

importance of race and the meaning of the assumed “social good” of white supremacy.

That said, there is much in this volume that is smart and thought-provoking, and I believe that it will inspire a number of more-detailed studies of such violence in the Midwest. I particularly like Campney’s focus on how some communities chose non-lethal violence, while others murdered, although the explanation for that difference will be left for other, more focused studies to uncover. With some attention to near-lynchings, Campney has also revealed how the authorities in the Middle West often worked to protect their prisoners; whether such

actions were more commonplace in the South than generally assumed will require further research on near-lynching in that region. Finally, Campney provides a thought-provoking discussion of the possibility of numerous private lynchings in the 1930s and beyond, episodes driven into obscurity by concern over how they would reflect upon communities; I believe that on this subject and the others raised in this volume, multiple dissertations will be launched.

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The Most Complete Political Machine Ever Known: The North's Union Leagues in the American Civil War

By Paul Taylor

(Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 2018. Pp. ix, 322. Illustrations, notes, index. \$45.00.)

During the United States Civil War, Northern free states contained groups and individuals sympathetic to the South and hostile to the administration of Republican president Abraham Lincoln. Anxiety over their criticisms prompted some to ask if the traditional civil liberties afforded U.S. citizens should be curtailed, yet the Constitution prevented the federal government from implementing wholesale restrictions on free speech. To silence these voices, Northern

society would have to police itself at some level.

Paul Taylor examines this tension through the lens of the North's Union League movement, a grassroots organizing effort that sought to stiffen civilian resolve to see the war's completion and squelch the words and actions of those whose commitment fell short of that goal. The leagues' political organizing for the Republican Party set a rancorous and divisive tone to arguments over

the meanings of loyalty and treason; league members employed rhetorical and physical assaults against Democrats who tried to claim a space of "loyal opposition."

Taylor places the Union Leagues within the broader antebellum context of closed or secret social associations, including the Sons of Temperance, the Know-Nothings, and the Freemasons. The leagues, however, were not formally inaugurated until 1862, following a string of Northern military and political setbacks. The movement's first chapters were founded in the states of the Old Northwest, although surviving evidence forces Taylor to concentrate his attention on the well-documented and well-financed organizations of Philadelphia, New York City, and Boston.

Leagues exercised considerable autonomy over their internal affairs. A national coordinating council could not prevent individual chapters from customizing their membership or statements of principle. Radical groups endorsed slavery's abolition and organized regiments for the United States Colored Troops. Conservative chapters included War Democrats and largely ignored the slavery issue. By 1864 most leagues shed any lingering pretense of non-partisanship, operating as the *de facto* political information office of the Republican Party. In that year's presidential election, the leagues produced a staggering amount of political literature, swamping Democratic messaging efforts.

Union victory meant demobilization of the leagues. However, radicals partially reconstituted the movement among the freedmen of the South, now a vital Republican constituency in the former slave states. Like so many other reforms inaugurated during Reconstruction, the leagues were crushed by the weight of racial antagonism and political apathy. By 1872 they were gone from the political scene, both North and South.

Taylor nestles his interpretations alongside the works of Jennifer Weber and Stephen Towne, who contended that overt Democratic disloyalty undermined the Northern war effort. The author takes considerable exception to the findings of author Frank Klement, who asserted that Republicans exaggerated Democratic disloyalty for purely political purposes. The author's depictions, however, have somewhat flattened his subjects, narrowly casting Republicans as true patriots and Democrats as hidebound obstructionists. Recent scholarship by Matthew Gallman and Robert Sandow has shown more nuance in the origins of Democratic resistance, emphasizing long-standing community conflicts rather than reflexive opposition to the Lincoln administration.

In concluding, the author returns to the central question of civil liberty coexisting alongside government during a time of war. To the question of whether the coercive actions of the Union Leagues could be justified, he points to their results: maintenance

of the Union and the destruction of slavery. On balance, Taylor provides a well-written, direct, and thoroughly researched summary of this movement.

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Flames of Discontent: The 1916 Minnesota Iron Ore Strike

By Gary Kaunonen

(Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2017. Pp. 253. Notes, bibliography, index. Cloth, \$100.00; paper, \$24.95.)

In *Flames of Discontent*, independent historian and descendant of Finnish immigrants Gary Kaunonen details the background and events of the 1916 Minnesota Iron Ore Strike. Telling the story of the strike from a working-class perspective, Kaunonen joins other works such as Thomas Andrews's *Killing for Coal* (2010) in setting an exciting trend in labor histories.

Introducing the 1916 strike as one of the United States' "most contentious and significant battles between organized labor and management in the early twentieth century" (p. 1), Kaunonen argues that this strike laid the groundwork for later labor organization by building a shared sense of class consciousness across varied ethnic groups. Chapter One introduces readers to the Minnesota Iron Range and its iron deposits. Kaunonen builds on William Cronon's "metropolis-hinterland" idea by linking the iron-mining towns to one another and to larger industrial centers like Duluth. Chapters Two and Three

chronicle how workers, many of them immigrants, demanded higher wages, fewer hours, and stronger safety precautions from companies like the Oliver Iron Mining Company (OIMC). As one of the main immigrant groups on the range, the Finns were among the first to organize, especially once they aligned with the Industrial Workers of the World. The Minnesota iron workers called their first major strike in 1907. The OIMC, however, brought in Slavic strikebreakers, thereby forcing a swift end to the strike. Chapter Four demonstrates how the Slavic strikebreakers realized the OIMC's exploitative practices and gained a sense of solidarity with the Finnish and Italian workers on the basis of a "working-class" identity. Chapters Five and Six trace the development of this class consciousness as the foundation for the 1916 strike. After detailing several key events of the strike, including the murder of an immigrant worker and the jailing of strike leaders, Kaunonen concludes the book with a discussion