

Rashid, the modern Saudi state was born. Thereafter, the desert kingdom became a matter of steadily growing interest to British strategists. In this informative (but, considering its emphasis, mistitled) book, Troeller makes extensive use of unpublished British documents to examine the period from 1910, when King Ibn Sa'ud first met with a British agent, through World War I, when he aligned himself with Britain, to 1926, when his conquest of the Hedjaz (including Mecca) unified the peninsula. All this was pre-petroleum. A "Postscript" takes the story to the Anglo-American discovery of large quantities of oil in Bahrain (1932) and the granting of the first concession to the California Arabian Standard Oil Company (1933).

Contemporary Affairs

**OLD PEOPLE,
NEW LIVES:
Community Creation in a
Retirement Residence**
by Jennie-Keith Ross
Univ. of Chicago, 1977
227 pp. \$13.50
L of C 76-8103
ISBN 0-226-72825-0

Les Floralties, a retirement residence for 150 men and women connected with the construction trades, is a 14-story glass and concrete residence in an old suburb of Paris. The neighborhood embraces low-rent apartments, a modern shopping center, industrial and commercial buildings. "The change of scene for new arrivals," writes Swarthmore anthropologist Jennie-Keith Ross, "is both social and physical, total and abrupt." She knows, having lived there herself for a year to observe how the aging create and maintain a "context for community." The young American's jargon-free report is a heartening contribution to the (frequently depressing) literature on the subject. She describes health and personality problems, daily routines, parties, the significance of seating arrangements in the dining room, political rivalries, and love affairs at Les Floralties. (Six couples met in the residence and are recognized as couples "only in the eyes of other residents." A legal marriage is seen as undesirable—"What would the children think?") Les Floralties *works*. But, says Ross, "So what?" should be the most frequently asked question in social science." Her case study, she concludes, has two messages:

"In such a residence, social interaction is greater [than in isolated private quarters] because of increased contact with age-mates, and morale is higher."

Arts & Letters

ROBERT RAUSCHENBERG

edited by Carroll S. Clark
and Kathleen A. Preciado
National Collection of
Fine Arts & Smithsonian
1977, 216 pp.

\$25 cloth, \$15.50 paper

L of C 76-58522

ISBN 0-87474-170-X

ISBN 0-87474-171-8 pbk

Avant-garde artist Robert Rauschenberg's new book *can* be judged by its cover. He designed it. The appealing "construction/painting/collage" reproduced on the dust jacket of the cloth edition is also used as the cover of the paperbound. It caricatures Rauschenberg's approach to the materials of his art (here, torn scraps of fabric, tape, and book-mailing wrappers superimposed on a summer sky). An annotated catalog of the 1976 retrospective organized by the National Collection of Fine Arts, this handsome book also contains a lively evaluation of Rauschenberg's development by British critic Lawrence Alloway, a detailed chronology with personal comments by the artist himself, photographs of him at work, and a complete bibliography. The 19 color reproductions are too few in number (black-and-white occasionally distorts his imagery); they include *Canyon* (1959), with its stuffed eagle protruding from the canvas, below which a small pillow dangles on a cord, and *Bed* (1955), a real quilt smeared with paint.

BOTTICELLI

by L. D. and Helen
S. Ettlenger

Oxford, 1977, 216 pp.

\$10.95 cloth, \$6.50 paper

L of C 76-26747

ISBN 0-19-519900-6

ISBN 0-19-519907-3 pbk

"Il Botticello" (the Little Barrel) was the nickname given to Sandro Filipepi when he was born in Florence about 1444. He was buried on May 17, 1510, in the Ognissanti Churchyard. Of the intervening years, too little is known. His grave has disappeared, but his powerful *St. Augustine* still hangs in the church. Twentieth-century admiration for the great Renaissance artist follows a long period of oblivion and, far worse, destruction of many of his works and of evidence of his life. Scholarly curiosity has led to much unwarranted interpretation. The Ettlengers take us back to what really survives in the evidence,