

provisions embodied by the Wagner Act. More recently, union and worker strength eroded further through concessionary bargaining, assaults on unions, new technology and managerial practices that increased employer power, neo-liberal deregulation policies—and ineffective union leadership.

Lichtenstein's analysis is not all gloomy. He finds hope in AFL-CIO president John Sweeney's efforts to organize new workers in service industries and to become more independent politically, and especially in union efforts to ally with neighborhood groups and other citizen activists around "living wage" campaigns and other working-class community issues. But his prescription for union revival seems clearly patterned after the old CIO model of the 1930s: militancy, democratic union governance, and political action.

Critics who find such views outmoded and naive will have trouble refuting the sound scholarship and logic on which they are based and that run throughout this timely and important book. And while the book does not mention Indiana, it indirectly sheds much light on Hoosier history and should stimulate much interest among scholars, workers, union officials, and the general public—in Indiana and elsewhere.

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*Merging Lines: American Railroads, 1900–1970.* By Richard Saunders, Jr. (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2001. Pp. xix, 486. Maps, tables, notes, bibliography, index. \$49.95.)

The history of American railroads during the first seven decades of the twentieth century can be summarized as a struggle for survival in the face of changing markets, system over-capacity, oppressive governmental regulation, and the rise of external competition. Railroad managers sometimes were inept, and the politicians who dictated the framework in which these companies functioned usually performed no better.

In *Merging Lines*, Richard Saunders, Jr., concentrates on the primary strategy employed during that era by railroad leaders and federal officials in their ongoing attempts to set matters right. Mergers had been commonplace before 1900, but courts, regulators, and Congress then decided that further combinations were contrary to the public interest. By 1920 federal policy had reversed course and now endorsed mergers—but only symbolically—and rail executives thwarted specific federal proposals that they deemed objectionable. As the industry's economic fortunes worsened after World War II, interest in mergers revived and major combinations were cobbled together. Some merged entities thrived. Others, especially Penn Central, proved to be embarrassing failures.

*Merging Lines* is a revised and updated version of the author's 1978 volume, *The Railroad Mergers and the Coming of Conrail*. The earlier work was rated as a perceptive and lucid analysis of the subject. The 2001 revision is even better. The narrative is expanded by nearly 20 percent and is bolstered by informative material relating to individual railroad companies, the decline of passenger service, post-World War II problems, and industry leaders. It is more accessible to the general reader because arcane railroad terminology is translated into ordinary English. The new volume includes twice the number of maps (although maps on pages 88, 133, 361, and at the top of page 61 incorrectly label the systems depicted). Saunders has softened some of his earlier criticisms of industry leaders, regulators, politicians, and rail labor.

Of particular interest to Indiana readers is the extensive coverage of the decline of the Pennsylvania and New York Central railroads and their merger into Penn Central, whose collapse in 1970 placed one-half of the state's rail mileage in bankruptcy.

Saunders's emphasis on mergers should not deter readers seeking a broader understanding of railroads during the 1900–1970 period. He incorporates essential information about the political economy in which railroads functioned, explains key milestones in public policy, and conveys what industry executives were thinking and why they acted as they did. Although the historical literature on this legendary industry is extensive, twentieth-century coverage is dominated by individual corporate histories. Only a handful of books effectively capture in a balanced fashion the important themes and issues of American railroading during these crucial years. *Merging Lines* is one of them.

Some readers may wonder why the author stopped at 1970, because the post-1970 round of mergers eclipsed what had gone on before. But Saunders points out (p. xviii) that his earlier version quickly became dated owing to "the classic danger of writing history too soon after the fact."

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*Pullman Porters and the Rise of Protest Politics in Black America, 1925–1945*. By Beth Tompkins Bates. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001. Pp. xiv, 275. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. Clothbound, \$45.00; paperbound, \$17.95.)

In the decades following the Civil War the ratification of the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth amendments seemingly guaranteed equal rights to all Americans. Yet before the civil rights movement, African Americans rarely found equality in the United States,