

expand upon the historical events which the book weaves together. In regards to the interviews, it is never clear as to whether they are done in English, Spanish, or both. While this is only a minor point, it may be helpful to know if some interviews were translated into English.

Whichever language was used, as Corona emerged out of the 1930s, primary data and interviewees testify that by 1940, Mexicans were primed to mobilize and strike against their long time white *patrones*. Mexican men used networks from playing baseball and local hangouts to plan the strikes. Though denied any positions of leadership in the formal organization process, Mexicanas were key facilitators of the burgeoning labour movement as they walked on picket lines and used their webs of association to marshal support.

Sadly, these efforts would go the way of most poor people's episodes of struggle and deteriorate into defeat. But the Mexican American community went on to access institutional power in Corona during the 1950s and 1960s. Those successes could have only occurred on the foundation of a long history of struggle. Much of that success is attributable to Mexican American soldiers returned from World War II and eligible for GI Bill benefits. This provides a hopeful conclusion to the story of Corona's Mexican origin community. However, unanswered questions remain as to whether this access to the levers of power produced equality for Mexicanas and inclusion for later Mexican arrivals such as Bracero workers. Last, what of the remaining working class Mexican Americans? GI Bill benefits connote ascension to the middle class for some, but not for all. Indeed, after demonstrating his ability with this book, these are matters which the author could certainly address in later research.

This book has been necessary for a good while. Generally, we are provided with a textured analysis of how subalterns procure equality within an antagonistic social structure. Specifically, Alamillo fills part of the considerable literature gap on Latina/Latino and US Southwestern community and labour history. This reviewer is sold on the book and I will have my labour history and comparative race/ethnicity students read it. However, the book would also be useful for other courses and scholarly endeavours in American Studies, Women and Gender Studies, and Social Movements.

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Rosemary Feurer, *Radical Unionism in the Mid-West, 1900-1950* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2006).

Many of the working-class history monographs that have been published in recent years have been community-based studies that have striven to illustrate the origin

and meaning of broad regional or national themes. This type of historiography has occasionally met with mixed success. Rosemary Feurer's new book is unquestionably a successful effort to view the remarkable challenges faced by the American labour movement over a fifty year period through the lens of one mid-western community. Anyone who may question the efficacy of community based studies need look no further than this book to have their concerns dispelled.

Feurer contends that the uneven nature of capitalist development led local terrain to be an important area of class struggle and movement formation. Her subsequent supporting evidence, which is firmly grounded in broad primary source research, ably supports this main thesis. Choosing to make District 8 of the United Electrical Workers the focus of her study is particularly significant. The UE was often viewed as being run by communists by other unions in both the Congress of Industrial Organizations and the American Federation of Labor. The UE, despite its importance in the history of the American labour movement, has not received the kind of attention that has been devoted to unions in auto and steel. District 8 was also based in the mid-west – an area that deserves more scrutiny from working-class historians. Feurer's analysis of UE District 8 sheds light upon the internal operation of the union, and reveals internal tensions and rivalries that seem to have roiled virtually every American union in the 1930s and 1940s.

The main conflict within the UE, as with many industrial unions, was over the role of communists. This book would be a major contribution to the existing body of work on industrial unions for its commentary on communism if for nothing else found between its covers. Like Stephen Meyer's *Stalin Over Wisconsin: The Making and Unmaking of Militant Unionism, 1900-1950*, this book shows that communists made decisive contributions to unions at the local level. Feurer also shows, like Meyer, how local communists often paid an enormous personal price for their political beliefs. In the case of the UE in St. Louis, the communists were led by William Sentner. Sentner frequently found himself under siege by employers, rank and file union members, and national union leaders. His own beliefs, like those of so many American communists, were challenged by the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact and the revelation of the brutal nature of Stalinism. He and other communists in UE District 8 operated fairly openly in their early years with the union, but their activities were circumscribed in the post-war years due to the anti-communists fervour that gripped the United States.

Electrical industry companies are the employers discussed in this book. Components manufacturers like Emerson are often seen as ancillaries to larger industries like steel and auto, but we see here that they played an important role in local economies. The electrical companies in St. Louis were locally owned operations that practiced employer paternalism while simultaneously doing everything possible to oppose unionization. Like the meat packing employers described by Liz Cohen in *Making A New Deal: Industrial Workers in Chicago, 1919-1939*, St. Louis' industrial capitalists sought to maintain full control of their plants but found their

efforts thwarted by the economic cataclysm of 1929 and the determined efforts of their employees to exert some control over their working lives. Like virtually all employers in the 1930s and 1940s, those who opposed UE District 8 sought the support of local authorities—including armed force—to coerce striking workers.

UE District 8 enjoyed considerable success with organizing and with promoting a vision of civic unionism among its members. Sentner was aware of rank and file concerns about his political views, but he also knew that communists were viewed with suspicion more because of the supposed influence of the Soviet Union on American communist ideology than because of how communism was interpreted by him and others in St. Louis. Communists promoted the unionization of women and African-Americans, and agitated for public relief during the Depression. The civic model failed, however, when the union attempted to form a broader social coalition to promote major government investment in Missouri. The success of the Tennessee Valley Authority emboldened UE District 8 to agitate for the creation of a Missouri Valley Authority that would finance the construction of a range of public works projects. The UE allied with groups like the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People to promote the MVA's creation. Feurer persuasively argues that this civic model of unionism that was exemplified by the effort to create the MVA failed due to employer efforts to reassert control during the post-war years. This observation is significant as it illustrates that American unions attempted to pursue a version of unionism in the post-war years that transcended the work place, but were stymied more by employer opposition than because of apathy within the labour movement.

This book is primarily about the years from the early 1930s to the early 1950s, so a title that reflects this emphasis would have perhaps been more appropriate. This slight shortcoming does not in any way diminish the strengths that this book possesses. In an analysis that incorporates gender, race, politics, economics, and biography Feurer has made an enormous contribution to our understanding of how the American labour movement developed from the 1930s to the 1950s.

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Katherine Archibald, *Wartime Shipyard: A Study in Social Disunity* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2006).

In 1942 Katherine Archibald, a graduate student in sociology at University of California—Berkeley, began work at the Moore Dry Dock shipyard in Oakland, California. In subsequent years she wrote up her experiences and the result was her classic participant observation study of a Bay Area shipyard during World War II, *Wartime Shipyard: A Study in Social Disunity*. This new edition is accompanied with