

mortgage foreclosures; he fought to protect small businessmen from the growing threat of chain stores; he favored legislation to strengthen farm organizations and cooperatives; and in defense of Wisconsin butter he struggled unsuccessfully to place a tax on oleomargarine.

In the early 1930s Boileau somewhat reluctantly followed Philip La Follette's lead in abandoning the Republican Party to run on the Progressive Party ticket. That was probably a tactical mistake, and in 1938 Boileau lost his seat to a Republican. The recession of 1937 had exacerbated economic problems in Boileau's district, and many voters there, as elsewhere in the Midwest, returned to the Republican fold. Moreover, in his support of progressive causes the Congressman had permitted his name to be associated with left-wing and Communist organizations. In 1938 he opposed the founding of the House Committee on Un-American Activities, and he signed a telegram supporting the Loyalist government in the Spanish Civil War. Boileau's Republican opponent used these issues effectively and won decisively in the fall election. Boileau again ran unsuccessfully for Congress in 1940, and in 1942 he won a seat on the circuit court, where he served until his retirement in 1969.

This is an impressive political biography. It combines an exhaustive examination of primary sources with a convincing analysis of election and congressional roll call data to show how economic and cultural issues in Boileau's district in Wisconsin related to the role he played on the national stage. The result is a useful examination of the part played by Wisconsin progressive Republicans and the Minnesota Farmer-Labor bloc in Congress in the 1930s. It is a significant addition to the literature on midwestern politics.

Solidarity and Survival: An Oral History of Iowa Labor in the Twentieth Century, by Shelton Stromquist. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1993. xii, 346 pp. Illustrations, appendix, index. \$39.95 cloth, \$14.95 paper.

REVIEWED BY ROGER HOROWITZ, HAGLEY MUSEUM AND LIBRARY

In the 1980s the Iowa Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO (IFL) funded an extraordinary oral history project on Iowa labor history. Now Shelton Stromquist, an adviser on the project and professor of history at the University of Iowa, has prepared a fine selection of these interviews. To provide context for the oral interview extracts, he has organized them into topical chapters and provided introductory commentary.

Stromquist faced a daunting task. The IFL project includes more than one thousand interviews from every corner of the state, and with

workers in every walk of life. (An appendix lists all the interviews.) The sheer volume and range of the interviews made a "representative" book impossible. Stromquist evidently decided to center the book around industrial workers and their unions. The great benefit of this approach is that he forcefully connects the history of Iowa's laboring people with that of the American working class. The weakness is that dimensions of the full oral history project that do not fit this paradigm are not reflected in *Solidarity and Survival*.

The book opens by introducing readers to working-class life before the coming of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) in the 1930s. The greatest strength of the interviews covering this era is the detail they provide about management's appalling behavior. For example, at the Ford plant in Des Moines supervisors controlled workers on the job and regulated their life even after they left the factory. At one mandatory meeting following working hours, Harry Booth recalled that workers were told to plant crops in gardens rented from the company, and to have the canned products available for inspection by Ford. "You were really one of the children of the Ford Motor Company," he told an interviewer (66).

Labor organizations occupied only the margins of working-class existence before the 1930s. Coal miners were the most important supporters of unionism along with a few insular craft unions. The Industrial Workers of the World briefly made a mark by organizing agricultural workers. These stories are covered very briefly, and mostly serve as prelude to the period of union organization that Stromquist wants to emphasize—the 1930s and the formation of the CIO.

The creation and consolidation of industrial unions in Iowa constitute the heart of *Solidarity and Survival*. The development of unions in Iowa's packinghouses serves as Stromquist's primary example. The interviews beautifully detail the interior texture of union organizing. At the Tobin packinghouse in Fort Dodge, Richard Lindner recalled how the humiliation of having to ask the foreman to use the toilet made him feel like he "was a baby. They made a union man out of me by pulling those kinds of things" (98). An African-American co-worker, Henry Simmons, explained how Tobin's decision to import skilled butchers from Chicago's stockyards created a core of prounion activists. And the spouse of a Fort Dodge packinghouse worker, Julie Fritz, emphasized how the women's auxiliary was central to the union's capacity to create a feeling of "togetherness, which made the union strong" (121). Fort Dodge workers, along with several other Iowa packinghouse workers, also stressed the contribution of regional networks spawned by the Austin, Minnesota-based Independent Union of All Workers.

