believe one is the source of agency who makes it happen; the desire to dominate and control the other who is active in providing, but whose activity is controlled by a relatively passive director, and the aggressive desire towards the other, if we take pollution as evidence of aggression." (93) The problem is not simply, of course, that production causes pollution. Rather, the ever-increasing speed and scale of production of commodities necessary to support this structure of desire far outstrips the speed of natural reproduction, thereby necessitating an ever-widening sphere of consumption and depletion of resources: "short-term profitability depends on an increasing debt to nature, a debt that must always be deferred, even at the price of survival." (146) We are fast becoming a danger to our own existence: one of the legal definitions of psychosis, Brennan points out.

History After Lacan is an attempt to think in a global way, to offer an analysis of, and some propositions about, a large historical movement. Brennan's is an activist mentality, and this book is activist history in the spirit of Walter Benjamin. It is not, however, an easy read, requiring a certain familiarity with a wide range of writers, including Lacan, Heidegger, Irigaray, Spinoza, Marx and Klein. This complexity will no doubt result in charges of elitism from some activists, and certainly the book has something for everyone to take issue with: psychoanalysts, for the extent to which she makes psychosis a metaphor; liberals of all stripes, for her attacks on some current pieties regarding race, class, and gender (criticisms made because of, rather than in spite of, her uncompromisingly leftist and feminist ethics); even medievalists could potentially be offended by the notion that a fundamental historical shift occurs at the beginning of the seventeenth century. Nonetheless, the book's theorization of the fantasy that underlies the movement of capitalism has a broad explanatory power that is remarkable, and remarkably timely, given the ongoing documentation of the World Bank's depredations in the "third world," the daily news of the continuing collapse of the environment, *et cetera*.

Jim Ellis
York University

John N. Vogel, *Great Lakes Lumber on the Great Plains: The Laird, Norton Lumber Company in South Dakota* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press 1992).

East of the 98th meridian, observed historian Walter Prescott Webb many years ago, American civilization stood on three legs — wood, water and land; west of that meridian, two of these supports were removed. Little wonder, Webb argued in his bold and incisive book *The Great Plains* (1931), that settlement stumbled and slowed as people from the humid, wooded east grappled with the unfamiliar challenges of the arid, treeless west. Adaptation was necessary at almost every turn. Pioneers found shelter in dark, often damp cabins of prairie sod, redesigned their ploughs, learned new ways of making a living from the land, even changed legal codes governing access to water. But in the last years of America's wooden age, there were few satisfactory substitutes for a commodity so common that it might be compared with a picture frame, escaping notice as it shaped the scene. Wood, says

Wayne Franklin, in his wide-ranging and thoughtful foreword to the work under review here, was "for long the refrain in our material existence." (vii)

In this slim volume, John Vogel seeks to show how these circumstances called into existence a large and vital trade linking lumber producers in the Great Lakes states with consumers on the Plains. More specifically, he is interested in the connection between the Laird, Norton Company's sawmill, planing-mill and sash-and-door factory in Winona, on the west bank of the Mississippi in Minnesota (which drew logs from the Chippewa Valley in Wisconsin), and settlers of the bare prairie of east-central South Dakota during the boom years between 1878 and 1887. His account is straightforward and methodical. A brief first chapter, "Great Plains Settlement and Great Lakes Lumber," sets the scene. Then the focus is narrowed to consider the "Settling [of] South Dakota," and the links between "Chippewa Valley Lumber and the Western Market." Chapter 4 details the activities of "Laird, Norton on the Dakota Prairie," and is followed by a discussion of "Dakota Towns and Their Lumberyards." "The Plains Truth about the Lumber Business" describes the commercial structure of the trade, and "Boom, Bust and Buildings" suggests how lives and landscapes were changed by the millions of feet of lumber freighted into South Dakota by rail as its population tripled and more.

