

publication. It explores the development of frames, from early decorative border designs on tomb paintings dating to 2000 B.C., to contemporary frame design. It examines and illustrates the most modest designs, such as the early Italian Cassetta frame, to the highly ornate and flamboyant Baroque and Rococo designs, and links the relationship between picture and frame. This book gives the reader a fascinating insight into the history, design and construction of European picture frames.

The book is divided into eight chapters: Introduction, Frames in Italy, France, Britain, The Netherlands and Belgium, Germany and central Europe, Scandinavia, and Spain. These chapters are again divided into subsections that break information into comprehensible and digestible sections. For example, the chapter on the frame in Britain is further divided into Medieval, Tudor and early Stuart, Early Baroque, Auricular, Late Baroque, Palladian, Rococo, Neo-classical, Regency and early Victorian, Pre-Raphaelite and Aesthetic Movement, and late nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

What makes this book so useful is that it is written in a reference style and is thus divided into the concise, aforementioned chapters and then sections. Each chapter is illustrated with remarkable and delightful drawings of frames and frame profiles and is sometimes augmented by black-and-white photographs. It is a shame that the photographs are so small (as is the text) and that the photographs are not always well produced. Each chapter is followed by a short bibliography, rather than compiling it at the end of the book, and I believe, considering the vast amount of information presented in the text, that this was a very useful approach.

The reader of this book will have historical, technical and stylistic information available to them that could influence the study,

interpretation and conservation of picture frames. For example, the Introduction broadly defines the types of frames as Ecclesiastical frames, Court frames and Secular frames, and the reader can then proceed within the text in the Introduction to review the sections on the Form and Function of frames, Stylistic Overview, Purpose, Framemakers and Reframing, and finally Historiography. Once through this Introduction, the book can be used as a reference text whereby certain regions or countries can be selected from the contents page and consulted.

Within the chapters of this book the reader has access to copious amounts of information on the history and development of frames, techniques and examples of frames from each period. With this information at hand, readers can make informed decisions regarding the history and construction of a particular picture frame, identify frame components, using standard terminology found in the text, interpret the originality of a frame to a work of art, using historical and stylistic information from the text, determine appropriate conservation treatments, and design and reconstruct new period frames, using the detailed drawings in the text. There are not many books available on frames that offer so much to the reader.

Another important function of this book is that it draws attention to aspects of picture frames in a format that was not previously undertaken. The comprehensive and well-edited nature of this book and its availability make it an invaluable tool to professionals working with picture frames of all types, and it encourages a new perspective on the preservation of frames as important decorative objects. I would highly recommend this book as a primary text for anyone interested in the history of European picture frames.

Katherine Jellison, *Entitled to Power: Farm Women and Technology, 1913–1963*

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Jellison, Katherine. *Entitled to Power: Farm Women and Technology, 1913–1963*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1993. 217 pp., 26 illus., cloth, US\$45, ISBN 0-8078-2088-1; paper, US\$15.95, ISBN 0-8078-4415-2.

There has been much written and a number of exhibits mounted dealing with the interaction between urban women and the newly available tools of domestic technology, and the outcomes of that relationship in the period after 1900. One of the major themes to emerge focusses on

how these tools were promoted. The acquisition of electric washing machines, for example, offered freedom from the drudgery of manual laundry, more free time and the possibility of being more alluring to their spouses. Although there continues to be much discussion in academic circles regarding the outcome of the adoption of technology by urban women, there is agreement that in its adoption they did not mirror the images proffered by advertisers and boosters of increased technology such as utility companies.

This may be attributed to the fact that the workplaces of urban males and females of the early twentieth century were usually separate. Males left the home to "go to work to earn money" at a job that was often at a remote location. The wives of these men had little connection with that job or with how technology was changing the means of production in their husbands' workplaces. It may be said that this lack of understanding had an effect on the extent to which they embraced domestic technology. Moreover, with the exception of those women who took in laundry, society rarely viewed home-based labour as being productive because it did not contribute cash to the family economy, and consequently did not see the need to improve productivity by investing in domestic technology.

The circumstances for rural women were quite different from those of their town-dwelling sisters. Rural women had a long tradition of productive labour in the marketing of butter and eggs off the farm property. They also found themselves working alongside their partners in the farmyard or field. Even if that involvement extended only to going to town to get parts, they were more closely connected to the productive activities of the farm. Indeed, as Katherine Jellison points out in *Entitled to Power: Farm Women and Technology, 1913-1963*, a farm woman had only to look out the window or over a fence to see how technology was changing the way in which her partner went about his productive labour.

How, therefore, did the editors of farm publications and those agencies involved in the introduction of technology to rural America present the advantages of the new technology to these women? On the surface it would seem that farm women would have been receptive to suggestions that they follow the course set by their urban peers and acquire, for instance, a gas or electric stove to reduce the drudgery and dirt associated with a coal- or wood-fired range. The basis of Jellison's thesis

is that the route to the "ideal" of a technologically modern farmhouse was more circuitous than its advocates would have wished, and that farm women were often leery of the rationale used to convince them to go down that road.

