

and blindness from the viewpoint of ophthalmology" (149). Omansky is vigilant about creating a space in which she and her participants are not merely subjects but active participants whose voices need to be heard. By writing this book and seeking this subjectivity, she is advocating for change by attempting to build bridges between the sighted and those in the borderland. Omansky's work is a strong example of how practicing oral history within the disability community can aim to promote meaningful, powerful dialogue.

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A MATTER OF SIMPLE JUSTICE: THE UNTOLD STORY OF BARBARA HACKMAN FRANKLIN AND A FEW GOOD WOMEN. By Lee Stout. University Park: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012. 222 pp. Hardbound, \$24.95.

One key challenge that historians face when writing about women leaders in politics and public policy is balancing the need to document the presence of women in government with providing analysis of their roles, responsibilities, and contributions in a larger political context. In Lee Stout's *A Matter of Simple Justice: The Untold Story of Barbara Hackman Franklin and a Few Good Women*, the author does an excellent job meeting this challenge. Stout avoids the pitfall that too often entangles historians who, while trying to write women back into a political narrative, overlook a full probing of their agency and impact and fail to weave their contributions into the general political landscape. In *A Matter of Simple Justice*, however, the author does a masterful job of both recording women's placement in key roles and showing how their contributions have connected with larger political and social developments.

Stout accomplishes his task by dividing his book into two sections. The first focuses specifically on the role of women in the Nixon administration and the president's appointment of Barbara Hackman Franklin as the White House's key person on women's appointments. Franklin's position came in response to recommendations from Nixon's Presidential Task Force on Women's Rights and Responsibilities, a group he created after reporter Vera Glaser challenged Nixon on his appointment record. Through his analysis, Stout shows that neither Franklin nor the women who served on the president's task force were token appointees. Further, their appointments increased four-fold the number of women serving in the administration and provided dedicated service to the White House and a variety of government departments. He shows that these efforts had the support of key Nixon insiders such as Fred Malek, special assistant to the president

for personnel, and Daniel Patrick Moynihan, assistant to the president for urban affairs. Stout also demonstrates that many within the administration recognized that increasing women's appointments was a "golden opportunity" politically for the Republican Party and championed Franklin's work to locate qualified women across the nation and place them in high-level appointed posts (23). Their political instincts in this regard proved true. In the 1972 presidential election, Nixon won 62 percent of women's votes compared with 59 percent of men's votes. Based on these results, Stout argues that, despite the conventional perception, the Nixon administration made significant progress on women's issues and women voters responded positively to his efforts.

In the second part of his book, Stout documents the biographies and careers of women presidential appointees from the Nixon era. This portion of the book contains extensive excerpts from interviews Stout and others conducted. For this reason, from an oral history perspective, the book is a treasure trove of eyewitness accounts told by those directly involved with events of the era. The information these biographical sketches provide not only gives a valuable glimpse of outstanding women appointees but also provides a window into the oral history resources housed in the Penn State University Library. Stout spent twenty-seven years as University Archivist at Penn State. In this role he approached Franklin, a Penn State graduate, about acquiring her papers. In the course of those discussions, Stout realized that many of the women appointees with whom Franklin worked were still living and had enjoyed long and productive careers in public service. Franklin readily agreed when Stout suggested that they undertake an oral history project to document these key women's stories. The result was the A Few Good Women Oral History Project on which Stout's book is based. Researchers interested in learning more about women government leaders in the Nixon era and related topics will find that Stout's work provides unusually high-quality oral history resources. Obviously, through this project Stout and Franklin became colleagues. Nevertheless, the connection they shared did not interfere with the objectivity of the author and in many ways seems to have facilitated the type of trust, clear responses, and openness so important in the oral history arena. The foresight to capture so many firsthand accounts, all related to one another, and to house them in a central location is rare and invaluable.

In addition to its contributions regarding government service in the Nixon years and the oral history resources associated with Stout's research, the book opens with a very helpful chronology that documents major events in women's political history from the 1848 Seneca Falls Convention to Sarah Palin's selection as the first woman Republican candidate for the vice presidency. Following this chronology is a pithy chapter tracing women's advancements in education, politics, and employment since 1945. Here Stout provides specific information on the impact of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (which created the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission), the history of the Equal Rights

Amendment, and the advancing role of women in government. Readers will find this chapter concise, packed with statistics and documentation, and useful to those trying to gain a handle on the progress of women's rights in the post-World War II era.

In conclusion, *A Matter of Simple Justice* is an outstanding resource for information on women and politics in the 1970s, a window into the extensive oral history resources housed at Penn State, and a source for the background and chronology of women's political history since World War II. It is well written, interesting to read, and incorporates oral history resources in a creative way. Most of all, however, the oral history project Penn State undertook that informed Stout's writing will be a lasting and important historical resource for many generations to come. It, and Stout's book, serves historians well.

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ON TIME DELIVERY: THE DOG TEAM MAIL CARRIERS. By William S. Schneider. Fairbanks: University of Alaska Press, 2012. 142 pp. Softbound, \$24.95.

Today's Iditarod and Yukon Quest sled dog races are reminders of a vast overland trail system in Alaska on which dog team mail carriers once transported mail and supplies. For nearly half a century, the trails—now mostly abandoned, overgrown, and unused—provided a rich communications and commerce network for the state's interior. In *On Time Delivery: The Dog Team Mail Carriers*, William S. Schneider engagingly describes the mail routes' history and the quotidian yet heroic activities of its carriers.

During the late 1890s, regularly scheduled mail service in Alaska grew out of several factors: prospectors' demands that the US government provide mail service, a growing number of merchants fueled by the gold rush, and problems created by prospectors' inability to cope with a shortage of supplies. The trail system that evolved "led from year-round ice-free ports on the coast far into the interior where gold was discovered and where there was a population of prospectors" (xi). Catalyzing the trail system's development was completion of the Alaska Railroad, a military road from Valdez to the interior, and a telegraph system connecting Nome to the continental United States.

Then, in the 1940s, dog team mail service ended on most routes with the advent of cheaper airplane mail and supply service. That savings came at a heavy price: abandoned trails, broken connections between communities, and the loss of the steady stream of news from mail carriers. Schneider openly laments the