

tricking plan supported by Mayor Williams and U.S. Steel officials. Andrews makes no mention of the Emerson School Strike, but the denouement must have pained Edwards, who until 1929 was general secretary of the Gary Interracial Commission. After the Great Depression set in, she renounced her naïve expectation that Gary's business leaders would champion racial uplift.

Moving to Chicago in 1932, Thyra broadened her education with scholarships to Brockwood Labor College in Katonah, New York, and International People's College in Elsinore, Denmark. She became a world-famous journalist, feminist, and human rights activist. Charismatic, unconventional, and independent, Thyra believed that fascism and racism were dire threats to human dignity. She staunchly supported the

Loyalist cause in the Spanish Civil War and the Double V movement during World War II. An unapologetic communist, she faced harassment from the FBI during the Red Scare and died in 1953, on the eve of the civil rights movement that she did so much to nurture. Andrews does justice to this compelling figure. He concludes that Thyra's "rebellion against 'man's inhumanity to man' was the driving force behind her global quest for freedom" (p. 179). Highly recommended.

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Bean Blossom

The Brown County Jamboree and Bill Monroe's Bluegrass Festivals

By Thomas A. Adler

(Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2011. Pp. xxii, 248. Illustrations, notes, list of interviews, bibliography, index. \$24.95.)

Folklorist, banjoist, radio show host, former executive director of the International Bluegrass Music Museum, and Bean Blossom festival attendee since 1968, Thomas A. Adler has written an in-depth history of Bean Blossom, Indiana, and its bluegrass music festivals, specifically contextualizing Bill Monroe's music and performances within the history of

American music, bluegrass, and other festivals. *Bean Blossom* informs our understanding of the role festivals can play in the formation of music communities and of how such events serve both as platforms for seasoned professionals and as training sites for the up-and-coming.

Adler's introduction offers an historical overview of music parks, trac-

ing their long lineage from royal hunting grounds through the first public municipal parks of mid-seventeenth-century England, to modern amusement parks. He adds to the mix such American institutions as the religious camp meeting, the Chautauqua movement, and regional fiddlers' conventions, all of which contributed to the development of the rural country music park.

Adler traces the history of the Bean Blossom festival from its genesis (c.1940-41) when a free Sunday night roadside show started to attract large crowds and became known as the "Brown County Jamboree," through the 'forties, when the Francis Rund family owned, promoted, and ran the jamboree, moving it from the roadside to their property. He documents Bill Monroe's first show there in 1951 and, for reasons still unclear, his purchase of the show, the barn, and about fifty-five acres of surrounding land. Indeed, Adler walks us through Monroe's Brown County Jamboree Park in the 1950s, covers Monroe's unique "Blue Grass sound," which by 1958 was becoming a recognized style, documents the festival's golden age (1972-82)—by which time Monroe's "June festival became a prototype for bluegrass festivals everywhere" (p. 123)—and traces the inevitable changes at the park and festivals after Monroe's death in 1996. Finally, he looks at the operation headed by his son, James, and the park's new leadership in 1998 and after.

Extensively researched, drawing from numerous oral histories, archival sources, newspapers, and secondary sources, this is a scholarly work; nevertheless, Adler's writing style leans toward the general reader. Eyewitness accounts abound, including the author's: "I was taken with the interior look of the barn and the close-up view....As Norman Carlson had put it so well before, this place's effect was powerful and immediate, astounding me with its rustic look juxtaposed with the commanding musical presences of Monroe and [Ralph] Stanley" (p. 107). Indeed, for this reviewer, one of the most engaging elements of Adler's work is its use of oral histories. Throughout the text he not only draws from and documents many of these accounts, but, when necessary verifies or corrects dates and other details.

Despite his claim to have written this history for the Bean Blossom festival regulars, Adler's book will also appeal to anyone interested in the history of music festivals or in the relation of music and place, more generally. This scholarly case study of how the history of one small place can illuminate the larger world of American music and culture makes a fitting contribution to University of Illinois Press's "Music in American Life" series.

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He has published on Texas Centennial music and celebrations and the National Folk Festival and is cur-

rently documenting the oral history of swing-era vocalist Louise Tobin.



Changing Gears

End of an Era

Directed by Justin Jones

(Muncie, Ind.: Institute for Digital Entertainment & Education, in association with the Center for Middletown Studies, Ball State University, 2010), DVD.

Over the past three decades, the plant closing story has become an American set piece: workers' voices tinged with both regret and pride, images of near-empty interiors of expansive factories and old buildings with broken windows, and somewhere along the line, the scene where an iconic factory tower falls to a dynamite blast. Variations of this narrative have appeared in books (Dale Maharidge and Michael Williamson's *Journey to Nowhere*, 1985), documentaries (*The Last Truck*, 2008), and even in popular songs, such as Bruce Springsteen's "Youngstown."

Changing Gears joins that collection, this time with a focus on Muncie, Indiana. The film tells the story of the rise and fall of the Borg-Warner auto parts company and its union, United Auto Workers Local 287. As with most other documentaries on plant closings, the film focuses on workers. Interviews with the last union president—whose father had been the local's first African American president years earlier—and several other active union members are intercut with historical

background on Muncie, the company, and the union. Over the course of the film, we follow several workers as they get ready, drive to the factory, and enter the plant on its last day.

Just as the classic *Middletown* is both a story of a specific place and a story of a type of place, *Changing Gears* combines the specific history of one industrial city and one of its most significant factories with the broader story of industrialization, globalization, rising health care costs, and the struggles of industrial unions to respond to those challenges while also doing their primary job—protecting workers. In the film, the workers offer powerful testimony first to the significance of the union in shaping not only their jobs but also family and community life, and then to the almost impossible conundrum they faced at the end, as the company demanded concessions in retiree health care. While the film does not make the details of the options union leaders faced entirely clear, it illustrates powerfully that the debate involved a false choice. As several of the workers note, the plant was