and domesticity. These ideals denied adoption rights to poor couples or single women who could not fulfill these ideological prescriptions. By 1943, the state issued Mexico's first social security law, which marked a watershed moment in the state's recognition of childhood as a specific "life stage" with age-specific social roles and free of work (xxi). But, the law benefited the formal working class, leaving the countless families who worked in the informal sector and who still relied on the work of children, without legal protection.

Blum provides a complex analysis of two major historical periods in Mexican history, usually studied separately, and a novel approach, which positions the family as the center of state intervention in the lives of Mexico's urban poor. This study is guaranteed to find a welcomed reception, especially among those interested in Mexican history, gender history and the history of childhood.

José Magaña

Michael Bronski. *A Queer History of the United States (ReVisioning American History).* Boston: Beacon Press, 2012. Pp. 312. Paper $18.00.

Although historians commonly position the beginnings of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) history at the start of the modern Gay Liberation Movement in the 1970s, Dartmouth historian Michael Bronski argues that this approach is inaccurate and misrepresentative of the LGBT community. Following Marxian and Feminist revisionist theories, Bronski presents gay history as a complex study of individuals playing integral parts in the American experiment rather than a linear progression of repression and gradual acceptance, thus breaking new ground in his everyman approach to the queer history of America. Perhaps overly ambitious in attempting to cover 500 years of gay culture, it is important to note that this work intentionally lacks comprehensiveness. Rather than exhaustively chronicling queer contributions, this is a cultural study filled with anecdotes demonstrating the various ways in which participants in same-sex relationships influenced and in turn were affected by the American experience.

Beginning with the Puritans' renunciation of Elizabethan openness to sexual discourse and their self-imposed exile to the Americas, early settlers sought to homogenize society by rejecting carnal behavior that did not directly support the cornerstone of their community—the family. Relying heavily on Foucauldian ideas of power and discourse to justify continuing American refusals to accept non-conformist relationships, Bronski argues that "homosocial

friendship" filled the gap between societal demands of heterosexuality and natural homosexual desires. While publicly portraying the rugged "New American Man" who ruled over his wife and progeny, many men (and women) maintained intimate relationships with their same-gendered peers. Whether sexual or not, these relationships exhibited (and often exceeded) all the passions of romantic love indicative of contemporaneous heterosexual partnerships.

As the product of a seasoned gay activist, this book is likely to draw criticism concerning its overt assumptions of sexuality. Bronski openly admits, while a politically driven work of revisionism, this is not a book about "outing" historical individuals. Rather, in supporting his theory of commonplace homosocial relationships, Bronski draws heavily on documented frontier relationships in which gender roles were relaxed, the growing availability and readership of queer literature by Whitman and other gay writers, and the sobering impact of war on encouraging young men's sexual appetites and explorations. The various roles of women as financial providers who often shared close working tenements, cross-dressing combatants, and the intimate bonds of wartime widows serve as evidence that, although society at large often rejected public same-sex relationships, queer romances existed throughout American history.

While the Gay Liberation Movement of the 1970s is the most discernible and publicized event in the queer history of modern America, it was merely a paradigm shift where that which had long existed privately could finally gain varying degrees of public acceptance. Gay men and women founded the United States, fought in its wars, and struggled for gender and racial equality. *A Queer History of the United States* is the history of one nation and one people - inseparable along the lines of their sexual identities. This book is appropriate for students of American history, gender and queer studies, and lay readers interested in new interpretations of sexuality in America.

Phillip Mikell

Josie McLellan. *Love in the Time of Communism: Intimacy and Sexuality in the GDR.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011. Pp. 239. Paper $31.99.

In *Love in the Time of Communism,* Josie McLellan, senior lecturer of Modern European History at the University of Bristol, explores the regulation of people’s sexuality living in the German Democratic Republic (GDR) from the 1950s to 1989. She argues that although