

Deborah Gorham and Florence Kellner Andrews in a fascinating article analyze La Leche League. The diversity of influences on women is daunting.

The last article in the book is the most timely, for Rona Achilles examines the new reproductive technologies. In her essay several of the themes of the book come together. First, in trying to assist infertile women to bear children, the medical profession has reached a new height of intervention. Second, these women have the pain of their inability to bear children intensified by the prescriptive literature which still permeates so much of the popular and professional literature. And third, the cost of the technology raises the important question of who pays for motherhood—the individual and/or the state. The Achilles article is a fitting conclusion for an excellent reader on motherhood.

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Mark Motley. *Becoming a French Aristocrat: The Education of the Court Nobility, 1580-1715.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990. Pp. 241. \$39.50 U.S.

The author of *Becoming a French Aristocrat* states his purpose very clearly—to provide a detailed examination of the educational practices of the court nobility of early modern France. The thesis underlying the ex-

amination is that while the education given the elite of the nobility was meant to provide preparation for certain professional roles, it also provided the means to develop the cultural resources needed to live successfully in the royal court. This education evolved over time and was based on the belief that the nobility was formed by a special hereditary quality. This *qualité* had to be encouraged in males through both “civilizing” the young to prepare them for court and allowing them festive licence and disorderly behaviour that provided bonding necessary for co-operation on the battlefield and prevented too much hostility in the struggle for position in society.

Motley argues that the large noble households were not simply strongholds of traditionalism in the process of being replaced by the nuclear family. Rather, he states, the households of the court nobility adapted to changes in society and provided a “modern” education to its young male and female members. This education provided information and attitudes that would provide for physical and mental health, moral and religious education, and social development. The latter included manners suitable both for court and polite society in general, as well as initiation into the network of patronage.

Beyond the household were secondary schools and noble academies. The former often provided a modified education for the sons of great nobles, allowing, for example, the residence of a personal tutor to instruct and supervise the young noble when he was not in classes. The academies provided training for young

male nobles in the skills they would need such as accomplished horseback riding.

When discussing secondary education the author relies heavily, as he admits, on the work of others. His discussion of the household is based on a mixture of his own work and that of others. The material on the academies is based almost wholly on his own archival research.

The author dares to question Michel Foucault's interpretation of the role of schools in the life of the nobility. His work is in the tradition of presenting nobles as adapters to changing society. It brings Jonathan Dewald's *Pont St. Pierre* to mind, even though that recent book is not cited in the bibliography. Motley also leaves the reader with a question—to what extent were the provincial and robe nobility able to emulate the educational strategy of the court nobility (or did they even wish to do this)?

The book is well organized and presents the author's arguments effectively. At the same time this is a book for those who like footnotes crammed with miscellaneous and sometimes extraneous information. This is a book that should be read by anyone interested in either education or the nobility in early modern Europe.

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Douglas Cole and Ira Chaikin. *An Iron Hand upon the People: The Law Against the Potlatch on the Northwest Coast.* Vancouver:

Douglas & McIntyre, 1990. Pp. 230, illus., index. \$29.95.

In 1885 the Canadian government made it illegal for the Indians of British Columbia to practise their ritual feasts known as the potlatch in which the accumulated wealth of the host was distributed to his many invited guests. Douglas Cole and Ira Chaikin's new book, *An Iron Hand Upon the People: The Law Against the Potlatch on the Northwest Coast*, traces the history of this law from its origin in 1885 until its repeal in 1951. This work will hold special interest for readers of this journal because the law against the potlatch was part of a federal programme to assimilate the Indians which included the creation of Indian residential and industrial schools in the 1880s. Indeed, one of the indictments of the potlatch was that "schools did not flourish where the potlatch held sway" (p. 20). The missionaries taught Christianity, the schools taught the habits of mind for work, and the government suppressed the more heathen practices. This alliance of church, state, and school robbed adults of their culture, history, and art, and children of their language and parents.

Or did it? The purpose of this book is to assess the argument that this law played a crucial role in oppressing native people and robbing them of their culture and identity. Its aim is to measure the historical impact of the law by documenting the actual numbers of Indians who were arrested and imprisoned for violating the law and critically evaluating the evidence of native compliance with the statute.