

pessimistic. We are contending with a problem unprecedented in this century. Until quite recently young adolescents have not been sexually active, and the observation that we have not yet learned how to instruct them to deal with the consequences of their sexual behavior is not surprising. A number of European countries, the Scandinavian in particular, seem to have had a far greater success in the endeavor. What can we learn from their experience? The mismatch here between needs and services is still very great, and it may be far too early to conclude that American teenagers will not become more sophisticated practitioners of contraception.

Whether Zelnik, Kantner, and Ford are correct in their gloomy view, their research provides a compelling case that there is no magical solution to be found for the problems ushered in by the transformation in sexual practices. Sex education, techniques of contraception more amenable to the teenage population, reimposing stricter standards are all likely to meet with resistance. The question is not can we make the problem go away but can we do more than we are doing. And, if so, what measures promise the largest payoff? The authors offer little by way of answers, but their work will most certainly stimulate and inform the efforts of those who are prepared to look for better, if imperfect, solutions.

Endnote

The Law of Marriage and Marital Alternatives, by WILLIAM J. O'DONNELL and DAVID A. JONES. Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, 1982. 252 pp. \$27.95 cloth.

Written by two professors of law at Pittsburgh's Graduate School of Public and International Affairs, this book promises more than it offers. While it does review the legal status of various aspects of marriage and marital alternatives, it does so rather narrowly. For example, the concept of common-law marriage is discussed but the current status of common-law marriages, the number of states having such laws, etc. are not dealt with. Such shortcomings notwithstanding, teachers and researchers in the family area will find this book to be a useful reference. It allows the reader to come up quickly with working definitions of various legal concepts that are usually difficult to obtain without considerable effort.

Knowledge, Science, and History

Channels of Desire: Mass Images and the Shaping of American Consciousness, by STUART EWEN and ELIZABETH EWEN. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1982. 312 pp. \$12.95 cloth. \$7.95 paper.

SUE CURRY JANSEN
Empire State College

Channels of Desire is a sequel to Stuart Ewen's 1976 masterwork, *Captains of Consciousness: Advertising and the Social Roots of the Consumer Culture*. It examines the same theme: the colonization and domestication of the American imagination by the marketing imperatives of an emergent consumer culture. It covers approximately the same time frame: the period from the Civil War to the present. And, it focuses on closely related subtopics: consumerism, the emergence of department stores and shopping malls as the cathedrals of the consumer culture, the role of mass media in Americanizing immigrants, film, fashion, and sexism. But this is no cheap reworking of played-out materials. To the contrary, where *Captains* was a tightly reasoned, polemical work occasionally pockmarked by tendentious neo-Marxian jargon, *Channels* is a collection of loosely inter-related essays written in a rich, evocative style that effectively conveys the texture as well as the substance of U.S. commercial history.

In sum, *Channels* is a work of integrity: interesting, carefully documented, and stylistically effective—a worthy companion volume to *Captains*. It reaffirms Stuart Ewen's reputation as the premiere critic of American mass culture, and establishes Linda Ewen as a powerful collaborator or "co-conspirator" in an important critical enterprise.

Gesellschaftsstruktur und Semantik: Studien zur Wissenssoziologie der modernen Gesellschaft, Vol. 1, by NIKLAS LUHMANN. Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1980. 318 pp. NPL, cloth.

Gesellschaftsstruktur und Semantik: Studien zur Wissenssoziologie der modernen Gesellschaft, Vol. 2, by NIKLAS LUHMANN. Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1981. 294 pp. NPL, cloth.

VOLKER MEJA
Memorial University of Newfoundland