
Book Reviews

The Democrats' Dilemma: Walter F. Mondale and the Liberal Legacy.

By Steven M. Gillon.

(New York: Columbia University Press, 1992. 468 p. Cloth, \$34.95.)

IT IS NOT EASY these days for an academic historian to write a serious, professional biography of a politician. Major history departments are strongly focused on social history, often with a quantitative cast. To do political history, let alone its most traditional form—biography, means cutting against the grain. Also, treating a living figure, especially one who still wields considerable power, is hard. The pressures to bend to the biography's subject are great. Finally, why focus on a politician whose reach for power ended in an electoral defeat of historic proportions? Despite superbly managing a career that included service as attorney general of Minnesota, in the U.S. Senate, and as vice-president, Walter F. Mondale in 1984 suffered the worst defeat of any presidential candidate since Alf Landon lost to Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1936.

Yet Gillon, a professional historian who came to maturity in Yale's history department, has, hands down, beaten the apparent odds against his book. He offers us a judicious, highly readable biography, demonstrating that there is and was much more to Mondale than his defeat at the hands of a popular incumbent. Gillon shows that most of Mondale's career can be understood as reflecting larger changes in American politics and society. What holds this book together is the skill with which the author tacks back and forth between characterizing his subject's talents for political brokerage and showing how his strengths and liberal vision were constantly tested during his rise within the Democratic party.

Mondale came to power in a party hindered by the very social and political changes it had done so much to sponsor. In pushing for unionism and social insurance during the New Deal, the Democratic party muted class tensions in ways that created the long-run possibility of middle-class resentments against big government. In recognizing and acting on the broad democratic claims of the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s, the party also helped to set the stage for white backlash against African-American political gains. Thus Mondale's defeat, Gillon argues, is an important moment in the evolution of American politics: it revealed the historic limits of an enormously skillful politician unable to cure the kinds of tensions within the Democratic base that led

to defections to the Republican party and created a body of swing voters called Reagan Democrats.

This book has broad political sweep. Along the way it offers a succinct account of the Great Society, and its four-chapter treatment of the Carter administration is among the best short accounts one can find of this subject. The biography is also richly textured and sometimes quite moving. No reader can help but be affected by Gillon's portrait of the meeting between Mondale's aging, frail father and his mentor Hubert Humphrey or by his lucid characterization of how Mondale came to full, populist life in the closing weeks of his presidential campaign, conducting himself with extraordinary dignity in the face of certain defeat.

In addition to having a well-conceived theme and real literary skill, Gillon also knows how to present new evidence. His extensive interviewing (seventy-five interviews in all) and his full access to Mondale, to his papers, and to many of his advisers and their papers helped produce an account loaded with important findings about little-known aspects of Mondale's personality and political career. Thus we learn much about the institutionally path-breaking relationship that Jimmy Carter and Mondale established with each other, one that left the vice-presidency permanently transformed. Gillon's research also led him to discover the extraordinary tension between Mondale and his running mate in 1984, Geraldine Ferraro, over her tardy release of a routine financial disclosure statement. This and other incidents irreparably damaged their relationship.

Other aspects of the book add to its freshness. Gillon sensitively treats Mondale's relationship with his generous but much more politically popular mentor, Hubert Humphrey. Also, Gillon understands better than has anyone else the lasting impact on Mondale of his early training and career in the Democratic-Farmer-Labor party. This turned him into a party politician who combined great integrity with great loyalty to his associates and a deep respect for the voluntary associations, interest groups, and social movements that speak for ordinary people. But Mondale's awareness that this kind of political accountability was critically important in making democratic politics work for ordinary people also came to limit him. Such a personal style contributed to his incapacity to develop a more telegenic political style, leaving him vulnerable to opponents such as Gary Hart and Ronald Reagan. Gillon also deftly develops the paradoxical contrasts between a somewhat wooden public persona and a private

man who is charming, incisive, and funny. He does a particularly good job of linking this inner tension to the larger, more structural difficulties Mondale faced in national politics in brokering disagreements among different kinds of Democrats and also appealing to the larger public.

Still, despite its strengths, there are flaws in this book. Gillon's account of how Mondale launched his "re-education" campaign in 1981 and 1982 is valuable, and his treatment of the search during the 1984 campaign for a message is excellent—but both miss a key feature of Mondale's politics during this period: his intense interest in industrial and trade policy. Gillon does not notice the continuity between Mondale's interest in such policy and key themes in the 1988 Dukakis presidential campaign, which had as a top adviser Robert Reich, who is the current secretary of labor. Reich had a major influence on Mondale in 1983 and much of 1984. Nor does Gillon mention the links between Mondale's policy interests and the general exploration of industrial and trade policy in all quarters of a more nationalist Democratic party. Had he noticed these links, his book would help readers to understand some of the reasons why Mondale is today the U.S. ambassador to Japan.

