

Book Reviews

even limited power on the part of blacks and unionists, as exemplified by the Memphis and New Orleans race riots, which form two of the better chapters in Rable's book. These events ushered in the radical phase marked by Congressional or Military Reconstruction which represented "the triumph of Jacobinism" in the aftermath of Johnson's crushing defeat in the congressional elections of 1866. In the remainder of the work Rable analyzes the strategy of the redeemer counter-revolution that led finally to victory for the reactionaries.

One might question Rable's employment of such terms as "Jacobinism" and "Counterrevolutionary" as applied to events in American history, from a historian-observer perspective. To the traditional Southerners who were the actor-participants in the tragic drama, however, the Republicans were indeed radicals intent on destroying the last vestiges of the "Southern way of life." Conversely, to the Radicals, the intransigent Southerners were intent on turning back the clock to antebellum days. There will be those historians who challenge Rable's bold view of Reconstruction, which is at odds for a number of reasons with the Dunning, revisionist, and post-revisionist interpretations of Reconstruction. The Dunningites will object to Rable's castigating the Bourbon Democrats as reactionaries while the revisionists and post-revisionists will take umbrage at his suggestion that the reconstructionists, whom they regard as conservative, were actually radical reformers. Nevertheless, the book deserves the careful attention of all scholars concerned both with Reconstruction and the subject of violence in America, past and present.

UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA

ALVIN R. SUNSERI

Chicago Divided: The Making of a Black Mayor, by Paul Kleppner. Dekalb: Northern Illinois Press, 1985. xviii, 313 pp. Notes, illustrations, tables, index. \$26.00 cloth, \$9.50 paper.

Professional historians tend to be skeptical of instant history. Chronicles of very recent events are usually journalistic in nature, relying more on anecdotes than analysis, and frequently written under the pressure of deadlines. Most historians would rather let the dust settle, wait for archives to open, and allow for that decent interval that is supposed to give us perspective. *Chicago Divided* is not the usual kind of instant history, however. Its author, Paul Kleppner, is an experienced political historian, well-versed in quantitative methodology, and particularly interested in the relationship between politics and culture. This account of the election of the late Harold Washington as Chicago's first black mayor in 1983 is a serious analytical study that began as a

research report on the voting patterns of Chicago's ethnic, racial, and religious groups. Kleppner confides that, in preparing the book, he began "virtually *de novo*" (xvi), but the statistical analysis he had prepared for the research report remained the heart of the book.

Kleppner attempted to place the bitter divisiveness of the 1983 election within the context of Chicago's political and social history. The dramatic growth of Chicago's black population after 1940 set the stage for a series of racial battles. The black community's quest for open housing and integrated schools met with fierce resistance from whites determined to maintain their cultural dominance in the city. Forced to choose between black and white, the leaders of Chicago's democratic machine gradually abandoned their loyal black supporters "to come down squarely and unmistakably on the side of their white ethnic supporters" (90). Once race became the controlling factor in the city's politics, "a biracial contest for mayor of Chicago had to become a battle between the races" (63).

While the broad outline of Kleppner's analysis is persuasive, the historical background he provided is weak in detail. Since the book's focus is on a later period, one cannot expect these background chapters to be based on primary research. It is, however, surprising that he ignored two recent books crucial to an understanding of race and politics in Chicago between the 1930s and the 1950s: Arnold Hirsch's *Making the Second Ghetto* (1983) and Roger Biles's biography of Mayor Edward Kelly, *Big City Boss in Depression and War* (1984). While Kleppner dates the machine's abandonment of black Chicago from the mid-1960s, these studies argue that as early as the 1940s the machine had become a vehicle for white domination of Chicago. Familiarity with Biles's work would have made it difficult for Kleppner to dismiss Kelly as inept or to maintain that the machine dumped him solely because of his corruption. Kelly had survived scandals before; the new issue that led to his downfall in 1947 was his support of open housing. Kleppner also slighted the role of Chicago's downtown establishment in relegating blacks to a position of continuing subordination. Hirsch showed how the desire of Loop businessmen to create a middle-class buffer zone on the near south side reinforced housing segregation in the city. These business interests, as much as the white ethnic population, provided support for the machine's emerging racial policies.