As in other areas of the country, World War II and its aftermath both consolidated Iowa's industrial unions and shaped a new round of conflicts. The increasing presence in the work force of minorities and women sparked struggles for equality and social justice. African-American workers in Waterloo's John Deere plant, the Des Moines Laborers' Union, and Sioux City's Cudahy plant all relate their efforts to secure equal opportunity. Their accounts contain suggestive comments about how greater integration at work promoted more racial tolerance. Black truck driver Edwin Hollins, who drove in a convoy with four white drivers, was persuaded by his coworkers to insist on service at a truck stop that wanted him to eat outside. "These are the guys I work with, run with, hell, slept with in Chicago," he explained (248). Black packinghouse worker Harry Hunter credited his local's decision to establish a union bar with reducing racial tensions. By socializing over a few beers, workers would realize, "Hey, man, you're the same as I am" (252). These anecdotes support a developing revision in studies of postwar labor that give it more credit for the development of a modern civil rights movement.

Stromquist's selections on women's activities during and after World War II buttress the new emphasis in women's history on the 1945-1965 period. Working-class women demanded access to jobs previously the domain of men, and became increasingly active in local unions by the early 1960s. Female telephone operators, electrical workers, and packinghouse workers all comment on their efforts to secure respect and equal opportunity from management and their male coworkers. The most dramatic struggle covered by Stromquist was in the meatpacking industry, where the decline in traditionally female jobs sparked tremendous gender conflict over the boundary between male and female jobs. Here, female activists like Ethel Jarred claimed women deserved equal treatment because "we'd paid dues for all these years, we were union members, we were entitled to just as much as any male" (228). This activism provided a base for the influence of Betty Talkington, women's activities director of the Iowa Federation of Labor in the 1960s.

Stromquist also shows the centrality of politics to the development of Iowa's postwar labor movement. In doing so, he effectively bridges social and political history—a rare accomplishment. Between 1945 and 1950, the cold war influenced Iowa's labor unions, and tremendous struggles broke out between left and right factions in the labor movement. A remarkable section of the book details, through interviews with partisans on both sides, the struggle between the United Auto Workers and the Farm Equipment union at Iowa's International Harvester and John Deere factories. But Stromquist avoids dwelling

excessively on the left-right fight. Instead, he uses the interviews to show how Iowa labor shaped state and local politics throughout the postwar period. Immediately after the war Iowa labor mobilized against efforts to pass a right-to-work law. In the 1950s Iowa labor unions became the base of an increasingly aggressive Democratic Party. These oral accounts should encourage renewed attention to the link between labor and liberal politics in postwar America.

Despite the richness of *Solidarity and Survival*, there are important omissions. In particular, the book does not reflect how the IFL project documents the experience of Iowa's skilled workers and their unions. The appendix lists interviews with forty-six members of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, yet not a single one appears in the text. This gap reflects Stromquist's decision to concentrate on Iowa's industrial workers, rather than make the book a sampler, without coherent focus, of all the interviews. Despite this probably unavoidable limitation, *Solidarity and Survival* provides a solid introduction to the IFL project, and should stimulate more research on Iowa's working-class people.

Entitled to Power: Farm Women and Technology, 1913-1963, by Katherine Jellison. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1993. xxii, 217 pp. Illustrations, tables, notes, index. \$39.95 cloth, \$13.95 paper.

REVIEWED BY MARY NETH, AMERICAN UNIVERSITY AND THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AMERICAN HISTORY

One of the most understudied groups in women's history is farm women. This is beginning to change, and Katherine Jellison's *Entitled to Power* will be an important book in the correction of this imbalance. Examining the Midwest over a fifty-year period of the twentieth century, Jellison argues that farm women had their own vision of their labor, and they selected technology not just to ease some of this labor, but also to complement their place as economic contributors to their family farms. While government, the farm press, and advertisers often assumed that farm women would use new technology to remove themselves from farm production and restrict their work to that of "homemaker," farm women rejected this model of womanhood. Over this period, farm women successfully maintained their role as productive contributors to family farms, even though technology, the changing agricultural economy, and their own choices had altered the content of that work. What did not change, according to Jellison, was women's place within the patriarchal farm family. Women continued

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