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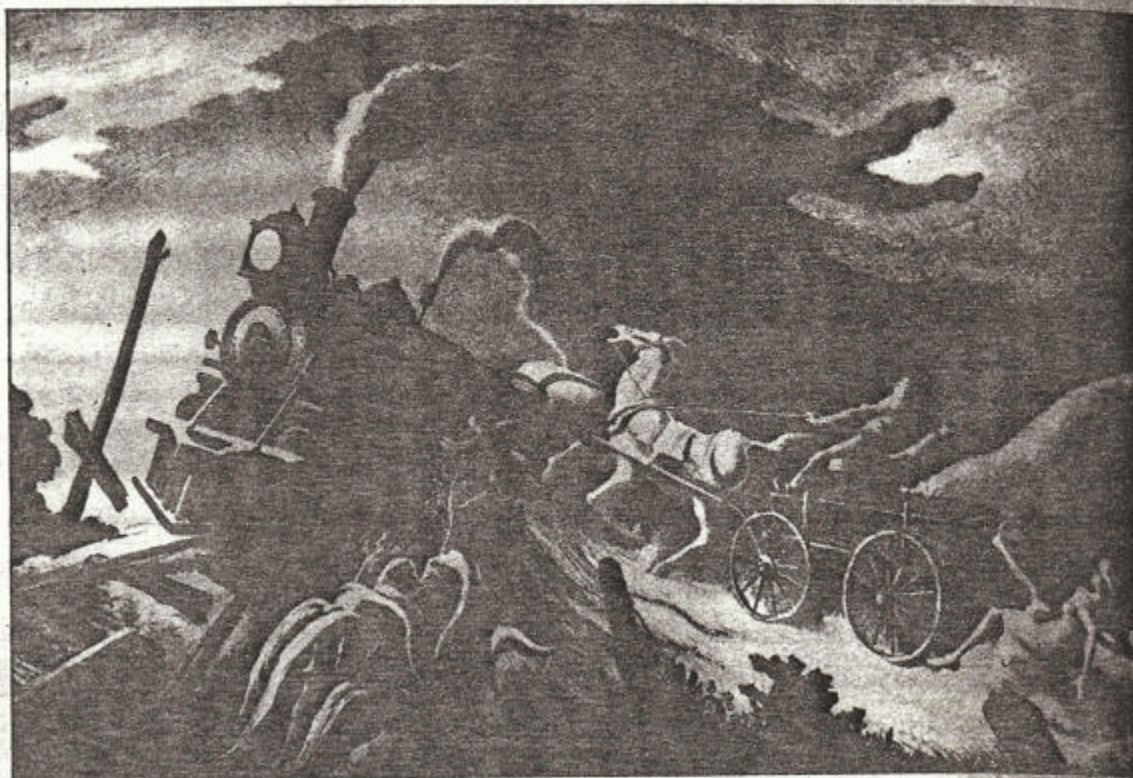
missions. The Soviet *Phobos* missions, which ended prematurely in 1966, have been the only recent attempts to visit Mars. There are plans for further martian missions, both America and the Soviet Union working towards manned missions and eventual permanent colonies on Mars. The author highlights the advantages of these ambitions, emphasising that (in theory) the technology exists to launch manned missions in the distant future. He urges an expansion of space exploration for various reasons, not the least of which is for international co-operation. The author writes with a great fondness for the subject, packing his book with facts and pictures of missions that might tempt any space travel enthusiast. The book would provide an inspiring introduction to the planet for a general audience.

The technical content of the book is kept to a simple level, and scientific phraseology is avoided wherever possible; a glossary is included, although one or two specialisms slip through unexplained. The book contains 175 black and white photographs, but the detail of some of the photographs and artists' impressions is rather heavy-going and a little repetitive in places. The text is only divided into chapters, and I feel that the book would benefit from further divisions of these.

The book is critical of the lack of attention and inclination of pre-war administrations to develop America's space potential. The impact of possible previous life on the planet is rather over-emphasised, but the planet itself holds many valuable clues as to the evolution of planetary surfaces and atmospheres, and to the history of the Solar System. The author constantly seeks to link future exploration through political, economic and social arguments to the realisation that he will be writing for the converted in his intended readership, the need for scientific research is well summed up in his statement: "Mars was, is, and will continue to be an intriguing planet that stimulates the imagination and challenges us to explain in detail to satisfy the insatiable curiosity of the human spirit."

JULIE CAVE

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Thomas Hart Benton's *Wreck of the Ol' 97* (1944), from *The Railroad in American Art: representations of technological change* edited by Susan Danly and Leo Marx (MIT Press, £38.25 and £15.95).

FULLNESS OF LIFE

THE GENDER OF BREADWINNERS:
WOMEN, MEN AND CHANGE IN TWO
INDUSTRIAL TOWNS, 1880-1950

By JOY PARR
University of Toronto Press,
251pp, £31.00 and £13.50
ISBN 0 8020 5853 1 and 6760 3
published 1990

Virginia Woolf once warned against assuming "that life exists more fully in what is commonly thought big than in what is commonly thought small". A textile town and furniture-making centre respectively, Paris and Hanover, Ontario, are small, and they confirm the accuracy of Woolf's advice. Joy Parr expertly uses the richness of local history to illuminate a major subject: the interaction of class and gender.

Parr selected the Penmans knitwear company in Paris and the Knechtel furniture works because the former employed mainly women recruited from the English East Midlands while the latter chiefly employed local men of German stock. The structure of the book underlines this contrast. In each case, Parr begins with a chapter on labour recruitment and ethnic composition and then proceeds to discuss the role of gender in the formulation of

both company managerial strategies and national tariff policy. The third chapter in each section analyses the sexual labelling of work while the fourth examines the relationship between wage work, domestic labour, and cultural values. A history of local labour struggles concludes each case study.

By this overt formality of contrast, Parr successfully highlights the fallacy of too rigid a separation of class and gender concerns and examines these categories as dynamically linked sites of struggle whose meaning is neither singular nor settled.

Emigration is usually seen as gendered with men responding to the international labour market and women following them to secure marriage and kinship ties. Yet Parr shows that the women who left Leicester or Nottingham for Ontario were often trying to evade or escape marriage and were drawn to Penmans' mills by offers of steady work, higher pay and more skilled positions. Life-long female labour gave Paris a distinctive social character in which men were the secondary workers. Parr argues that this hampered Penmans' efforts to secure a favourable tariff but augmented managerial authority by tying it to patriarchal cultural values and by limiting labour turnover in this exceptional working women's community.

But if gender sensibilities strengthened managerial resolve at Penmans,

similar considerations invigorated shopfloor militancy at Knechtel. Parr argues persuasively that the rejection of scientific management schemes by Hanover's workmen, against the advice of union officials, was rooted in the workers' conception of manhood rather than class consciousness. Woodworking was as much a manly act as a craft in their eyes; a patrilineal vocation learnt by men from men. Public advocacy and civic involvement were also construed as male, and this fact strengthened the woodworkers in the "struggle time" of the 1930s as surely as it called into question the "womanly militance" of the breadwinners of Paris in the 1949 dispute. In these class conflicts, gender mattered.

Clearly, this is social history of a very high calibre. From company and union records and state reports on both sides of the Atlantic, Parr has deftly carved a history of labour in contrasting trades. In addition, her skilful use of local newspapers and personal interviews and her awareness of European and American parallels has produced a work that reknits the unravelled threads of gender, ethnicity, region and class, and reveals the fullness of life in things too commonly deemed small.

PETER LING

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