

Turnleys *The Family of Man* must have been a powerful model, and indeed we can see some echo of that work in *McClellan Street's* passionate interest in people's lives. But perhaps the influence also shows in some images that are not particularly unusual or complex – straightforward photographs of apparently happy people smiling at the camera. Fortunately, most of the photographs in *McClellan Street* go beyond a simple well-intentioned gesture toward shared humanity. They describe a complicated and gritty environment and offer the viewer images of people with complex relationships and mixed feelings. These tougher photographs are often quite wonderful – employing complicated picture structures and unexpected viewpoints – pictures that one would not expect from seventeen-year-old photographers. We all start our own work with the model of an admired previous work in mind; perhaps this book of early work from two distinguished photographers offers a good example of how our subsequent work can

build upon yet grow distinct from that foundation.

Separately, David and Peter Turnley have published many books, covered important world events, and won awards. All young photographers (like my students) see highly successful careers like theirs and wonder how to start down that road. This book is one fantastically interesting example of two exceptional careers beginning: young brothers working hard to discover the world, photography, and their own talents.

BOB THALL is professor in and former chair of the Department of Photography at Columbia College Chicago. He is the author of *The Perfect City* (1994); *The New American Village* (2000); *City Spaces: Photographs of Chicago Alleys* (2002); and *At City's Edge: Photographs of Chicago's Lakefront* (2005). His photographs are in the permanent collections of the Art Institute of Chicago, the Canadian Centre for Architecture, and the Museum of Modern Art, among others.



The Calumet Region *An American Place*

Photographs by Gary Cialdella, edited by Gregg Hertzlieb, essays by Gregg Hertzlieb, Gary Cialdella, and John Ruff

(Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2009. Pp. 118. Photographs. \$39.95.)

Calumet-area native Gary Cialdella experienced firsthand the Region's heyday, as well as the changes brought on by the demise of its once-

thriving industrial base. This fact makes the photographer an ideal choice to document the area bordering Lake Michigan. Cialdella's pic-

tures follow three essays – all of them written by regional natives – that provide readers with a framework through which to view the images. In the first, editor Gregg Hertzlieb discusses his appreciation for the Region and his relationship to Cialdella. Cialdella's own essay tells the photographer's personal story and helps the reader to see the Calumet Region through Cialdella's eyes and lens, while also providing the rationale for his selection of photographs.

The final essay offers Valparaiso University professor of English John Ruff's appreciation of Cialdella's images. Ruff enhances his views with artistic impressions of the images and their relation to the region. Ruff anticipates the reader's questions, asking for example, of a photograph entitled, "Backyard, Reese Street, Robertsdale Neighborhood, Hammond, Indiana, 1999": "[Who] sits there, to view and be viewed in this setting?" (p. 42). As a group, the essays not only frame Cialdella's photographs but also provide analysis and insight into the Region's geography and industrial history.

Even for someone who has not visited the area, Cialdella's views provide a gritty yet passionate glimpse of the country's deindustrialization. In this respect, they bear striking similarities to photographs of other former industrial powerhouses such as Youngstown, Pittsburgh, and Birmingham in their depiction of abandoned land, buildings, and industry. What appears is a commu-

nity in the shadow of its former glory. Individual images of high-tension power lines (p. 21), a house next to the Amoco refinery (p. 57), coke batteries (p. 46), and downtown buildings (p. 83) all show an area with deep history struggling to survive. In their striking juxtaposition of industrial and personal space, they suggest both the familiar problems that afflict America's industrial centers and the details that make this place unique.

As a photographer with extensive background in architecture, Cialdella has a way of capturing the Region's varying styles and cultural influences. His view of Mina's Furniture store (p. x) provides a particularly memorable example: Here is a building that has had two lives. Underneath an overlay of chipped paneling resides the hint of a once-beautiful terra cotta façade, making the reader want to see what treasure lies beneath.

Cialdella's images are very good, but their publication quality is inconsistent. Some are crisp and accentuated, where others seem to lack detail in the shadows. Print size varies from a small snapshot, to half page, to full page, which may distract those who prefer larger views. These reservations aside, I learn something new and interesting each time I pick up this book. Gary Cialdella draws his readers in for a tour and leaves them with a greater appreciation of a familiar – but still unique – American place.

MIRIAM MEISLIK is Media Curator at the Archives Service Center, University of Pittsburgh and Lecturer in the

School of Information Science, University of Pittsburgh. She is the author of *Historic Photos of Pittsburgh* (2008).



Fur, Fortune, and Empire

The Epic History of the Fur Trade in America

By Eric Jay Dolin

(New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2010. Pp. 442. Illustrations, notes, bibliography. \$29.95.)

Eric Jay Dolin sees the story of the American fur trade as nothing less than an epic tale of the formation of American empires, particularly those of Great Britain and the United States. The fur trade as a source of wealth, a claim to jurisdiction, and a spur to expansion factored heavily, Dolin argues, into imperial rivalries between the English, French, Dutch, and Swedes, and later, the United States and British Canada. Over the course of three hundred years, fur trade merchants seeking new Indian suppliers or fresh hunting grounds explored the North American interior and thus dramatically enhanced Euro-Americans' geographical knowledge. Their catch—beaver furs, deer skins, otter pelts, buffalo robes, and numerous kinds of “small furs”—earned them enormous profits and provided the seed capital for the creation of several frontier American towns, from Albany in the East to Astoria in the West. Not least of all, the fur trade was full of colorful characters, many of whom figure at the heart of Dolin's book.

Dolin has little new to say, but the scope and style of his book are

virtues. He begins with the Dutch and French fur trade in the seventeenth century East and continues to the collapse of the bison population on the plains in the late nineteenth century. Along the way, he touches on all of the major fur trade outfits and major Euro-American players, pausing to develop the personalities of some of the more memorable actors, such as Peter Stuyvesant, the director-general of New Netherland, and John Jacob Astor, the head of the American Fur Company. Lesser players are here too—French *coureurs de bois* canoeing the Great Lakes and Mississippi River, grizzled American mountain men braving Blackfoot raids to catch beaver deep in the recesses of the Rockies, New England ship merchants navigating the dangerous fogs of the Northwest to trade with local Indians for otter skins prized by Chinese traders in Canton. Dolin has an eye for telling anecdotes and an ear for the apt turn of phrase that brings these compelling stories to life.

Unfortunately, Dolin takes an anachronistic approach to his research and writing. He pays little attention to Indians, who acted both