

histories and biographies, interviews, correspondence, and field observation.

The result of his labor is an extensive account of Missouri's population origins, perhaps the most thorough treatment any state has yet received. Its entire settlement history is considered, from the Indians and earliest white and black arrivals through the 1980 census. American and foreign migrants, whose convergence on the national crossroads of Missouri was aided by its position at the junction of the Ohio, Mississippi, and Missouri river valleys, chose settlement locations according to economic potential and accessibility. Chapters describe population sources and settlement patterns in periods to 1980 and place Missouri's experience into its larger national context. An appendix lists by county the leading nativity or ethnic groups in 1860 and 1980 and the location of unique settlements. A "wall map" on a separate sheet is essentially a distillation of the book, locating and identifying ethnic enclaves both large (Germans, French) and small (Swedes, Bohemians) among the old-stock Americans (predominantly from Kentucky, Tennessee, and Virginia). Hoosiers will be especially interested in the significance of Indiana natives among early Missourians (fifth largest population source in 1860 and fourth in 1890) and the growth of Amish and Mennonite communities since 1945.

Only minor problems mar the book. The lightest tone on some choropleth maps disappeared in reproduction. The wall map is not dated, although according to the sources and text it displays mostly nineteenth-century conditions. The book may not delve deeply enough into the details of Missouri's past to please some readers, but its purpose is to "provide a geographic data base" for future research by discovering the "where" of sources and settlements rather than the "why" of differences among groups (p. v). Before the why can be thoroughly determined the where must be revealed, and this Gerlach does excellently.

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*Workers On the Edge: Work, Leisure, and Politics in Industrializing Cincinnati, 1788-1890.* By Steven J. Ross (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985. Pp. xx, 406. Illustrations, tables, appendix, notes, selected bibliography, index. \$35.00.)

For most of the nineteenth century Cincinnati was a major industrial city with many successful firms and a large labor force. In recent years, however, it has attracted far less scholarly attention than a host of New England and Pennsylvania villages. Steven J. Ross partially remedies this omission with an extended description of the evolution of the Cincinnati labor force. Much of his account has a familiar ring. For example, he distinguishes between an "Age of the Artisan" (1788-1843), when handicraft pro-

duction was the rule, and an "Age of Manufacturing" (1843-1873), when the factory emerged. His third category, an "Age of Modern Industry" (1873-1890), when large factories succeeded the small mid-century plants, is more novel but questionable. Other features of the story are also familiar. Cincinnati workers (as well as other Cincinnatians) subscribed to a "republican ideology"; workers more often saw themselves as Germans or Protestants or Odd Fellows than as wage earners; and labor unions grew in good times and declined in depression periods. Indeed, until the 1880s, there was little to distinguish the experiences of Cincinnati workers from those of the workers that John R. Commons *et al.* described in their pioneering, four-volume *History of Labor in the United States* (1918-1935) and that various other authors have recounted in the interim. In the mid-1880s, a time of general labor upheaval, Cincinnati workers became more aggressive and united, winning many strikes and nearly capturing control of the city government. Ross devotes approximately a quarter of his book to these episodes, and it is those final chapters which are his principal contribution.

Was there more to the Cincinnati story than Ross has uncovered? Possibly. Though Ross's documentation is impressive, he has not found the kinds of information, such as payrolls and other internal business records, that permit a precise view of changes in employment and working conditions. Too often he is forced to infer relationships (e.g., an increase in average factory size led to greater insecurity and dissatisfaction). More important, the records Ross uses reflect the perspectives of artisans and factory craftsmen, a large though hardly representative group of Cincinnati workers. Through most of the nineteenth century Cincinnati's major employer was the meat-packing and meat by-product industries, which employed few skilled workers. Ross devotes five pages to the meat-packers and their workers and disregards the soap and candlemakers, though a recent paper by Steve Gordon has demonstrated that abundant records are available. In view of the ethnocultural divisions that Ross documents, there is good reason to doubt that the skilled workers' leaders and publicists spoke for all Cincinnati industrial workers. Finally, Ross is preoccupied with the workers' failure to put their jobs ahead of other ties and allegiances and makes much of their united efforts between 1884 and 1887. But which pattern was the rule and which was the exception? Ross's data suggest that the events of the mid-1880s were the aberration and that his efforts to find a common class consciousness might have been devoted to more productive issues.

Though Ross has brought together much useful information about Cincinnati workers in the nineteenth century, the city's potential for economic and labor historians remains largely unrealized.

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