

views. This is Bogue's considerable contribution to the examination of Turner's life and intellectual legacy.

The author's penchant for detail—the thought-by-thought analysis of correspondence, a phrase-by-phrase examination of the essays, a thrust-by-thrust presentation of speeches, the immersion into the nitty gritty of everyday living—unfortunately makes for tedious reading. The reader gets lost in the details.

Nevertheless, for everyone interested in a better understanding of the frontier and sectionalism—Transappalachia and the Old Northwest figured prominently in Turner's studies—Bogue's biography is the essential well-balanced introduction. For those who already know where they stand, a careful reading of Bogue may reaffirm or unsettle some of their thinking. Further, it is a model biography and a case study of economic, naval, and geographic determinism.

Bogue acknowledges that Turner consistently argued that racism and slavery played secondary roles in American development and that Turner's views on recent immigrants, Indians, and Jews were stereotypical. These positions need careful examination in their context as well as assessment from today's perspective.

Bogue's intriguing subtitle aptly encapsulates Turner's quest to understand the unfolding of American history. He was fond of poetry, particularly that of Rudyard Kipling, who ended one piece: "We yearned beyond the skyline, where strange roads go down" (p. xvi).

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*An Appalachian New Deal: West Virginia in the Great Depression.*

By Jerry Bruce Thomas. (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1998. Pp. x, 316. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$36.95.)

When most people think or read about West Virginia, coal miners are the workers who probably first come to mind. But coal miners, however important to West Virginia's economic life, have never made up a majority of that state's working people. To his credit, Jerry Bruce Thomas has produced a fine study of the Great Depression in West Virginia that spreads the misery equally among miners, lumbermen, farmers, urban workers, and their families. It is, in fact, one of this book's strengths that the author details the many ways in which much of the New Deal legislation affected ordinary Americans on their farms, in the mining and lumber camps, and in the towns and cities of West Virginia.

The purpose of this study is to examine the impact of New Deal policies on the state government and people of West Virginia. The author succeeds in this task and in the process fills gaps in our knowl-

edge of yet another state's history during this nation's worst economic crisis. He more than adequately describes and analyzes the effect of such federal programs as the National Industrial Recovery Act and the Agricultural Adjustment Act. He goes further than simple narration and provides the reader with a detailed analysis of how groups in the state, from the Community Chest organizations to the United Mine Workers of America, reacted to the economic crisis and federal intervention. While Thomas's efforts were not specifically aimed at derailing any long-held notions about West Virginia during the depression, his work contrasts with another recent study of Appalachia's economic development which cites the New Deal as partial cause of the mountain states' long-term economic ills.

Following the lead of many other historians who have studied the New Deal at the state and local level, Thomas's conclusions about the impact of the New Deal on West Virginia are "charitable" (p. 2). While the national programs did not solve the nation's economic crisis in the short-run, Roosevelt's policies "did much to make the Depression more tolerable and to encourage in the American people a sense of compassion" (p. 3). In other areas, too, Thomas's conclusions conform to those of others. Examining the several governors of West Virginia during the depression, Thomas confirms the "distracting influence of local issues and economic interests and the difficulty of persuading state politicians to follow national leadership" (p. 3). As in other parts of the country, West Virginians also experienced long-term changes that derived from New Deal policies, but these programs did not provide enduring solutions to West Virginia's basic economic weaknesses. In an interesting epilogue Thomas concludes that the New Deal did not provide an adequate economic stimulus to propel West Virginia into a period of post-World War II progress experienced by other southern states hit equally hard by the depression. He lays a good deal of the blame for this on the state's topography and history of economic exploitation by the coal industry. In the post-depression decades "the prevailing concepts of progress and growth in the American economy offered no sustainable alternatives suitable to West Virginia's environment and unusual conditions" (p. 240).

This work is based upon solid research in all relevant primary and secondary sources, and while the author's writing style is neither imaginative nor engaging it is adequate to the task of narrating the details of depression-era politics and economics at both the state and national level. This work should take its rightful place in American historiography alongside other state studies of the Great Depression in America.

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