More important, the very simplicity of the book's theme—that Mondale's life is a metaphor for the crisis of the Democratic party—means that the author tacitly accepts the Republicans' own account of what the 1984 election meant: that the country had become conservative. This makes too much of a single presidential election. It is worth remembering that Republicans have not enjoyed unified control of national government since the first Eisenhower administration. Something more complicated than a country going conservative explains the record of divided government at the national and state levels since the 1960s and the kind of discontent that created the odd form of unified control that the Democratic party currently enjoys. It is also worth remembering that in 1984 the jump in per capita disposable income was one of the largest of any presidential election year since World War II. No rational electorate would have thrown out an incumbent under this circumstance—especially when faced with an alternative who had served in an administration that engineered a recession in 1980 in the name of fighting inflation and securing business confidence. Does it follow that a majority of the voters rejected fifty years of liberalism or even Walter Mondale?

Also, Gillon tends to overdo the racial tensions within the Democratic party. He relies heavily on the journalist Thomas Edsall, who has claimed that the Democrats' racial liberalism cost the party its capacity to represent the working class. Gillon does not go this far, but he could have been more sensitive to how deeply tendentious Edsall's argument is. In responding to the civil rights movement, the Democratic party did not hurt itself, it emancipated itself.

Notwithstanding these flaws, Gillon brings alive a man who has stood for positive, effective government. The book's lasting impression is of Mondale's undying moral decency. The volume ends with Mondale finding within himself the true Mondale and thus gathering the courage to end his 1984 campaign speaking up eloquently and un-self-consciously for those who are forgotten and ignored—homeless people, Na-

tive Americans, blue-collar workers unemployed due to plant closings—all of those whom Michael Harrington once called the Other America. When he was in elective politics, Mondale never forgot that this America is always there and that it is larger and more in need of empowerment than most of the political establishment understands.

Reviewed by RICHARD M. VALELLY, *associate professor of political science at Swarthmore College. He is the author of various works on party and social-movement politics, including* Radicalism in the States: The Minnesota Farmer-Labor Party and the American Political Economy (1989).

Over the Earth I Come: The Great Sioux Uprising of 1862.

By Duane Schultz.

(New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992. 307 p. Cloth, \$21.95; paper, \$12.95.)

THE TITLE of this book sounds like the title of a movie. As a matter of fact, there was a movie called *The Glory of the Great Sioux Uprising*. It starred Debra Paget and Preston Foster and was set in the Black Hills of South Dakota. It provided temporary employment as extras for the Lakota people of the area. The main Indian characters were played by white stars. I think this book would make a good movie—a movie in the genre of *The Searchers*, starring John Wayne, the great Indian fighter of the silver screen.

I first met this book when a relative who is an actress in England (she is a made relative; in our culture we can make relatives) wrote to my sister about it. She wrote, "This is not the way Grandma told the story." I told our relative that the way Grandma told her the story is true. Our great-grandma was a witness and a participant in the tragedy.

Writing history is an awesome power. It has been said that historians have more power than God; historians can change history. Power in the hands of the untrained is a dangerous thing. The author of this book is trained in psychology. Perhaps if he had written a book on the psychological effects of the conflict of 1862 it would have been useful in dealing with the legacy that that time in history has left us: Why is there still racism in Indian-white relationships? Why do our children seem still to suffer the effects of history?

This book perpetuates the stereotype of the savage, blood-thirsty Indian washing his hands in the blood of his victims. On the dust jacket I read that the book was well researched. Then I read the bibliography. The author seems to have skimmed some of the books and then liberally quoted from others. Two major resources he used were especially racist, even in their own time: Mankato's *Daily Review* and *Weekly Review* and Charles S. Bryant's *A History of the Great Massacre by the Sioux Indians in Minnesota. Including the Personal Narratives of Many Who Escaped* (1864). After all, Mankato is the place where thirty-eight Indian people were hanged.