Jellison chose to examine the agricultural heartland of the American midwest between the turn of the century and the 1960s. Here, the scale of farm operations meant that changes in field technology had a very noticeable impact. Promoters of technology such as internal combustion field equipment were very active in the many farm-oriented publications. Over the course of approximately fifty years the face of agriculture in this part of the United States experienced profound change: horses were replaced by tractors and many family operations were collapsed into larger agribusiness concerns. This was also an area where "a major proportion of the female population lived on farms well into the twentieth century" (p. xx). Perhaps most importantly, from Jellison's point of view, there was an untapped resource among the pages of agricultural publications in the form of advice columns, letters to the editor and opinion polls, in addition to the standard resource of government records. This documentary evidence had been examined before but never from the perspective of farm women. Additionally, Jellison found it fruitful to consult the memoirs of the women who played an active role in promoting household technology, as well as the farm women at whom those promotional campaigns were directed.

Jellison points out that the editors of farm publications promoting technology through their editorial and advice pages often had a very close relationship with the United States Department of Agriculture, which was also working to promote technology through its own publications and advisory services. A case in point involves members of the Wallace family, who over the half-century served as head of the U.S.D.A. and owned *Wallaces' Farmer*. As Jellison illustrates, these promotional efforts were often initiated by Washington through legislative action, and emphasized in the heartland by the editors of like-minded farm publications. Although the thrust of the message emanating from Washington and the farm publications remained unchanged for fifty years, Jellison has been able to identify six distinct periods within that time, each employing a different rationale to persuade farm women to adopt the new technology. These changes in the promotional propaganda are not unlike those witnessed in the campaign aimed at urban

Ontario housewives by the Hydro-Electric Power Commission of Ontario, Consumers Gas and assorted appliance manufacturers in the period between 1910 and 1950. While the method changed according to the tone of the times, the message remained the same: to utilize domestic technology.

According to Jellison, the subtext underlying the American campaign was to convince rural women to give up their roles as productive members of farm families and focus solely on keeping house. She attributes the motivation behind this to the patriarchic nature of farming during this period. In introducing this theme, Jellison draws on the works of one of the icons of American midwestern writers, Willa Cather. Highlighting the actions of Cather's heroine, Alexandra Bergson, who, by running her own farm and introducing scientific farming practices to her male neighbours, oversteps the bounds of her accepted role, Jellison points out that "for midwesterners of her day, farm women were not supposed to be farmers; their role as a farm producer was understood to be a limited one that remained secondary to their domestic duties" (p. xix).

Jellison makes it clear that farm women were not "Luddites"; they realized the value of household technology. In spite of the prevailing propaganda, however, they were only willing to accept it on their own terms and when it suited their needs. Rural women placed too great a value on their role as producers to adopt the goal of full-time housekeeper promoted in the sales and editorial messages, and when they did begin to adopt technology, it was with the goal of allowing more time for those productive activities. Jellison also observes that these women did not limit their adoption of technology to that being offered — if finances permitted, they utilized the technology of the

car to allow them to escape the role of housekeeper and to seek pre-packaged foodstuffs off the farm.

When, during the Second World War, advertisers of domestic equipment suggested that their technology could be used to free women to spend time in the fields, they were stating the obvious; farm women responded by simply increasing the level of their already well-established involvement in crop work. Furthermore, although the prosperity of the post-Second World War period brought technology within the grasp of a large spectrum of farm women, it was not adopted to permit them the life of greater domestic leisure being portrayed in the sales literature, but rather to allow them greater time to engage in productive labour off the farm. Jellison makes no attempt to inject modern feminist ideals into the actions of these early twentieth-century women, but instead acknowledges that they acted to preserve the economic and productive role of which they were rightfully proud, not to subvert the patriarchy in which they found themselves.

In examining the response of these women to the legislative and advertising campaigns designed to turn them into mirror images of urban domestic housewives, Jellison has done an admirable job of highlighting an aspect of agricultural history that until now has gone unacknowledged in academic circles. My only regret is that the book does not deal with the experience of Canadian women. This, of course, is not a fault of Jellison but rather a nudge to an enthusiastic doctoral student. Her contribution provides an excellent context in which to examine the current situation on many family farms, where off-farm work by both sexes is accepted because it has become necessary to keep the operation afloat.

Michael Ann Williams, *Homeplace: The Social Use and Meaning of the Folk Dwelling in Southwestern North Carolina*

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Williams, Michael Ann. *Homeplace: The Social Use and Meaning of the Folk Dwelling in Southwestern North Carolina*. Athens and London: The University of Georgia Press, 1991. 190 pp., 40 illus., cloth, US\$35, ISBN 0-8203-1346-7.

Michael Ann Williams' *Homeplace: The Social Use and Meaning of the Folk Dwelling*

in Southwestern North Carolina demonstrates how oral testimony can be extensively used in vernacular architecture and material culture analysis. Through interviews with fifty people from southwestern North Carolina, the author provides a sensitive analysis of how dwellings were used in the past and what these spaces and artifacts meant to local residents. The main