

America divided the community's workers for two decades. Yet the coup de grâce came in the late 1970s, and most dramatically in September 1980, when the smelter's new owner, the Atlantic Richfield Corporation (ARCO) regained ACM's Chilean mines, a profitable alternative to Anaconda and Butte copper. Unwilling to invest in its now inefficient and outdated Anaconda facility (made so by years of poor management under ACM), trying to escape what it considered onerous environmental regulations, and obtaining favorable tax treatments for a plant shutdown, ARCO finally announced the closure of the smelter.

Mercier's account of the rise and fall of community unionism in Anaconda is well written, well researched, and well argued. My one regret lies in the book's failure to exploit its oral history sources more thoroughly. Women's voices, so central to many of Mercier's arguments, are sparsely quoted. Moreover, though the book concentrates heavily on the Cold War years, Anaconda's left is surprisingly mute. We learn about anticommunists and defenders of the IUMMSW, but the author says little about local socialists, communists, and "fellow travelers." The author also neglects Anaconda's corporate elite. Though Mercier does not want to "personalize the corporation or demonize its managers"—preferring instead to make the greater point that the company was merely following the logic of domestic and international capitalism—it would have been useful to hear the voices of local and distant corporate managers pondering the economic fate of this community (and not merely in press releases or public speeches).

Still, this book is a very strong one; it is a wonderful trek through post-World War II western industrial and labor history, a territory still little explored by scholars. Its rich evidentiary foundations and incisively crafted arguments make it a joy to read, and its subtle synthesis of various levels of analysis—domestic, community, institutional, national, and international—constitutes an instructional manual of sorts for writing the history of the twentieth-century industrial American West.

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*Serving History in a Changing World: The Historical Society of Pennsylvania in the Twentieth Century.* By Sally F. Griffith. ([Philadelphia]: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001. Pp. x, 539. Notes, illustrations, index. \$59.95.)

What is a historical society? How has it evolved? What are its characteristics? Where is it headed in this new century? Whose history should it preserve? Using the Historical Society of Pennsylvania as

a case study, Sally F. Griffith delves into the history of one of America's most prestigious historical societies in an attempt to answer those questions.

This is not the first time that the historical society world has been dissected for historical or scientific reasons: Griffith's book joins two recent studies—Kevin Guthrie's *The New York Historical Society: Lessons from One Nonprofit's Long Struggle for Survival* (1996) and Jed Bergman's *Managing Change in the Nonprofit Sector: Lessons from the Evolution of Five Independent Research Libraries* (1996)—both of them funded by the Mellon Foundation in New York. Their stories are pretty much identical: they tell of elitist, Caucasian clubs of founding families, peopled by avaricious acquirers of objects, documents, and materials of the early days of the republic, to which no real "professional" care was given. The leaders of these societies undertook unfettered buying, selling, and dealing with no oversight and no ethical standards. Indeed, many of the great collections of this country and in Europe were founded with plunder from other countries.

The late Susan Stitt, a long-time advocate of professional care of collections and prudent management, took office as the first President of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania in January 1990. Over an eight-year period she moved the society from its deficit mode into a modern "corporate" model. The changes sometimes prompted resistance from the old leadership. When Stitt insisted on the title of "President," Griffith writes, the board acceded and then "separated membership in the Society from the responsibility of choosing the Board and its officers" (p. 403). When the members got wind of their disenfranchisement, they voted the measure down. The episode showed both the board's isolation from the society's membership and, in the words of one dissenting board member, "mistrust . . . [of] the Society's leadership" (p. 403). (A similar skirmish recently played itself out at the Indiana Historical Society, with the result of power remaining with the members of the Society.)

Griffith's book is a welcome scholarly addition to the literature on nonprofit, museum, and historical society management, and stands in contrast to more popular renditions of the museum field, such as Thomas Hoving's *Making the Mummies Dance* (1993), an entertaining account by the former impresario of the Metropolitan Museum of Art. One wonders, however, how much general appeal it will have beyond the world of museum professionals. It should be read by every museum director and trustee in the country, but beyond that is it too much "inside baseball"? Much of the book recounts the inner dealings of the institution as it moves from one phase to the next and, to an insider, the stories are not only fascinating but recall earlier situations and colleagues in similar scenarios.

The most important chapter is the last. Entitled "Epilogue: The Predicament of Early Nineteenth-Century Institutions In a Late

Twentieth-Century World” it neatly summarizes the global issues facing the museum/historical society field. The author links together and summarizes the questions posed above. Whose history is it, where are historical societies headed, how have they evolved, and more importantly than ever, are they dinosaurs in a twenty-first century world? These are not rhetorical but real questions faced by museum and historical administrators on a daily basis. These institutions no longer resemble the cabinets of curiosities whence they came. The political and economic realities associated with today’s evolving environment have radically changed the meaning of “historical society.” Those who awaken to “relevance” too slowly will not survive. Those who do survive will operate institutions that bear little resemblance to their ancestors of the Victorian period.

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