The power of writing history is in what is emphasized and what is not. This book dwells on atrocities. Certainly, atroci-

ties are committed in war; as a Vietnam veteran, I know this on an eyewitness basis. And it is always the innocent bystander who suffers. *Over the Earth I Come* implies that there were fraud, lies, downright deception, and manipulation on the part of the government in its dealings with the Dakota. But just as we think we are going to get a true or balanced account of that time in the history of Minnesota, the book turns into a cowboys-and-Indians story. The very characters who were the prime instigators of the tragic time—the deceivers and profiteers—turn into heroes, and the first victims, the Indians, become the bad guys. If this book is ever made into a movie, I would recommend the resurrection of those old silver-screen Indian fighters to play the likes of Alexander Ramsey and Henry Sibley. Perhaps Ward Bond could play Colonel Charles Flandreau.

This book only perpetuates the old stereotypes of Indian people. After all, the white settlers were invited to this paradise not by us, but by the serpents. As a result, they, too, were driven out. I would not read this book unless I had to—and I had to, to write this review. *Pidamaya* (Thank you).

Reviewed by SHUNGHIDA (RED FOX), REV. GARY CAVENDER, a Wahpeton Dakota from the Minnesota Upper Sioux Community, who is a teaching associate in American Indian studies at the University of Minnesota.

Canoe Country: An Embattled Wilderness.

By David Backes.

(Minocqua, Wis.: NorthWord Press, 1991. 205 p. Paper, \$14.95.)

IN JULY 1993, Ojibway leaders of the Bois Forte and Grand Portage bands informed the U.S. Forest Service that the 1854 treaty signed at La Pointe exempts them from Boundary Waters Canoe Area restrictions regarding motor boats, party size, and permit reservations. According to one spokesman quoted in the *St. Paul Pioneer Press*, Indians do not accept the forest service definition of "wilderness"; there is no such word in their language. "This is our home," he said.

We are now well into the eighth decade of controversy over the region that has become known as the BWCA, so this latest development should surprise no one who has been paying attention. It is harder to understand why the BWCA is perpetually fought over. David Backes has written the area's history in a way that may not only help facilitate understanding but also may help resolve disputes like the one brewing with the Ojibway.

Canoe Country is unlike R. Newell Searle's 1977 book, *Saving Quetico-Superior: A Land Set Apart*, as Backes is more interested in the background or "context" of the problem than detailing political battles. *Canoe Country* attempts to tell the history of perceptions and attitudes about this wilderness and why people are drawn to it. In the final analysis, this is what "limit[s] the culturally acceptable uses for that place" and sets the stage for conflict.

Backes identifies four major images of canoe country. The historic image of the Quetico-Superior region as a "resource

bank" has lasted into the present, especially among local people who make their living from those resources. Even the early conservationists believed that professional scientists and managers would maximize withdrawals from this bank.

The second image was that of a fishing paradise. This notion gained prominence in the 1920s and was widely promoted in outdoor magazines. Those who had this perception did not think conveniences such as resorts and motors intruded on the wilderness.

A third view held that the canoe country was a place of sanctuary where one could escape the modern world with its relentless pace, commotion, and ambiguities. Believers wanted to get away from conveniences and in the 1940s led the fight to exclude seaplanes and resorts from the area. This time, the mainstream media became involved (as activists became more sophisticated at manipulating it) in promoting the image. The *New York Times* and *Washington Post* carried editorials supporting the bans.

The fourth image of the BWCA, the one that has come to dominate the preservation debate, is that of a sacred place. This idea goes beyond mere escape. Its champions "sought primarily a sense of oneness with nature that gave them spiritual sustenance." Sigurd Olson's writings are the clearest articulation of this belief; during the 1950s both the Sierra Club and the Wilderness Society emphasized this image in their publications and conferences. By definition, this perception was far less tolerant of many of the ways area residents made their living. This, in turn, led to increased mistrust of outsiders and near paranoia in northern Minnesota as the economy deteriorated. The combination of local anger and the need by 1975 to create legislation that would clear up the ambiguous 1964 Wilderness Act created a climate of revolt.

Backes concludes that BWCA entrepreneurs would have had to slow down the rate of resource use anyway because the resources were being depleted. The high-intensity resort industry, for example, was having a noticeable effect on fish populations. "Outsiders" who believed that the area could renew the spirit forced this slowdown—but not long before it would have become necessary.

Despite its innovative interpretations, this book is not without faults. The discussion of the BWCA issues and participants during the 1960s and 1970s seems hurried. This is particularly disappointing because Searle's history ends in 1960. Backes introduces important figures, such as Charles Dayton, without providing any background or placing them within the framework that is central to the book's thesis. There is no indication that Backes interviewed later participants in the wilderness battle about their ideas and images of canoe country. There is also no indication that the author used the Minnesota Historical Society's Environmental Issues Oral History Project, which was completed in 1989.

