

The book has an epic quality: an examination of a generation that, from its youth to its old age, was consumed by the war. Young men who came of age in the political struggles of the 1850s carried the fight into the war and then into the postwar years of Reconstruction. They carried a generation of grudges with them.

The racism that was at the heart of the war did not disappear with emancipation and Union victory; it lived on to sour the victory long after the war was over. Etcheson pulls no punches on such things, and the Reconstruction part of the book gives her study a depth that many other books lack.

Those seeking a reference book on Indiana and the Civil War will be disappointed. There is little actual history of the war here. There are no descriptions of the recruiting, mustering, and equipping of troops; no regimental histories; no combat scenes with glorious charges and dashing soldiers. The book does not need such things, but potential readers should be cautioned.

The major fault of the book is in Etcheson's format. The book is a series of scholarly studies of Putnam County and the war that are linked together into a book. The result is that the book lacks the dynamic quality of a Civil War story. It cries out for a traditional historical narrative. The characters introduced by the author are the true center of the book, but the reader does not actually get to know them; too often buried too deep in the scholarship, they don't come alive on the page. Etcheson the scholar would be well served by the storyteller's muse. Such criticism aside, this book is a fine contribution to Civil War scholarship.

The Plains Political Tradition: Essays on South Dakota Political Culture, edited by Jon K. Lauck, John E. Miller, and Donald C. Simmons Jr. Pierre: South Dakota State Historical Society Press, 2011. 391 pp. Illustrations, notes, appendixes, index. \$19.95 paper.

Reviewer Michael Schuyler is professor emeritus of history at the University of Nebraska at Kearney. He is the author of *The Dread of Plenty: Agricultural Relief Activities of the Federal Government in the Middle West, 1933-1939* (1989).

The Plains Political Tradition is an excellent contribution to our understanding of South Dakota history and politics. The editors did an outstanding job of making each chapter unique while staying on course about the political culture of South Dakota. Each of the 12 chapters in the book are well written and carefully documented. They include "The Foundations of Political Culture in East River South Dakota" by Jon K. Lauck; "Immigrants and Politics in South Dakota,

1861–1930” by Frank Van Nuys; “Setting the Agenda: Political Parties and Historical Change in South Dakota” by John E. Miller; “Another South Dakota or the Road not Taken: The Left and the Shaping of South Dakota Political Culture” by William Pratt; “Home and Family First: Women and Political Culture” by Paula M. Nelson; “Literature and the Political Cultures of South Dakota” by Joel Johnson; “War and Peace in South Dakota” by Ahrar Ahmad; “Missiles and Militarization: How the Cold War Shaped South Dakota Political Culture” by Gretchen Heefner and Catherine McNicol Stock; “Environmentalism in South Dakota: A Grassroots Approach” by John Husmann; “The American Indian Movement and South Dakota Politics” by John A. Heppler; “Local Government in South Dakota: The Nuts and Bolts of Political Culture” by Donald C. Simmons and Donald A. Watt; and “The Politics of Defeat: Senate Elections in South Dakota” by John D. Schaff. The book also includes a number of appendixes that provide background for the development of South Dakota from the territorial period to the present.

Most of the essays begin by agreeing that Republicans in South Dakota, except during the brief periods of the Populist era, World War I, the 1920s, and the Great Depression, have dominated state and national elections in South Dakota. At the same time, Republicans in the state have embraced social and moral values that they believe distinguish themselves from their political challengers. Immigrants and early settlers in South Dakota, especially Germans and Scandinavians, along with native-born Americans, embraced Puritanism, individualism, self-reliance, governing in small groups, ethnicity, and suspicion of all governments at all levels. More recently, however, while South Dakota remains conservative and has warmed to the government in Washington, regardless of political party, it has staunchly insisted upon maintaining small-town values.

Contemporary South Dakotans continue to be actively involved in modern politics. In recent years the state has produced such liberal politicians as Senators Tom Daschle and George McGovern (who was also the Democratic presidential candidate in 1972). The Republican Party, however, has dominated politics in the state by continuing to defend the party’s conservative values.

South Dakotans watch their elected leaders, Republican and Democrat alike, carefully. South Dakota is one of the leading states in the union in defeating incumbent elected officials at the state and federal level. Republicans insist that they remain committed to small government and rural values, but they contradict themselves when they accept millions of dollars in support for agriculture and state and local

governments. At the present time conflicted South Dakota Republicans have learned to live with massive contradictions and continue to take pride as “values” voters in the state. The future of the Republican Party in South Dakota remains to be seen.

This book deserves attention by interested scholars in agrarian states. It is timely and answers many questions about the Great Plains tradition.

Marching with Dr. King: Ralph Helstein and the United Packinghouse Workers of America, by Cyril Robinson. Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger, 2011. xii, 256 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$44.95 cloth.

Reviewer Bruce Fehn is associate professor of social studies education at the University of Iowa. He is the author of several articles in the *Annals of Iowa* and elsewhere about the United Packinghouse Workers of America.

In *Marching with Dr. King*, Cyril Robinson, a labor lawyer and emeritus professor of criminal justice, focuses on Ralph Helstein’s leadership of the United Packinghouse Workers of America (UPWA). The book traces Helstein’s entire life (1908–1985) from his boyhood in Minneapolis to his death in Chicago at age 76. Robinson devotes most of the book to Helstein’s leadership, first, as the union’s general counsel and then as UPWA president from 1948 to 1968. Robinson is particularly concerned to link Helstein’s Judaism to his commitment to democratic unionism and civil rights. As have other historians, particularly Rick Halpern and Roger Horowitz, Robinson describes how, under Helstein’s leadership, the UPWA forged exemplary programs to break down segregation and discrimination in the union, meatpacking plants, and communities in which workers lived.

In separate chapters on African Americans and women, Robinson discusses Helstein’s and the union’s efforts to enforce antidiscrimination clauses in union contracts with Armour, Swift, Wilson, and other packinghouses. He argues that Helstein built upon local, shop-floor anti-discrimination labor actions to establish effective antidiscrimination programs in the wake of a defeat in the nationwide packing strike of 1948. With the union reeling from raids from competing unions and companies’ wholesale dismissal of strike leaders, Helstein created an Anti-Discrimination Department led by African American and Iowan Russell Lasley, who had been a leader in Waterloo’s UPWA Local 46. The UPWA also required every union local to have an antidiscrimination department, and the national union headquarters made certain that the local departments had antidiscrimination programs in the meatpacking plants and communities.