

and distinctive framing in the novel *Three Miles Square* as a “story without a beginning or an end” (115).

The Dawn of Industrial Agriculture in Iowa often suffers, however, from its distinct organization and lack of focus. Transitions between sections are abrupt, with some material underdeveloped and seemingly unrelated to the story of Corey’s perspectives on agricultural industrialization. Much of the action is far from Iowa, including European travel, work in New York City, and subsistence farming in New York’s Hudson Valley. The reader learns a great deal about both Corey and Lechlitner, with extensive excerpts from correspondence as well Lechlitner’s poems, but again much of this material lacks a connection to Corey’s critique of rural culture. Durrenberger discusses historical events to provide some context, but does not ground it in the scholarship on the rural Midwest of the last sixty years. Furthermore, considering that Corey and Lechlitner are the primary subjects of the book, it is odd that there are no index entries for either person. Finally, it is difficult to see the intended audience for this book. Readers will gain a better understanding of the respective works of a significant Iowa-born author, with literary studies specialists benefiting the most. Historians of the Iowa experience will find the treatment of historical events and Corey and Lechlitner’s place in them interesting, but too perfunctory and dated to be very useful.

The Fight for the Soul of the Democratic Party: The Enduring Legacy of Henry Wallace’s Antifascist, Antiracist Politics, by John Nichols. New York: Verso, 2020. viii, 286 pp. Notes and index. \$26.95 hardcover.

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In this book John Nichols posits that Henry A. Wallace fought valiantly through word and deed to push the Democratic Party and the country to be more progressive, inclusive, and forward thinking, but that he ultimately failed to move the United States in that direction. The author further leads the reader to consider whether Wallace was sacrificed for the “greater good of the party” in favor of the more centrist Harry Truman.

Throughout this book the reader comes to understand Wallace’s vision of a world, which challenged the status quo, the power brokers, and those who would have had to give up money and status in a realigned society. Wallace’s desire to build coalitions and friendships with those of the same ideology including socialists, communists, unions, the

poor, and blue-collar workers, among others, is on full display. The book is partially a history of politics and parties and partially a biography of a human being and politician.

Henry A. Wallace is presented as an unabashed, unapologetic progressive. The book follows his assumption of great responsibility and power and his subsequent loss of it. The author speaks to how Wallace challenged the conventional thinking of his time on postwar leadership in the world, ultimately alienating leaders in the United States and upsetting allies abroad. His fight for the direction of the Democratic Party is played out in detailed scenarios throughout the book.

One of the vignettes that stood out to me was that of Wallace choosing to tour the American South while he was vice president and his bravery in sticking with his message, unashamed of his beliefs on race and organized labor. Nichols uses Wallace's vision from his own words and casts him in a more clarifying light, supported by the words of others of his time.

At times the book seemed somewhat repetitive, or intermittently dense and slow to get through because of references, but this is helpful to novices in political history. These items underscore the author's desire to help the reader understand the direction Wallace intended to take the country and his party, and how influential voices in the Democratic Party caused the rejection of these ideas. We are currently in a time in the United States in which the electorate questions whether it is more important to win elections and have power or to stand for a clear set of principles and ideas, obtaining less diluted compromise.

The Notes on Sources section is thorough, transparent, and welcome. These notes invite the reader to dig deeper and learn more about the facets of each story. Quotations from contemporary politicians are acceptable, but not necessary for the reader to draw connection to their own lifetime or conclusions. Nichols clearly acknowledges the existence of previous biographies of Henry A. Wallace and the Democratic Party. The book is a fascinating critique and analysis of the steps and missteps of the Democratic Party over time, detailing the path to the present day.

If you have an interest in current U.S. politics and stances I recommend reading this book. Nichols proffers a theory that identifies the rejection of Henry A. Wallace and his progressive stances as the point in which politics for the Democratic Party in the United States steered off course. I happened to be on one of my regular walks through Glendale Cemetery in Des Moines after I'd finished this book. On that particular day I made it a point to swing by Vice President Wallace's gravesite to pay my respects. I couldn't help but wonder how things would have been different if he had been on the ticket with FDR in 1944.