A few more specific problems mar the book. Readers can become suspicious of every fact when the writer and editors make a mistake such as calling James Abourezk the senator from North Dakota instead of South Dakota. Also, not one of the fourteen maps included provides the level of detail that I desired or expected. For example, a map of roads proposed in 1925 to go through the Superior National Forest shows only nine lakes, five of them named. This in no way allows a

reader a sense of how these roads would have altered the environment. Finally, a pet peeve: the lack of an index greatly diminishes the usefulness of this book. It is nearly impossible to relocate the author's discussion of Ernest Oberholtzer's background or Sigurd Olson's fish-stocking venture, for instance.

In spite of these complaints, *Canoe Country* accomplishes what history should always strive for. It helps us understand the people, events, and forces that shaped our beliefs. It tells us how we arrived at a particular point. In doing that, it also provides a framework for thinking about current events. It was disconcerting to discover, for example, that the roots of my thoughts about the border wilderness could be traced to a 1920s Ely Chamber of Commerce brochure, but this kind of knowledge may aid policymakers in resolving future BWCA disputes. I recommend this book to anyone visiting canoe country and especially to those involved in decisions affecting the area.

Reviewed by PATRICK K. COLEMAN, *acquisitions librarian at the Minnesota Historical Society and frequent visitor to the BWCA, who has actively participated in discussions concerning the area for more than twenty-five years.*

Between Memory and Reality: Family and Community in Rural Wisconsin, 1870–1970.

By Jane Marie Pederson.

(Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1992. 314 p. Cloth, \$50.00; paper, \$17.95.)

WITH THIS CLOSE STUDY of two townships in southern Wisconsin, Pederson calls us to reexamine stereotypes of rural Middle America. Drawing on census material and other public records to establish migration and marriage patterns for Lincoln and Pigeon townships in Trempealeau County, she then delves into the lives of families and individuals, quoting from diaries, letters, and interviews and showing us glimpses from photo albums. The reader emerges with a striking sense of daily life and social change over a century, during which time Norwegian and Polish immigrants put down roots amid farming settlements established by New England families that followed the frontier farther west. By the early twentieth century Norwegians constituted the area's dominant cultural presence. Pederson's work focuses to a large extent on the transmission and maintenance of Norwegian cultural patterns in this hospitable North American environment.

As the book clearly shows, rural ethnic families did not live in isolation. Both in their working lives and in their social connections, they spent a great deal of time together as neighbors and kin. A chapter dealing with rural hospitality describes patterns of visiting in some detail. Dedication to hard work, devotion to the land, and loyalty to the ethnic community—including its strong religious base—were the overriding values that shaped the day-to-day contours of the two farming communities. Pederson ties these values to life in Norway

during the nineteenth century; she cites a broad range of historians and sociologists in comparing life-styles in rural Norway to those in rural Wisconsin. In this, her choice of secondary-source material seems sound, although it is limited to studies published in English. In a few minor ways, the author's lack of familiarity with the Norwegian language mars the text; for example, the consistent misspelling of the term for a neighborhood work project or collective help—*dugnad*, rendered here as *dugnag*. Likewise, the spelling given by several informants for Norwegian expressions and songs is not fully correct, although recognizable and properly translated.

Gender patterns also receive generous attention. Pederson outlines the significant shifts women experienced as their sphere of acceptable behavior grew narrower. Traditionally, women in these communities exhibited great independence in their social lives and in their responsibility for aspects of the farm and household economy. In addition to arranging and sustaining the social networks of the community, they worked in the fields, cared for the animals, and handled the dairy products. With the arrival of commercial dairying and highly mechanized crop farming, such chores became identified with men. But these developments came gradually to Trempealeau County. For most of the period under discussion here, male and female partnership in farming served as the egalitarian norm.

The author began this study out of a personal desire to counteract misunderstandings that the rural American life-style was out of touch with reality and the mainstream of American culture. As we follow her informants through the twentieth century, especially into the post-World War II era, we see them mediate between "a way of life and mentalité rooted in the past" and a market economy that dramatically changed the structure of farm life. Pederson shows us the remarkable resilience and adaptability of these communities and helps us appreciate the difficulties of moving from wheat farming to dairy farming, from a cooperative mode to a more individualistic mode of production, from reliance on cooperative labor to the individual ownership of farm machinery, from gender roles and sexual patterns transported from the valleys of Norway to the more highly codified patterns of behavior expected within middle-class America.

