

good wages in the North, many lonely and disenchanted whites returned to the South either temporarily or permanently.

During the early 1930s many more returned home, as the Great Depression reduced the supply of jobs, the Midwest's chief attraction. By the late 1930s, however, the northward migration of white southerners resumed and accelerated during World War II and the postwar period of prosperity, reaching a peak in the 1950s. In the process, southern whites transplanted much of their culture in northern communities. Berry specifically considers the transplantation of southern religious and musical culture, discussing the rise of the Southern Baptist Church north of the Ohio River and the importance of country and western music in the lives of the newcomers to the Midwest.

Berry finds that throughout these years prejudice against the migrants was widespread, spawning negative stereotypes regarding the supposed ignorance, poverty, and violence of southern whites. As the elimination of poverty rose to a place of prominence on the national agenda during the 1960s, well-meaning social scientists and social welfare agencies reinforced these stereotypes when they focused new attention on the hillbilly ghettos of midwestern cities. Berry, however, emphasizes that white southern migrants, though largely blue collar, were not necessarily poor. Instead, he contends that most of them achieved their economic goals and found relative prosperity in their new homes. Yet, not all wanted to remain in Ohio, Indiana, Michigan, or Illinois for the rest of their lives. Thus Berry concludes with a short discussion of those who returned to the South after retirement. By the end of Berry's book, however, the reader is aware that even the white migrants who returned to the South left their mark on the history of the Midwest.

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*Kerner: The Conflict of Intangible Rights.* By Bill Barnhart and Gene Schlickman. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1999. Pp. xii, 406. Illustrations, appendix, notes, bibliography, index. \$29.95.)

The Kerner Report will insure that the name of Otto Kerner will not be forgotten. The report remains a seminal statement on American race relations more than thirty years after its release. Yet it is striking how little Americans—even most American historians—know about Kerner, the governor of Illinois from 1961 to 1968 and the chairman of the commission that prepared the famous report.

Bill Barnhart and Gene Schlickman have helped repair this deficiency with their new biography, the first full study of this significant politician. Theirs is a sympathetic portrait, covering the

important phases of his life but ultimately fixated on explaining the sad conclusion of his public career.

Kerner, Barnhart and Schlickman show, was a reluctant politician despite familial advantages. He was born in 1908 into the Czech community in Chicago. His father, a lawyer on the rise, served as an alderman before ultimately gaining an appointment as a federal judge. In 1934, Otto, Jr., married the youngest daughter of Anton Cermak, the late mayor of Chicago and architect of the city's modern Democratic party organization.

The polished young Kerner—educated at Brown University and Northwestern University Law School—was, however, more interested in the Illinois National Guard than in Illinois politics. His service in the guard led to a commission in the army during World War II. He saw action in North Africa, Sicily, and the Pacific theater.

During the war, Kerner impressed Jacob Arvey, his commanding officer in the guard and a leader in the Cook County Democratic Party, who encouraged the decorated veteran's entrance into state politics. Kerner's vote-getting ability attracted the attention of Richard Daley, who successfully backed Kerner as the Democratic nominee for governor in 1960.

At this point, Barnhart and Schlickman back away from a chronological approach and feature Kerner's most notable work as governor: mental health reform, death penalty commutations, open housing issues, and the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders that produced the Kerner Report. This informative topical approach reveals much about public policy in a midwestern state in the 1960s, but it does not produce a comprehensive evaluation of Kerner's two terms as governor.

The most distinctive feature of this biography is its extensive examination of the context of Kerner's conviction for fraud and other charges in 1973 while he was a federal judge. The history of corruption in Chicago, the horse racing scene in Illinois, the rising power of the Internal Revenue Service, the growing distrust of public officials in the late 1960s and early 1970s, and much more are covered in great detail.

Barnhart and Schlickman argue that Kerner's conviction was unfair and that it would have been overturned had he lived longer. (He died of cancer in 1976 not long after his release from prison.) Their brief is persuasive, but even at the end of this thoroughly researched biography based on dozens of interviews and manuscript collections, Kerner's inept defense against federal charges is striking. This points to a characteristic of this study: though it will likely be the definitive biography of the Illinois politician, the inner Kerner remains elusive.

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