
NEW TITLES

History

THE ANATOMY OF HISTORICAL KNOWLEDGE

by Maurice Mandelbaum
Johns Hopkins, 1977
232 pp. \$12.95
L of C 76-46945
ISBN 0-8018-1929-6

Johns Hopkins philosopher Maurice Mandelbaum once characterized himself in a seminar as one of only two "real gestalt psychologists" still around. This lucid book supports that contention. Must reading for anyone interested in the analytical philosophy of history, it begins with the author showing the unity of historical inquiry while simultaneously suggesting valuable distinctions among various modes of historiography. Mandelbaum next analyzes the concept of causality, arguing that "the more evidence a historian possesses concerning what occurred in a society at a particular time, the less arbitrary and perfunctory his assertion of causal connections can be." Finally, he offers a penetrating discussion of objectivity and of the extent to which different forms of history can be objective. Throughout, he conveys his own profound reflections and an exhaustive knowledge of earlier inquiries.

LIFE IN CUSTER'S CAVALRY: Diaries and Letters of Albert and Jennie Barnitz, 1867-1868

edited by Robert M. Utley
Yale, 1977, 302 pp. \$15
L of C 76-52425
ISBN 0-300-02094-5

U.S. Cavalry officer Albert Barnitz and his bride Jennie spent most of their first two years of marriage apart. He participated in the Army's campaign against the Plains Indians, and she waited in Cleveland until he came home after being wounded in 1868 at the Battle of the Washita. This collection of the couple's letters and entries from both their journals is remarkable for its coherent picture of 19th-century frontier army life, complete with notes on "roast hind quarter of a nice fat buffalo calf" and "chasing Antelope with Genl. Custer's Greyhounds." Albert was plagued by floods, locusts, deserting and drunken soldiers, and by Custer, whom he calls "the most complete example of a petty tyrant that I have ever seen." ("Mrs. Custer did not leave the house as clean as she

might," Jennie sniffed.) Albert questioned his government's schizophrenic treatment of the Indians. He found it "very foolish to fight [them] with one hand, and to make presents, and give them arms with the other."

**LYING-IN: A History of
Childbirth in America**
by Richard W. Wertz and
Dorothy C. Wertz
Free Press, 1977
260 pp. \$10
L of C 77-72040
ISBN 0-02-934510-3

Two social historians take a look at the changing ways of childbirth in America since Colonial times. Much material is drawn from human documents—midwives' reports, diaries, letters. They make for lively reading on the decline of midwifery; the growing notion of pregnancy as illness; surgical intervention in delivery; and painkilling, including the use of amnesiac drugs in "twilight sleep." Illustrations range from a 16th-century woodcut of a fetus to photographs of an elegant Roosevelt Hospital room, complete with Oriental rug (1896), and husbands' candid camera shots of their wives giving birth by the "natural" Lamaze method. The authors hail the return of interest in childbirth at home.

A FINE OLD CONFLICT
by Jessica Mitford
Knopf, 1977
333 pp. \$10
L of C 77-2324
ISBN 0-394-49995-6

Like Lillian Hellman in her memoir *Scoundrel Time*, English satirist Jessica Mitford (best known for *The American Way of Death*, 1963) adds little to our knowledge of American communism in the 1940s and '50s. But like Hellman, she brings to life an odd minichapter in Anglo-American history, taking up her family's achievements and misadventures where *Daughters and Rebels* (1960) left off. Here are "Farve" (her eccentric paternal parent, Lord Redesdale), unflappable "Muv," and sisters Nancy, the wry novelist who ridiculed middle-class pretentiousness in her essay on U (upper-class) and non-U English usage; Diana, the outspoken British fascist, imprisoned in the 1930s for her political activities; and Unity, a member of Hitler's entourage, who committed suicide the day World War II broke out. A self-styled "Red Menace," Jessica Mitford married an American and became a member of the Communist Party in California. She quit the Party in 1958, finding it by then "an embattled . . . occasionally comical organization."