The richness of the sources the author used, her interdisciplinary approach, and her clear writing render this a memorable book all on its own. Its value is further increased as a corrective to much previously published work about the region and its population. Persistence, understood positively as personal and communal stability and loyalty to core values, emerges as the key to interpreting the responses of families and communities to new mores—adapting to change, but actively shaping that change in accord with these values. Such an interpretation shows us a rural America that, well into the present century, was not "left behind" but rather embraced a satisfying, deeply rooted life-style.

Reviewed by JANET E. RASMUSSEN, *vice-president for academic affairs and professor of modern languages at Nebraska Wesleyan University, who is the author of New Land, New Lives: Scandinavians to the Pacific Northwest (1993).*

A Passion for Polka: Old Time Ethnic Music in America.

By Victor Greene.

(Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992. 355 p. Cloth, \$28.00.)

POLKA MUSIC and the European-American ethnic music related to it are vital parts of the cultural history of America and the Upper Midwest. Until recent times, however, serious inquiry has been delayed by the attitude that these musical styles are not worthy of study. In addition, some scholars have held that, because class identification has supplanted ethnic identification in American life, ethnic music is not important. In *A Passion for Polka*, the author, a professor of history at the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, acknowledges those viewpoints. He then argues convincingly against them and moves ahead to the book's purpose: to chronicle the development of European-American ethnic music in terms of its responses to sociological changes and its relationship to the popular music of the surrounding culture. This book is long overdue.

Although "Polka" is written in large, red letters on the dust jacket, the book focuses on the portion of the title to the right of the colon. Polka styles represent a few of the European-American ethnic musics that have gained popularity with specific ethnic groups and the broader public. While the book is national in scope, significant portions are devoted to the Upper Midwest, an acknowledged world center for polka and related music. Thus, *A Passion for Polka* adds to the recent contributions of *Minnesota Polka: Dance Music from Four Traditions*, the recording and essay released by the Minnesota Historical Society and the Minnesota State Arts Board.

The theme that culture contact affects all of the cultures involved unifies this volume's chronological approach. For example, the first chapter identifies band music as the popular music of nineteenth-century America. In ethnic communities, bands specialized in music representing that group but also played selections from the general American repertoire. Bands not representing an ethnic group often were influenced by ethnic music as well. In addition, European-trained musicians, considered superior to their American colleagues, frequently held major positions in American bands. As leaders, arrangers, or soloists, they infused music from their native lands into the American repertoire.

Later chapters also show how ethnic traditions and mainstream music influenced each other. Readers will be struck by the similarity of developments within traditions whose styles, languages, and histories differed markedly. In chapter five, for example, the author describes how immigrant entertainers of many nationalities portrayed an Old Country person in

a new land in such a way that ethnic listeners empathized with both the Old Country and American aspects of the character. Later, the book shows how the popularity of polka music owed partially to ethnic loyalties and partially to the bands' adopting the instrumentation and staging conventions of the swing era. The second-generation audience found the swing-influenced sound ethnic yet more "American" than the music of their parents' generation. In addition, the swing-era accoutrements enabled members of other groups to appreciate ethnic-based music.

Greene is at his best when recounting the musical and related developments within ethnic communities and the connections between those groups and the mainstream. If there is an area where he allowed his standards to drop, it is in using his data to account for the popularity of ethnic music. For example, Greene cites the folk-dance and folk-festival movements of the early twentieth century as evidence that an open attitude toward ethnic cultures was evolving. However, many who participated in these movements were intellectuals or cultural workers already converted to a liberal social and political agenda. They were not the proletarian consumers of ethnic music that Greene discusses in the rest of the book.

Later, by examining how specific ethnic artists or songs attracted broad-based audiences, Greene attempts to show how ethnic music became general popular music. For every Lawrence Welk or "Bei Mir Bist Du Schön," however, there were many other artists and songs whose popularity never extended beyond a specific ethnic group. During its heyday, from 1940 to 1960, ethnic music did not supplant general popular music. It simply constituted a small portion of what was popular.

These criticisms are minor, however, when one considers the magnitude of the book's achievements. *A Passion for Polka* is the result of laborious research into music, culture, and social life within European-American communities. It provides detailed accounts of music-related activities—such as conducting business in specific communities and the unique cultural settings that played a role in shaping ethnic music—and thus sets its subject into meaningful contexts.

