days of Jefferson Davis' Confederacy, suggesting how the reality and mythology of defeat were bridged.

Papers of Andrew Johnson
University of Tennessee-Knoxville
Brooks D. Simpson


The Reconstruction period in American history evokes strong emotions among historians and scholars—from apologists to revisionists. One cannot characterize much of the literature as balanced. Into this labyrinth of controversy walks Joe M. Richardson, calmly, measuredly, to chronicle the history of the American Missionary Association in its quest to liberate Southern blacks from ignorance and sin.

This is the first monograph on the AMA since an Emory University dissertation appeared in 1957. Richardson consulted the AMA Archives at the Amistad Research Center, New Orleans, as well as numerous other manuscript collections and printed sources. Using teachers' and missionaries' letters and reports, he humanizes their experiences and lets them tell us their frustrations, joys, and fears. Not only did these Northern emissaries face violence and hostility from whites, they often did not understand or appreciate black culture and religion and thereby alienated some blacks.

Richardson analyzes the role the AMA played in Southern education. While stressing its achievements in public education and especially in establishing black colleges, he acknowledges the AMA's failure and weaknesses in leadership, finances, overexpansion of schools, and the push for Congregationalism. This is a fair and critical assessment of the contributions of the AMA. Christian Reconstruction is a rare treatise on this time period—a balanced account of "the most significant of the many benevolent societies assisting blacks during the Civil War and Reconstruction" (ix).

Florida State University
Susan Hamburger


In the late nineteenth century, Durham, North Carolina, developed into a "New South" community. The rise of cigarette and textile manufacturing wrought extensive changes in the economic and social landscapes and brought hundreds of women into the paid workforce. Dolores Janiewski, in Sisterhood Denied, attempts to tell the story of the New South "through the experiences of the women who contributed to the region's wealth while remaining poor themselves" (4).

Using census data and oral histories, Janiewski seeks to identify the factors that shaped women's experiences at home and at work. She also strives to explain why women facing similar conditions and discrimination in industrial situations failed to realize the implications of their kinship (4) and were even less receptive to unionization than men. What she discovers should come as no surprise to historians familiar with the effects of racial or sexual bias in the workplace or society. In Durham, a rigid hierarchy, shaped by class, white supremacy, and male dominance, pervaded urban life and was reinforced by religion, family indoctrination, and perceived futility.