sible a new frankness in the American novel.' But the debate over Dreiser's style (or lack of one) still goes on" (p. 112). "George Barr McCutcheon's experiment in [realism and] tragedy, The Sherrods (1903), must have chilled the ardor of his fans who were looking to another Graustark" (p. 113). "Undoubtedly the best of the lot of these novels about women in Chicago is Willa Cather's Lucy Gayheart (1935) . . . . The plot is slight, but as Howard Mumford Jones said, no one reads Cather for her plots" (p. 242).

Andrews has also selected some apposite epigraphs for several of his chapters—among them, Carl Sandburg's "Hog butcher for the world" (p. 1); George Horton's "Mrs. O'Leary lit her lamp 'n the shed" (p. 22); Bret Harte's "Queen of the West, by some enchanter taught" (p. 38); H.L. Mencken's "Out in Chicago, the only genuinely civilized city in the New World" (p. 71); and Nelson Algren's "It isn’t hard to love a town for its broad and bending boulevards" (p. 264).

In the physical center of this book (its rational center is, of course, Chicago itself) one finds a splendid gallery of photographs, including those of poet and biographer Sandburg; "Sharps and Flats" columnist Eugene Field; novelist Henry Fuller on a bust sculpted by Lorado Taft; short story writer Sherwood Anderson; Harriet Monroe, founder of Poetry; playwright Ben Hecht; and, in a group at Schlogl's Round Table, cartoonist John McCutcheon.

The book is appropriate for library acquisition, even if literary critics may derogate as trivia most of the pieces discussed. After all, some critics' trivia may turn out to be some historians' pay dirt.

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A.L. Lazarus


In the 1970s John Bodnar conducted "more than one thousand" (p. 193) interviews with retired Pennsylvania industrial workers. Workers' World is a selection of those interviews, together with a series of essays in which he interprets the workers' comments. Sixteen men and nine women describe rather dreary lives and unpromising jobs in the years prior to the Depression, and nine men (including two from the earlier group) recount their often exciting but unexceptional activities as union organizers in the 1930s. Bodnar does not explain why or how he selected these particular accounts from the larger body of interview materials,
but certain features stand out. Most of his workers and organizers were engaged in the coal mining and iron and steel industries. An even higher percentage were first- or second-generation East European immigrants. Of the twenty-six who are identified by ethnicity, eleven are Poles, six are other East Europeans, and three are Italians. The names of most of those who are not identified suggest similar origins. In contrast, only four, including two blacks, are from long-established American families.

These distinctions may or may not be important, but they are worth noting because of the strong emphasis Bodnar places on the workers' families. He argues that familial ties, and the desire to protect and enhance those ties, were the common denominators of the workers' world. Products of a social milieu in which powerlessness and economic failure were taken for granted, Pennsylvania's industrial employees harbored few material aspirations. Realists and pessimists, they remained passive members of family-centered "enclaves" isolated from society and impervious to the blandishments of bourgeois life. Even in the 1930s, Bodnar argues, they embraced unions merely to win job security and institutional protection for their families.

Bodnar's approach is intriguing and emphasizes a dimension of working class life that is easy to overlook because it is so obvious, but in this reviewer's opinion does not accurately reflect the interview material. The interviewees emphasize their family associations, as one would expect, but their comments are diverse and often contradictory. One is not impressed with their sense of powerlessness, rejection of material ambition, or "realistic" dismissal of the possibilities of social progress. Bodnar's schema, moreover, rests on an implicit counterfactual comparison. He argues in effect that interviews with farmers, executives, or professionals would reveal less interest in and reliance on family associations. But would they? Or does the oral history format virtually guarantee the types of statements that Bodnar emphasizes? This reviewer's experiences, and those of others, suggest that oral history interviews elicit much information about family relationships and notable events, strikes in particular in the cases of industrial workers, but very little about routine activities such as everyday work associations, machine operations, and technological change. Bodnar's interviews seem to be consistent with this pattern.

Finally, even if one assumes that this reviewer has missed nuances of the workers' statements that others would find noteworthy and has underestimated the sensitivity of his technique, Bodnar's analysis remains suspect. By selecting East Europeans
employed in industries characterized by low growth rates and old-fashioned managerial methods, he has based his interpretative essays on the careers of individuals who had little chance to succeed in industry and dismal prospects in society at large. The thirty-two workers featured in the volume had far more reason than workers generally to rely on family connections and relationships. Had Bodnar selected a better mix of workers, as well as a better mix of industries, his interpretative statements might be more than the suggestive but unproven hypotheses they remain.

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Daniel Nelson


*The American Farmer and the New Deal* is an analysis of the farm programs of the administration of Franklin D. Roosevelt. The book’s title is slightly misleading in that the bulk of the work consists of an administrative history of the Agriculture Adjustment Administration (AAA), but this in no way detracts from its value as a solid contribution to the field of agricultural history.

Theodore Saloutos begins his work by recounting the problems of farmers in the 1920s and their lack of success in establishing a comprehensive government farm policy at that time. During the presidential campaign of 1932 this quest was brought to the attention of Franklin Roosevelt, the Democratic candidate, who proved to be receptive to the initiatives of such farm leaders as M.L. Wilson and Henry A. Wallace.

When the New Deal began to take shape in the spring of 1933, one of its centerpieces was the Agricultural Adjustment Act, a complex piece of legislation designed to restore the farmer to his proper place in the American economy. Saloutos very carefully explains how the AAA functioned, its relationship to the Department of Agriculture, its successes and failures and the reasons for them. He analyzes the roles played by leading personalities. Secretary of Agriculture Henry A. Wallace appears only on the periphery, but the program was greatly influenced by the work of men like Chester C. Davis, Jerome Frank, and Rexford Tugwell. Social and economic conditions influenced the success of such programs as the domestic allotment plan and the Farm Security Administration, and Saloutos explains that whether or not a program worked or attracted participants was often also affected by such intangibles as race relations, local and rural