A Passion for Polka is important for the Upper Midwest because it deals with music styles and musicians of considerable regional popularity. In addition, it shows that events and trends in the area were part of a national phenomena. Victor Greene has created the standard to which later books about ethnic music will be compared.

Reviewed by PHILIP NUSBAUM, folk arts program associate at the Minnesota State Arts Board, who is the author/compiler of *Norwegian-American Music from Minnesota: Old-Time and Traditional Favorites* (1989).

News & Notes

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THE MANITOBA FLOOD of 1950: An Illustrated History (Winnipeg: Watson and Dwyer, 1993, 110 p., paper, \$17.00) is a timely publication by J. M. Bumsted. Detailing in text and more than one hundred photographs the spring flooding of the Red River Valley in 1950, the book includes personal memories and survivor narratives about what the U.S. Red Cross at the time called "the worst disaster of its kind in the history of North America." Particularly interesting is the story of the government's hedging on paying flood-damage claims of more than \$50 million (1950 figures). Look for similar "keepsake" books on the Midwest's flood of 1993.

HISTORY AND TRIVIA are conjoined in *The Awesome Almanac of Minnesota* (Fontana, Wis.: B&B Publishing, 1993, 175 p., paper, \$12.95). Written by Jean Blashfield, this illustrated volume offers "comprehensive coverage of the best, the worst, the most, the least, the good, the bad, the famous, the infamous." (The Jolly Green Giant wears a size 37 shoe; President Theodore Roosevelt gave his "Speak softly and carry a big stick" advice at the state fair in 1901.)

Minnesota trivia buffs and travelers will enjoy browsing through the entries, which range from one to several paragraphs in length. Chapters focus on official Minnesota, nature and the environment, historic milestones, municipal stories, the arts, entertainers, industry, and sports. A day-by-day calendar of historic events precedes a credible index. Similar almanacs have been published for Wisconsin, Illinois, Michigan, and Indiana.

TWO OF MINNESOTA'S most popular historic sites are the focus of attractive color booklets released by the MHS Press. *Split Rock Lighthouse* (revised 1993, 32 p., 43 illustrations, paper, \$7.50) tells the story of the catastrophic North Shore storm that provided the catalyst for building the light station, the powerful people who wanted it built, and the modest keepers whose vigilance kept ships safe on the world's most dangerous lake. Fascinating recollections by the keepers' children recount the hardships and pleasures of life at the isolated sentinel.

James J. Hill House (1993, 36 p., 80 illustrations, \$7.50) is a guide (including architect's drawings) to the thirty-six-room St. Paul Victorian mansion, its striking architectural details and decorative elements, and its state-of-the-art technology. Craig Johnson's lively text also reveals stories about upstairs and downstairs life in the massive Summit Avenue home of the railroad baron, his wife Mary, and their nine children and twelve live-in servants.

"WHAT STRUCK ME first of all . . . was how good I felt in places where the conventional wisdom about beauty and scenery told me I should be bored and uncomfortable," wrote Frank Gohlke in the essay that introduces his

evocative collection of black-and-white photographs, *Measure of Emptiness: Grain Elevators in the American Landscape* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992, 105 p., cloth, \$59.95, paper, \$29.95). The looming elevators in the Twin Cities Midway district drew Gohlke to his subject in the early 1970s; from these he expanded his scope and changed his orientation to encompass rural elevators and landscapes throughout the Midwest and plains states. The photographer's essay is a wonderfully clear explanation of his intentions and the evolution of his thinking. A concluding essay by geographer John C. Hudson discusses the grain elevator as an American invention.

THE THIRTY-SEVENTH annual Missouri Valley History Conference will be held in Omaha, March 10–12, 1994. Proposals for papers and sessions in all areas of history are welcome. Proposals, accompanied by a one-page abstract and vita, should be sent by October 15, 1993, to Dale Gaeddert, chair, University of Nebraska, Omaha, Nebr. 68182.

HARVEY KLEHR and John Earl Haynes, seasoned historians of their topic, have collaborated on a new work, *The American Communist Movement: Storming Heaven Itself* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1992, 210 p., cloth, \$24.95, paper, \$13.95). Treating communism as a social as well as political movement, the authors chart its rise, heyday, and gradual decline in the United States. They pay particular attention to the party's attempt to influence more mainstream American political action. Communist and popular-front activities in Minnesota and the Midwest receive some attention throughout the book.



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