

attractive to persons in poorer, rural areas. Populist support also had a pietist tinge, but, Cherny astutely argues, this was largely because those poorer farmers who strongly opposed liquor control remained wedded to the Democratic party.

Populist-Democratic fusion became official policy in 1896, and this coalition of economic and ethnocultural interests controlled Nebraska government until 1900. Renewed agricultural prosperity and agitation over prohibition then led many poorer, pietist farmers back to the GOP. Republican ascendancy was short-lived, however, for after 1905 the party split into competing factions. Democratic divisions were less serious, and the Democrats' emphasis on economic and political reform, opposition to moralistic legislation, and successful organization of old Populists began an era of Democratic control lasting until 1918.

Cherny closely examines the ancestry of progressivism in both major parties and the Progressive party. In general, he finds that economic distress motivated supporters of Populism and of a faction in each major party; that there was very little overlap in the leadership; and that Populist economic proposals differed greatly from progressive emphasis on regulation of business and individual behavior.

Cherny's study is important and insightful, but its elements are not equally impressive. His analysis of voting behavior is instructive; yet, his failure to consider turnout and his basic reliance on county data (and not even from all counties) raise questions. Furthermore, while the discussion of the 1880s considers religion, later analysis uses only ethnic variables. Finally, although Cherny makes some worthwhile points about leadership and the political system, his analysis is brief and largely superficial. These criticisms are caveats, however, not major objections, for Cherny has demonstrated his primary points and written an important work.

Purdue University, West Lafayette

Philip R. VanderMeer

Working with History: The Historical Records Survey in Louisiana and the Nation, 1936-1942. By Burl Noggle. (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1981. Pp. ix, 139. Notes, appendix, bibliographical note. \$14.95.)

Though the Historical Records Survey (HRS) was one of the most popular relief programs designed by the Franklin D. Roosevelt administration during the Depression, it has received surprisingly little attention from the historical profession. This neglect seems especially curious since the project was intended

to salvage and make accessible a vast body of public records presumably of great interest and importance to historians. The American Historical Association established a Public Archives Commission as early as 1899 in response to concern about the treatment of public records; yet, the HRS and the work it achieved have been virtually ignored since 1942. The appearance of Burl Noggle's essay on the HRS in Louisiana is therefore a hopeful sign that interest among historians in this program is on the rise.

The Historical Records Survey was formally established in January, 1936, as an agency of the Federal Writers' Project (FWP), one of four arts projects sponsored by the Works Progress Administration (WPA). HRS gained separate status from FWP in November, 1936. Its purpose was twofold. First, it was to provide jobs for white-collar workers, 85 percent of whom had to be on the relief rolls. Second, it was to locate, preserve, organize, inventory, and make accessible the public records of state and local governments. It accomplished both these aims, according to Noggle, rather admirably. In its six-year existence, it gave work to several thousand unemployed, salvaged countless records, and produced almost two thousand publications, mostly inventories of municipal, county, and state archives. It did so, moreover, without the controversy that surrounded the other arts projects. This was possible in part because HRS, maintains Noggle, was a manifestation of the cultural regionalism "that coursed through American culture and scholarship in the 1930s" (p. 54).

HRS units were established in all forty-eight states plus New York City and the District of Columbia. One of the best and most successful of these units, according to Noggle, was the one in Louisiana. It produced "some of the best county inventories ever published" (p. 56). To demonstrate this point Noggle includes in a sixty-page appendix selected contents from the *St. Bernard Parish Inventory*, published in December, 1938. A review of these excerpts does indeed confirm Noggle's judgment as to the quality of the inventories, or at least this inventory, produced by Louisiana.

Noggle's essay is brief (only seventy-five pages), perhaps too brief for the goals he has set for himself; namely, to offer a case study of a New Deal relief program and to suggest how this nation looked at its history in the 1930s. As a case study, *Working with History* suffers from a lack of breadth and scope. The narrative focuses too narrowly on the program's administration and administrators and not enough on its operation and

its workers. It is the traditional view of history from the top. The reader is left wondering who were the people who salvaged and inventoried the records, how did they go about their work, how did they look upon their work, and what became of them when the program fell victim to the war effort. As a case study, therefore, Noggle's essay is incomplete; hence, it is only partly successful.

Noggle succeeds more fully in communicating the state of mind among historians and others toward the study of American history in the 1930s. The HRS county studies, along with the FWP state studies, enjoyed a large measure of popularity, according to Noggle, because they were a manifestation of the growing interest among citizens in defining and evaluating what it was to be an American, particularly in the face of the threats of economic collapse and fascism. The public records of America's past were certainly critical to this evaluation process, and Noggle makes this point well.

In addition to the essay and the appendix, the book contains a brief but helpful bibliographical note; regrettably, it does not contain an index. The author has produced a very thoughtful and well-researched study, one, it is hoped, that will inspire similar efforts in other states.

Indiana Historical Society,
Indianapolis

Robert K. O'Neill

Andrew Jackson and the Course of American Freedom, 1822-1832. Volume II. By Robert V. Remini. (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1981. Pp. xvi, 469. Illustrations, notes, index. \$20.00.)

Few presidents, before or since, have seized the public imagination as much as Andrew Jackson. Generations of some of the best historians in America have used their talents to explain Old Hickory's influence. Now, Robert V. Remini, a leading Jackson scholar, proposes a major reinterpretation of his subject's life. In this second volume of a planned trilogy, he advances the story over the ten-year period from Jackson's retirement as governor of Florida in 1822 through his reelection as president.

The central theme of the book is the conflict between corruption and liberty in America. By corruption, says Remini, Jackson and his supporters meant not only venality, but misuse of government power against freedom. Indeed, the author contends, James Monroe's administration "was perhaps one of the most corrupt in the early history of the United States" (p. 15).