Kleppner's treatment of the Daley era is far stronger. His statistical data, presented in a clear and easily understood format, demonstrate how the machine's base of support shifted during the twenty-one years that Richard J. Daley served as mayor. Blacks played a crucial role in Daley's early victories, especially in 1955 and 1963, when white ethnic voters divided. Daley maintained black support through his ties

with Congressman William Dawson's south side organization and a network of loyal black lieutenants on the west side. The machine provided jobs and services in the black community but supported whites on racial issues involving schools and housing. Blacks were "separate and unequal partners in the Machine's coalition—subjects, not citizens, of their own city" (71).

With the civil rights movement of the 1960s, this kind of "plantation politics" became less tenable. Sporadic rebellions against the machine and declining black voter turnout demonstrated black Chicago's waning enthusiasm for Daley. Kleppner's statistics are particularly illuminating here: instead of a conventional presentation of election results, he used a "mobilization indicator" that compares votes won to the entire voting age population. Daley continued to win the majority of black votes cast, but the demobilization of the black electorate signaled potential danger for the machine. If black non-voters could be aroused against the machine while white ethnics divided, the face of Chicago politics could change.

That, of course, was exactly what happened in 1983. Daley's death led to a series of battles for the succession, and the bruising 1979 primary between Michael Bilandic and Jane Byrne ruptured white unity. Kleppner demonstrated, in perhaps his best chapter, how Byrne set the stage for Harold Washington. Elected with strong black support, she nevertheless backed the white ethnics on every major issue affecting the cultural domination of the city. At the same time, her ineptness as an administrator and a politician assured white opposition as well. In 1982 and 1983, blacks registered in record numbers. "Ronald Reagan, more than anyone else, was unwittingly responsible for this development," but "Jane Byrne gave blacks additional reason for coming alive politically" (135). This black mobilization, together with the candidacy of Daley's son, State's Attorney Richard M. Daley, gave black Chicago its first real chance to elect one of its own as mayor.

In his analysis of the 1983 primary and general election, Kleppner again made good use of statistical data. Although the division of the white vote and mistakes by both Byrne and Daley contributed to the primary result, in the end the mobilization of the black electorate produced Washington's victory. In the general election, white Democrats were forced to choose between race and party. For most it was an easy decision: the overwhelming majority of white voters, particularly in the ethnic neighborhoods, voted for the Republican candidate, Bernard Epton. But Washington, combining his solid black support with a majority of Hispanics and a significant proportion of whites from the liberal Lake Shore area, managed to win.

Kleppner's treatment of the 1983 elections is sound but bloodless. He failed to do what journalistic accounts of elections do best; he never brought the campaign to life. Washington himself remains a shadowy figure, more a symbol of black aspirations than a flesh-and-blood human being. Kleppner did not interview any of the participants; his narrative account of the election is based mostly on newspaper sources. Interviews probably would not have changed his overall analysis of the election, but they surely would have illuminated the nature of the decision-making process and the strengths and weaknesses of the candidates themselves.

Chicago Divided is a valuable and important study of a major event in the history of American urban politics. But its author did not fully resolve the dilemma of writing instant history. Written quickly, his book lacks the historical depth that a historian of Kleppner's ability would ordinarily provide. At the same time, there is little here of the excitement of politics that one finds in the best journalistic studies.

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA, TWIN CITIES

ALLAN H. SPEAR

Race and Kinship in a Midwestern Town: The Black Experience in Monroe, Michigan, 1900-1915, by James E. DeVries. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1984. xiii, 189 pp. Notes, illustrations, appendix, index. \$17.50 cloth.

In *Race and Kinship in a Midwestern Town*, James DeVries, professor of history at Monroe County Community College, Monroe, Michigan, examined the social and economic experiences of a small number of black families in Monroe, Michigan, from the mid-1800s to 1915. DeVries's book is part of August Meier's series, *Blacks in the New World*, which includes such topics as blacks and Reconstruction, blacks in politics, blacks in business, blacks in northeastern ghettos, and blacks as national leaders. By focusing on the black experience in a small, midwestern city, DeVries added another dimension to Meier's series.

DeVries's study is divided into four main chapters plus an introduction and a conclusion. The chapters include a brief history of Monroe and the background of black families there; an elaboration of two southern racist traditions—the child-Negro stereotype and the beast-Negro stereotype—and their application to Monroe's citizenry; and the last chapter, "Home-Grown: The Personal and Ego Identities of Monroe Negroes, 1900-1915." Chapters two and three dealing with the racial stereotypes are fully explored and add an important element

Copyright of Annals of Iowa is the property of State of Iowa, by & through the State Historical Society of Iowa and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.