

Most partners met on college campuses and just over half still live in an academic environment—three of them in or near Iowa City. Virtually all lead comfortable middle-class lives well insulated from the rudest elements of insecurity and intolerance. Yet couples that include partners of color also emphasize the persistence of racism, even in the supposedly more tolerant Midwest. Most are also troubled by midwesterners' lack of interest in non-American cultures.

These case studies suggest that, even in the heartland of America, "white bread" culture is giving way to a diversity that is itself diverse, even as it celebrates the power of love.

Taking History to Heart: The Power of the Past in Building Social Movements, by James Green. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2000. 340 pp. Illustrations, notes, index. \$50.00 cloth, \$19.95 paper.

Reviewer Peter Rachleff is professor of history at Macalester College. His most recent book is *Hard-Pressed in the Heartland: The Hormel Strike and the Future of the Labor Movement* (1993).

The scholarly investigation of American history underwent an intellectual revolution in the 1960s and 1970s. The focus of research moved away from "great men" and turned toward the formerly "anonymous." That breakthrough established a set of subfields—the history of African Americans, women, immigration, and labor—within the academy. It also posited major tasks to be tackled, including the presentation of these newly constructed historical experiences and voices to the non-academic public. *Taking History to Heart* offers its readers not just an insider's view of this enterprise but a critical eye on it, one that recognizes the challenges in this project even as it celebrates the effort of undertaking it.

James Green is an appropriate author for such a book. An activist in the 1960s, a reluctant academic with an unconventional career path, and a labor historian committed to making the new history accessible to working women and men, his life's work has revolved around the notion that history matters, that understanding where we have come from can help us shape where we are going. Most of the essays collected and revised for this volume grow out of Green's own experiences—editing an independent "radical" magazine, teaching history to working-class students, collaborating with unions to commemorate labor history events and sites, consulting with documentary filmmakers, and participating directly in strikes and community struggles. These experiences have not only made him well suited to explore the potential and pitfalls of bringing history to the wider public, but they

have molded his writing skills so that *Taking History to Heart* is an enjoyable, even compelling, read.

There is wonderful historiography here, too. Readers will learn how the "new" labor history took shape in the 1960s and 1970s, inside and outside of the academy, in traditional but also untraditional settings. They will learn how the interaction between students and teachers at community colleges and state universities and in labor education classrooms helped shape the research agendas of young labor historians. They will also learn how labor historians collaborated with each other to support research projects as well as participate in public history projects. And they will learn how methodological issues—such as the insights and flaws of memory and oral history, the search for missing documents, the connections and disconnections between the experiences of different groups of workers across generational, racial, and gender lines—have shaped the contours of labor history. Students of historical inquiry will value the time they spend with this volume.

So, too, will students of public history. Green offers rich details about particular projects, most of them in Massachusetts, including conferences, commemorations of historic sites, the publication of popular literature, the writing of curricular materials, and the production of documentary films. He goes well beyond merely narrating these stories. He explores the tensions between conventional historical research and scholarship, on the one hand, and the presentation of that history in a public, celebratory, and dramatic fashion, on the other. He also explores the often weak links between the historians' imagined audiences and the actual audiences who manifest their interest in the projects. Green's exploration of these challenges is what makes *Taking History to Heart* worth reading for many historians who share his conviction that history does matter, and they will derive inspiration from his willingness to learn from each experience and muster the enthusiasm and energy to get out there and try yet another project.

My favorite chapter, "Seeing the Past with 'Movement Eyes': Making Documentary Films about People in Struggle," grows out of Green's work as a consultant with Blackside Films on their seven-segment "Great Depression" series for PBS. He begins with an appreciation of the prominent role of documentary films in the quest to bring the new labor history to non-academic audiences, and he discusses his own experiences on some of these projects. Despite his enthusiasm and experience, however, he found himself little more than a beginning student when he joined the Blackside team. Readers of *Taking History to Heart* follow Green deeper and deeper into the challenges posed by Blackside's professional and aesthetic standards, as

well as their political commitment. They struggled to find visuals, audios, and music; to depend on actual participants rather than scholars as on-screen voices; to give voice to diverse, even contending points of view; to include the stories of those typically left out; to define a central theme for a complicated, detailed story; to discover a narrative story line with internal tension and drama; and to give play to participants' ideas and conceptualizations as well as their involvement in dramatic actions. In the end, Green remains dissatisfied with what he and Blackside were able to achieve on the project. "The series," he writes, "had captured the excitement, but not the political process of movement building" (193). Yet, he concludes on a personally empowering note, "what I learned from Blackside people about what makes a story work as human drama has been very helpful in my subsequent historical writing" (198).

Green's willingness to ask critical questions of his own work, to keep his goals and methods uppermost, and, at the same time, to draw out constructive lessons in every experience makes *Taking History to Heart* a rare and valuable volume. Readers from other regions of the country will find a mirror here in which to examine themselves. The challenges Green has faced have nothing to do with region and everything to do with the enterprise of public history itself.

Encyclopedia of Local History, edited by Carol Kammen and Norma Prendergast. American Association for State and Local History Book Series. Walnut Creek: AltaMira Press, 2000. xvi, 539 pp. Illustrations, appendixes. \$79.95 cloth.

Reviewer Glen Gildemeister is director of the Regional History Center at Northern Illinois University and has worked in local history as a researcher, writer, archivist, and administrator for the past 25 years.

Carol Kammen and Norma Prendergast have created a unique reference work for the American Association for State and Local History's book series. They assembled a cast of 130 writers, wrote a number of entries themselves, and then edited the material into the work at hand. The book is organized alphabetically by subject and thus no index was needed. Two appendixes offer brief entries on various ethnic and religious groups. These, too, are in alphabetical order and provide bibliographic, Internet, and repository information rather than subject content. Two more appendixes provide current addresses for state historical societies and the regional branches of the National Archives and Records Administration.

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