

the board's debates did not focus on the benefits of sterilization for the individual but on the need to reduce welfare costs.

Dowbiggin's failure to note the Iowa connection to eugenics is his most glaring omission. In discussing Harry Hamilton Laughlin's career and his influence on the eugenics movement, Dowbiggin tells the reader only that Laughlin was a high school biology teacher from Missouri with questionable credentials (78-79). In fact, Laughlin was from Oskaloosa, Iowa, studied and taught at Iowa State College in 1907, and earned his Ph.D. from Princeton University in 1917.

This oversight aside, Dowbiggin's work should provoke Iowans to examine their state's long affair with eugenics. The records of the Iowa Board of Eugenics, as well as the records of the Iowa Psychiatric Association and its members, await thorough scholarly investigation.

The United Mine Workers of America: A Model of Industrial Solidarity? edited by John H. M. Laslett. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1996. xi, 576 pp. Illustrations, tables, notes, index. \$65.00 cloth.

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Was the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) a model of industrial solidarity? That is the question posed by John Laslett. A collection of twenty-two essays attempts to answer that question. Laslett argues in the introduction that the answer is no, but that the UMWA came "as near to being such a model as any other American trade union ever has done, or perhaps is ever likely to" (25).

The text is divided into five sections, each containing several essays. Part one addresses the UMWA during its heyday, 1890-1960. Part two examines the workplace and related health issues. Part three looks at the role strikes, minorities, and women activists have played in the UMWA and its activities. Part four contains a series of articles comparing the UMWA to trade unionism in South Wales, Scotland, and Nova Scotia. Part five focuses on developments that have affected the UMWA since 1960.

Several of the essays analyze not only the development of the UMWA as one of the largest and most powerful trade unions in the United States, but also the evolution of the ideal of worker solidarity for which the UMWA is legendary. Several essays show that while the rank and file was frequently militant, ready to confront capital at every opportunity, the leadership more often than not took a different approach in their relations with capital. The essays on John

Mitchell and John L. Lewis drive this point home. They emphasize that Mitchell sacrificed worker solidarity on the altar of trade agreements, while Lewis remained wed to existing contracts, even if it meant undermining the labor movement. Over time both of these legendary leaders lost touch with the rank and file, and this undermined worker solidarity.

Two essays assess the impact mechanization and the company town system had on the UMWA and on coal mining in the United States. Mechanization struck a mighty blow to worker solidarity as it eliminated jobs in the industry by the thousands. Price V. Fishback, in a controversial essay, argues that the company town system and its two main attributes—company housing and the infamous company store—were not the mechanisms of control that labor historians nearly always characterize them as. The company town system, Fishback argues, did not cause UMWA solidarity.

While the UMWA won a signal victory in 1946 with the establishment of its health and retirement funds program, the history of the UMWA since 1946 has been one of declining membership and influence. With the passing of John L. Lewis from the leadership scene, the UMWA entered a period of bitter infighting, culminating in the murder of Jock Yablonski. But from this nadir the UMWA regained its stature as one of the preeminent trade unions in the United States. A reform movement in the 1970s put more control and decision making back into the hands of the rank and file. New leadership in the 1980s in the person of Richard Trumka led the union into a new era. Several essays address how new leadership and new tactics have restored the union as a model of worker solidarity.

Is the UMWA a model for worker solidarity? There is much in the history of the UMWA to suggest that it was and still is. Essays on the UMWA's attitude toward immigrants, African Americans, and women indicate that while the union's policies were not perfect in regard to these three groups, they were far ahead of many other trade organizations and American society at large. In a final essay, Maier B. Fox argues that the UMWA has a proud history of fostering worker solidarity and that the union's role is likely to continue into the future.

This collection of essays is a major contribution to the history of the UMWA. Several of the essays stray from the theme, but aside from this minor flaw, these essays significantly augment the body of knowledge surrounding the United Mine Workers of America and its rich history. Although the book does not deal directly with the history of Iowa, it is worthwhile reading for any Iowan with an interest in the UMWA.

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