

order dance with modernity. The authors try to describe the specific mechanisms of boundary maintenance (that can be strikingly different) that each group employs to maintain its fundamental character. They provide ample evidence to suggest that there is no imminent threat that any of these groups will disappear. Ironically, the old orders are thriving at a moment in history when their way of life is seemingly most threatened by outside intervention, via the tourists who flock to their communities and their movement into the mainstream of the economy.

THOMAS J. MEYERS is professor of sociology at Goshen College, Goshen, Indiana. His research in the Old Order Amish of northern Indiana has focused on social change that is related to rapid population growth and subsequent movement into industrial employment as the principal means of making a living.

Duquesne and the Rise of Steel Unionism. By James D. Rose. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2001. Pp. xi, 284. Tables, notes, index. \$42.50.)

Our understanding of unionism in the 1930s is central to our understanding of organized labor in contemporary America. James D. Rose explores the rise of steel unionism from the shop-floor perspective, presenting intriguing findings that engage some of the central interpretive controversies in the field.

The gigantic Duquesne mill, stretching along the Monongahela River near Pittsburgh, was a key component of the nation's steel industry. Established in the 1880s as a competitor to Andrew Carnegie's empire, the plant soon was absorbed by Carnegie; modernized and expanded, it became one of the most important units in Carnegie Steel and, after 1901, in United States Steel. Employing thousands, technologically advanced (for a while), and dominating a community with a diverse population of native-born whites, African Americans, and a multitude of European immigrant groups, Duquesne is an excellent platform from which to explore shop-floor activism and steel unionism.

Rose's study stretches from the appearance of a lodge of the Amalgamated Association of Iron and Steel Workers, two months after the mill's opening, through the successful organizing campaigns of the Steel Workers Organizing Committee (SWOC) in the 1930s, to the union's entrenchment in the plant by World War II. Early sections describe the formation of mill and community, shop-floor operations, unionization efforts, and such conflicts as the Great Steel Strike of 1919. The picture that emerges is a complex one of both a mill and a town divided by ethnicity, skill, and work experiences.

The book's heart is its treatment of the depression era. Here, Rose enters several intertwined debates about unionism in the 1930s: the

extent to which rank-and-file militancy, rather than the actions of government and national union leadership, underlay the upsurge of organizing in the early New Deal; whether this militancy represented a lost opportunity for a less-bureaucratized, more democratic labor movement; the degree to which American workers had transcended their diverse ethnic and cultural origins to develop a culture of unity; and the nature of the employee representation plans of the 1920s and 1930s.

Rose's findings contribute substantially to these debates. He describes a workforce that remained deeply divided by ethnicity, skill, and work experience, one not characterized by the unity some historians have described. These divisions had a profound impact on unionization efforts, with both the Amalgamated and SWOC finding it difficult to unite their core constituency—unskilled hourly workers of Eastern European origin and African Americans—with skilled tonnage workers and skilled tradesmen, often native-born of northern and western European ethnicity. A complicating factor was U.S. Steel's Employee Representation Plan (ERP). Established as a mechanism to prevent unionization and dominated to a significant degree by management, the ERP was for many skilled workers an adequate and effective means for meeting their needs for representation—for many, preferable to an independent union.

This contention challenges the prevailing view, which dismisses ERP-type organizations as simply company unions and their advocates as management lackeys; at Duquesne, activists used the organization to improve the conditions of skilled workers, and they developed work provisions, grievance procedures, and other mechanisms that were adopted by the eventually successful SWOC organization. Further, Rose argues that Duquesne's rank-and-file movement was inadequate in bringing unionization to the mill. Only a favorable national labor policy and a highly structured national union organization could accomplish this. He thus presents a strong alternative reading to those who argue that CIO unions chose a cautious, bureaucratic mode of operation that stifled a genuine grassroots union movement.

Rose's central assertions are likely to be disputed, and of course the degree to which the Duquesne experience reflected broader patterns in 1930s working-class activism will be debated, but clearly his in-depth analysis of labor activism in this mill is an impressive, challenging, and thought-provoking contribution to our understanding of American working class history.

GARY L. BAILEY is chair of the department of history at Indiana University of Pennsylvania. He teaches labor and public history and serves as editor of the Pennsylvania Historical Association's *Studies in Pennsylvania History* series.