with a special focus on gender, is original and convincing. Refuting the notion that the gas industry was solely motivated by the apparent popularity of electricity in the 1880s, she argues that the lady demons occupied a liminal realm between the producers and consumers of domestic technology. "The use of women experts to mediate between male producers and female consumers helped to domesticate, perhaps even feminise, gas technology, engendering sales and challenging gendered assumptions about the corporate sphere," Clendinning explains (p. 3).

The book's concentration on a single industry, gas, is both its strength and its weakness. The author's careful scrutiny of everyday sources such as the *Journal of Gas Lighting* and a 1911 poem by a demon gives readers a sharp sense of the characters who made British gas a modern industry and the unusual positions they occupied between the home and the corporation. The book opens, for example, with the lovely tale of lady demon Ethel Margaret Lovell-Wright taking top honors at the International Gas Exhibition in London in 1904. Her prize was a gold watch, traditionally the symbol of corporate masculine respectability. At the same time, readers are left wondering about other professional women whose paid work took place in the homes of others. Lady decorators, realtors, health inspectors, music teachers, even lady doctors walked the same fine

line between feminine respectability and manly enterprise.

Especially compelling is Clendinning's interest in trade exhibitions, and the conception of both selling and cooking as spectacles. Chapter two, "Exhibitions and the Spectacle of Selling," examines trade shows as sites of entertainment, education, leisure, and commerce. Inspired by the success of the Great Exhibition of 1851 and worried by the success of the Electrical Exhibition of 1882, the gas industry held an exhibition in 1882–1883 that revolutionized its commercial practices. In order to counter public opinion of coal gas as an outdated fuel, the industry linked gas lighting and cooking with public health and housing reform. Lady demons were essential to this transformation of public opinion. Beginning in mid-1888, sales of gas stoves escalated due to the great success of traveling cooking demonstrations staged by lady demons. Blank forms to rent stoves were distributed to audience members during the popular shows, which were often held in town halls. "It was part of the process of feminising the gas cooker by shifting its association away from the public institution of the restaurant or the hospital, and into the private scullery of the middle-class home," says Clendinning (p. 67).

This work, although a business history of selling gas, is not a book that explains how gas appliances and fittings worked or who designed them; how gas technology changed British kitchen plans or eating habits; or how women's highly visible role in gas companies affected utilities pricing. Clendinning's study belongs, instead, with fine social and cultural histories like Angel Kwolek-Folland's *Engendering Business: Men and Women in the Corporate Office 1870–1930* (1994) and single-occupation books like Susan Porter Benson's *Counter Cultures: Saleswomen, Managers, and Customers in American Department Stores, 1890–1940* (1986), feminist works that challenged and complicated Alfred Chandler's explanation of the rise of managerial capitalism. Clendinning's questions extend beyond the corporation itself to scrutinize the cultural context of particular decisions, such as the invention of the penny-in-the-slot prepayment meter of the 1890s and the promotion of stoves through rental/credit schemes. How did such practices impact women consumers, she asks. What does the lowly gas stove tell us about imperialism?

The book's twenty-four illustrations are unfortunately reproduced very poorly, which may mean scholars of material culture and architecture will find it disappointing. For researchers in social, cultural, and business history, however, the lady demons are still a spectacle.

ANNMARIE ADAMS
McGill University

LOWELL J. SATRE. *Chocolate on Trial: Slavery, Politics, and the Ethics of Business*. Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press. 2005. Pp. xi, 308. Cloth \$55.00, paper \$24.95.

Cadbury has long been associated in Britain with ethics and progressive social policy, both because of the antislavery position associated with its Quaker founders and because of its model village of Bournville, which housed some company workers at the end of the nineteenth century in exemplary conditions. Lowell J. Satre challenges this image through a detailed examination of Cadbury's use of cocoa beans farmed by slaves in the Portuguese island colonies of São Tomé and Príncipe off the coast of Angola between the years 1901 and 1909.

Although Portugal had abolished slavery in all of its colonies by 1870, it allowed contract labor. Natives could sign agreements of their own free will by which they committed themselves to five years' labor at a set wage. Under this system by 1900 Angola shipped about 4,000 *serviçais* a year to São Tomé and Príncipe to work on cocoa plantations. In reality, the workers were coerced, repatriation was all but impossible, and the death rate was as high as twelve percent. Cadbury, Satre shows, was one of the main customers for the crop farmed by this de facto slave labor. By 1900 Cadbury purchased forty-five percent of its cocoa beans from São Tomé. By 1907, long after the labor practices in the Portuguese colonies had come to light, Cadbury still imported 7.4 million pounds of cocoa beans from São Tomé, about thirteen percent of the island's total exports (p. 80).

There is considerable evidence, presented in detail by Satre, that George Cadbury was well-informed that slave labor was producing the beans that made his chocolate. As early as 1901, Cadbury had heard reports of slave labor. In 1905, Cadbury finally sent an agent, Joseph Burt, to investigate. Journalists were well ahead of him. In 1905, Henry Woodd Nevins wrote an investigative article for *Harper's Monthly Magazine* entitled "The New Slave Trade," an expanded version of which appeared as a book, *A Modern Slavery*, the following year. The *Daily Mail* reviewed the book and criticized "Quaker houses who largely advertise their preparations of cocoa but singularly enough never mention that the main ingredient is slave labour" (p. 54). In 1907, press coverage escalated when, in a high-profile article in the *Fortnightly Review*, Nevins alleged that "One-fifth of all the chocolate eaten and cocoa drunk in the world is the produce of slave labour and the cocoa and chocolate makers of Great Britain have been indirectly employing one-third of the slaves on the islands" (p. 82). The Cadbury agent's report was released to the public in 1908. The Burt Report concluded that thousands of black men and women were being transported against their will to work in unhealthy conditions from which they would never return; "if this is not slavery, I know of no word in the English language which correctly characterizes it" (p. 93). The whole controversy came to a head when a newspaper editorial appeared in September 26, 1908, in the *Standard*, overtly contrasting Cadbury's reputation as a "philanthropist and friend of humanity" with the conditions of the slaves in São Tomé. Cadbury, who felt he had been pub-

Copyright of American Historical Review is the property of University of Chicago Press and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.