

the outsider the inside personalities, issues, and conflicts of that professional college as it moved along its contorted path from near extinction to eminence in its field. The university's largest college, the College of Liberal Arts, receives similar analytical scrutiny in the chapter, "General Education." That college, however, never achieved the greatness envisioned for it by MacLean, Foerster, Bowen, and, in his own way, Dewey Stuit. Seashore praised what he called "creative anarchy" as being the climate that best promoted both academic freedom and academic excellence. In the College of Liberal Arts, unfortunately, there was always more anarchy than creativity. A few programs, such as the Writers' Workshop under Paul Engle, achieved both uniqueness and greatness, but the college's component parts would remain far greater than the combined whole.

Stow Persons expresses the hope in his preface that "someone may eventually produce a more comprehensive account of the university" for which his work may serve as a "starting point" (ix). In the areas upon which he concentrates, his *is* the comprehensive account that has long been needed. One major area, however, is curiously neglected. He gives almost no attention to the College of Law. One is at a loss to understand why that college should be so slighted. It has provided the university either directly or indirectly with three of its presidents in the twentieth century and has sent one of its deans, Wiley Rutledge, on to the United States Supreme Court to become an ally of Justices Douglas and Black in laying the foundations for the activist court of Earl Warren. Here remains one starting point for that comprehensive history of the University of Iowa that Professor Persons has called for and has very nearly provided.

Children of the Mill: Schooling and Society in Gary, Indiana, 1906-1960, by Ronald D. Cohen. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1990. xiv, 296 pp. Illustrations, maps, notes, index. \$35.00 cloth.

REVIEWED BY CARROLL ENGELHARDT, CONCORDIA COLLEGE, MOORHEAD, MINNESOTA

The title of Professor Ronald D. Cohen's detailed, informative work is somewhat misleading; "children of the mill" are not the central focus of his study of schooling and society in Gary, Indiana, founded in 1906 as the site of the world's largest steel mill. Rather, Cohen traces the rise and fall of the Gary or Platoon School plan, a world-famous, controversial, yet widely copied progressive educational experiment. Cohen's major sources are the papers and publications of Superinten-

dent William A. Wirt, principal architect of the plan, and the many publications of interested observers attracted by the system. The limited official records of the Gary public school system forced Cohen to piece together much of his story of board and educational activities from newspaper files.

Within the historiography of American education, Cohen tends toward revisionism, which interprets the schools as instruments of corporate capitalism. Nonetheless, he finds in Gary evidence of both John Dewey's humanitarian progressive education and a business emphasis on economy and efficiency. This is the case, he explains, because Gary schools evolved "in a multiracial, multiethnic, class-structured urban setting" (x) and attracted the attention of many different community organizations.

The author develops these themes throughout eight chapters organized chronologically in five- to ten-year chunks, often corresponding to such external events as the Great War, the prosperous twenties, the depressed thirties, and World War II. Although the repetitious detail of Cohen's chapter organization sometimes obscures themes and tires readers, he returns again and again to several interesting topics: Americanization, segregation, released time for religious instruction (ended by a U.S. Supreme Court decision in 1948), and the efforts of business and other community groups to influence the schools.

As fashioned by Superintendent Wirt, who was hired soon after the founding of the steel city, the work-study-play plan or platoon system synthesized various progressive educational currents and evolved piecemeal over several years. Children were platooned: some were in academic classrooms, others in manual training, and still others on the playground. The system appealed both to the humanitarians who wanted to meet the needs of active children in an urban-industrial society, and to the economy-minded who desired the lower taxes achieved by the efficient use of school facilities. Fully established by 1910, over the next two decades the plan attracted a flood of visitors so numerous that they had to be regulated, but the visitors carried the system to many other cities. The system survived under Wirt's leadership until after his death in 1938. Then urban change, newer educational theories, and new educational leaders led to the piecemeal dismantling of the plan. Although by the mid-1980s the Gary schools paralleled other northern urban systems, some elements would have been familiar to Wirt. "School authorities still sought to maintain a plethora of courses and services, keeping the educational system a vital aspect of community life, directly for the children and indirectly for the rest of society" (210).

Cohen's book contains helpful hints for historians interested in the urban schools of an agricultural state. Were any Iowa cities guided by similar progressive visions, business dominance, and challenging ethnic mix? Even if they weren't, the historical evolution of Iowa's urban school systems would be worth similar detailed study.

Regulating Danger: The Struggle for Mine Safety in the Rocky Mountain Coal Industry, by James Whiteside. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1990. xv, 265 pp. Illustrations, maps, tables, notes, bibliographical essay, index. \$37.50 cloth.

REVIEWED BY PHILIP F. NOTARIANNI, UTAH STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Coal mine fatality rates in the five Rocky Mountain states of Colorado, Montana, New Mexico, Utah, and Wyoming consistently surpassed the national averages. At least 8,016 coal miners lost their lives in these five states between 1880 and 1984. *Regulating Danger* describes why mining in the West was so dangerous; analyzes the roles of miners, owners, and government in dealing with issues of safety; and outlines the effectiveness of state and federal legislation in regulating the dangers of coal mining throughout the United States.

James Whiteside provides a general history of the coal mining industry in the five western states, dealing more thoroughly with Colorado. He approaches the topic chronologically, weaving all five Rocky Mountain states into the discussion, and at times interspersing national events and trends into the study. Various illustrations and photographs enhance the book, as do tables that chronicle statistically by states (including the U.S. totals) the fatalities in western mines.

The work begins by establishing the industrial setting of coal mining in the Rocky Mountain West through a state-by-state discussion. As the author states, "Examination of this complex setting, with its layers of authority and interdependent workers, reveals much about miners and their work relations and how those relations helped to shape safety conditions in the mines" (43). Whiteside stresses the significance of large-scale commercial coal mining to the industry as a whole, and he highlights the roles of both owners and miners.

Then he proceeds to discuss safety regulations, from the first legislation passed in Colorado in 1877 to the Coal Mine Health and Safety Act passed by the U.S. Congress in 1969. The most significant theme that permeates the entire period is the belief by industry and many government officials that miners were responsible for their own safety. While the author is very sympathetic to the miner, he does note the joint responsibilities of owners and miners. He points out, for

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