

Matthew Wisnioski. *Engineers for Change: Competing Visions of Technology in 1960s America*. Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2012. Pp. xvii, 286. \$35.00.

Like masculinity, the engineering profession seems always to have been in crisis. In *Engineers for Change* Matthew Wisniosk looks closely at the period 1964-1974 and finds engineers confronting a reoccurring bout of concern over issues that most workers would recognize as revolving around wages, hours and conditions. The rapid growth of the profession as a consequence of Cold War military demands, and the accompanying concentration of engineers in large bureaucratic corporate organizations, led to anxiety over the quality and reliability of jobs.

At the same time the long-held belief that the profession was under-valued by society, that engineers were not respected and that the (in their view) profound effect they had on the nation's well-being and progressive improvement was not adequately acknowledged , reinforced their anxiety and general malaise. In 1986 Edwin T. Layton's classic *The Revolt of the Engineers* (which Wisniosk acknowledges as important in the shaping of his own understanding of the profession) described a similar crisis of the profession in the Progressive Era. Standing in splendid professional isolation between science and business, the Progressive engineer seized upon the contemporary Conservation Crusade and general push for national Efficiency to define and justify their central role in the nation's well-being.

In the context of the decade 1964-1974 however, a dangerous new element had been added to the equation. The word *technology*, hardly used before the 1930s, had become the common label for something very like, but not really the same as, engineering. Its