Vogel is earnest and laborious in his endeavours. Derived from a Marquette University doctoral dissertation, the study rests squarely on the Laird, Norton Company papers, yet examples of rampant "thesisese" — such as: "A careful review of photographs and street scenes from late nineteenth-century South Dakota suggests that architectural standardization was found in schools, churches, and railroad depots" (140), and "Despite the fact that this yard entered the Laird, Norton system with virtually no mention in the company's correspondence, it is unlikely that its acquisition was an arbitrary decision...[without any evidence] it must be concluded that a well-managed yard with a decent market share was offered to Laird, Norton and that the company decided to buy it" (85) — are mercifully rare. Moreover, Vogel is refreshingly reserved about the importance of his contribution. This study, he concludes, "substantiates that, at least in the regions investigated, lumber from a Great Lakes logging district reached and was marketed in a portion of the Great Plains and chronicles the pattern and process of how it happened." (146)

Such modesty is appropriate, for this is, fundamentally, a familiar story. For all Webb's arresting evocation of the difficulties facing settlers of the semiarid west, students of the forests and the plains have long known that lumber from the Great Lakes underpinned settlement beyond the 20 inch isohyet that largely parallels the 98th meridian. Nor is there much new, beyond detail, in Vogel's treatment of pattern and process. Mississippi sawmillers had sold their lumber downriver since the 1850s (as A.R. Reynolds and Charles E. Twining demonstrated in their "business histories," *The Daniel Shaw Lumber Company* (1957) and *Downriver: Orrin H. Ingram and the Empire Lumber Company* (1975), respectively) and most adapted quickly to markets opened by the westward march of settlers and railroad tracks. If freight cars and "line yards" replaced rafts and river-front depots, neither retailing strategies nor the advantages of vertical integration were much changed by the new transportation tech-

nology and the geographical reorientation of trade flows that it made possible. [On this point, and among others, see also Agnes M. Larson, *History of the White Pine Industry in Minnesota* (1949)]. Furthermore, Vogel's brief treatment of the competition between Chicago lumber wholesalers and Mississippi sawmillers for the developing western market suffers, in 1994, by comparison with the fresh and incisive analysis of Chicago's impact on its hinterland offered by William Cronon in *Nature's Metropolis* (1991). Even Laird, Norton's lumber sales in Minnesota and the Dakotas have been the focus of a chapter in Fred W. Kohlmeyer's *Timber Roots: The Laird, Norton Story 1855-1905* (1972).

Against this backdrop, the author's claim that his contribution lies in placing "Laird, Norton's Dakota experience in the large ... context ... of the Great Plains settlement process" (xvi) defines the ground on which his book must be judged. There is much here, to be sure, on the score of yards Laird, Norton opened on the Dakota prairie (and on others that they passed over) — details of their founding, cost, lay-out, managers, and business practices. But this is, by and large, information culled from company records. From my point of view, too little attention is given to the vital role that lumber, and the yards that sold it, played in the lives of prairie settlers. The final chapter, which attempts to assess the impact of lumber on the landscape, is brief and ultimately unsatisfactory, in that it raises more questions than it answers about the settlement process, the gendered nature of pioneer experience, and the aspirations of western migrants. In the end, Vogel has written a detailed expository footnote — an extended elaboration on relatively well-known aspects of the lumber business and the spread of settlement in South Dakota. Without more on the ways in which settlers whose culture was "strained to its foundations" (ix) — in echo of Webb, although his name is surprisingly missing from these pages — responded to the scarcity, cost and often monopolistic or duopolistic marketing arrangements set in place by the likes of Laird, Norton and Company, this book falls short of providing a new window on the history of either the forest or the plain.

Graeme Wynn
University of British Columbia

Anthony Rotundo, *American Manhood* (New York: Basic Books 1993).

Over the past two decades, historians have come to recognize that men are gendered subjects. Among the earliest and most frequent contributors to this new "men's history" have been historians of the American middle class — writers such as Peter Filene, Mark Carnes and Peter Stearns. However, Anthony Rotundo's study is the first full-length comprehensive attempt to chart the rise of an American middle class masculinity. In this examination of the changes in masculinity experienced by the "comfortable classes" of New England and the midwest from the eighteenth to the twentieth centuries, Rotundo provides us with an important early synthesis that is liberally augmented with his own primary research.

In the first chapter Rotundo explains that a "communal" type of manhood exercised its potency through the colo-