

tendency to sublimate or discard more distinctive aspects of American culture" (75). Throughout the twentieth century, those of Irish and Bohemian descent returned to the parish, and like in the larger United States society, the distinctions between the ethnic groups blurred into a general white identity. New waves of immigrants to Iowa City would come, particularly as the University of Iowa grew. By 1991, the parish served a wide range of immigrants and ethnicities, as illustrated by a series of dinners featuring Mexican, Italian, Korean and Chinese cuisine along with German, Irish, and Bohemian.

Overall, Pfiefer's book provides a model for historians on how to use local histories and contexts to understand American religious experience. Further, by analyzing the long histories of parishes—from their inception to the present—he is able to show the changes and continuities in how US Catholics encountered and shaped their communities and the broader nation.

*Grand Army of Labor: Workers, Veterans, and the Meaning of the Civil War*, by Matthew E. Stanley. Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2021. 320 pp. Illustrations, notes, index. \$30.00 paperback.

Reviewer Dana Caldemeyer is Associate Professor of History at South Georgia State College. Her book, *Union Renegades: Miners, Capitalism, and Organizing in the Gilded Age*, focuses on farmer and laborer non-unionism in the late nineteenth century.

In the decades following the Civil War, people throughout the United States struggled to rebuild the nation, particularly reconciling differences to create a new identity. David Blight and other scholars of Civil War memory have long noted that as the nation united again after the war discussions of slavery as the cause for the war were sacrificed to create a unified white republic. Matthew Stanley's *Grand Army of Labor* takes this narrative in a new direction, seeking to use Civil War memory and Marxist labor history to explore how Civil War memory influenced working class organizations and political movements.

Stanley's work analyzes speeches and writings from organizations like the Greenbackers, Populists, Knights of Labor, Socialists, and the American Federation of Labor. Each chapter of the book examines a different labor group or third-party effort to demonstrate how the memory of the Civil War shaped Gilded Age movements. He argues that the memory of the Civil War both bolstered and hindered worker solidarity.

On the one hand, the Civil War was a radicalizing force for labor organizing, especially in the Midwest where so many individuals joined organizing efforts. Activists saw the emancipation of enslaved

people as the beginning of a radical transformation of labor. Their understandings of slavery and freedom were framed by the war and allowed them to create what Stanley calls an “antislavery vernacular” (6) that was crucial to the Gilded Age labor and third-party movements. Stanley connects phrases like “wage slavery” to Civil War memory, reminding the readers that many activists of the period were Civil War veterans themselves. When activists compared individuals like Eugene Debs to Abraham Lincoln, Stanley notes, they drew on the memories of who Lincoln was and what he stood for in the push to end slavery. The influence of Civil War memory is particularly visible when Stanley analyzes the numerous songs sung by the workers at organizational meetings, clearly showing that these movements drew from a common understanding of the Civil War and that they used this understanding to justify their organizing efforts.

At the same time, memory of the war also worked against labor organizations. Some groups saw socialist demands for “emancipating the worker” as a threat to society. Likewise, Civil War memory created splits within the movements themselves so that racism, sectional divides, and sexism often pushed away Black, immigrant, and women workers. The AFL, in an effort to unite the white workers, used Civil War memory to cast newly arrived Eastern European immigrants as complacent slaves and to overcome racial and sectional divisions. In cases like this, Stanley cogently surmises, “‘whiteness’ sabotaged solidarity” (121).

Stanley does an excellent job highlighting how Civil War memory shaped Gilded Age labor reform efforts, but in doing so, his work can overemphasize its importance. Jeffersonian agrarianism, the memory of the American Revolution, and religion were also foundational to how activists framed their reform efforts. One can just as easily find references to Thomas Paine or Jesus Christ in the songs and writings of these groups, and many workers compared Debs to Moses. While Stanley does not deny that these understandings also shaped these movements, a reader unfamiliar with Gilded Age rhetoric might come away with the impression that Civil War memory was the dominant force in shaping these reform movements instead of one influence among many.

Still, Stanley convincingly shows that the memory of the Civil War was woven into the fabric of Gilded Age labor reform movements. Scholars and other individuals interested in how this memory shaped class struggles of the Gilded Age will find this book an important read.