

farmers" who had adopted the land-grant creed were crushed, while many old-style frugal farmers survived.

Drache's book will fit snugly on the shelf of the agribusinessman/twenty-first-century commercial farmer. His judgments about agriculture are for the most part conventional and uncritical. In his preface he looks for scapegoats for contemporary agriculture's problems and finds them in the environmental, animal rights, and consumer movements. This failure to take the critics of production agriculture seriously means that much of the new rural history that has changed how we look at the countryside—such as the negative impact of science and technology on rural society—get short shrift. Thus a most important lay historical audience, whose only contact with the history of agriculture will be through this volume, will be denied access to fresh interpretations. For them, Drache will have confirmed the conventional wisdom.

*Farm and Factory: Workers in the Midwest, 1880–1990*, by Daniel Nelson. *Midwestern History and Culture*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995. ix, 258 pp. Tables, notes, index. \$29.95 cloth.

REVIEWED BY PETER RACHLEFF, MACALESTER COLLEGE

*Farm and Factory* deserves to take a place among the most respected books consulted by students of midwestern history. Daniel Nelson is an experienced and esteemed scholar of American labor history, the author of two well-researched and tightly argued labor history monographs (*Managers and Workers: Origins of the New Factory System in the United States, 1880–1920* [1975] and *American Rubber Workers and Organized Labor, 1900–1941* [1988]) as well as several articles in scholarly journals. His writing style is clear and uncluttered, and he has cast his net over a broad expanse of not only geography but also history.

*Farm and Factory* is full of information on topics ranging from the impact of technological and managerial changes on the organization of production in specific industries and the changing role of government in the economy to the emergence of mass production unions and new political expressions. From automobiles, tires, and farm machinery to white collar offices, service and retail establishments, and the growth of the government bureaucracy, *Farm and Factory* is sure to become the first source consulted by future students of work in the region.

Nelson is at his strongest when he offers a detailed case study, often of a subject on which he has conducted his own research. Their value lies not just in the richness of the detail he offers, but also in the ways that he manages to anchor wider trends in specific experiences. Readers are certain to spend extra time with chapter four, "Revolutions

in *Production and Work, 1900–1930*,” where Nelson draws on his earlier examinations of scientific management and the evolution of the tire industry. Here, too, his presentation is grounded in everyday workplace relations rather than in the building of formal institutions.

Yet *Farm and Factory* is more than a series of case studies. Nelson puts forward an analytical framework that should likewise be consulted—and perhaps confronted. The key to that framework lies in the book’s title—farm *and* factory, not farm *to* factory, or farm, factory, and office. This title reflects the “simultaneous” growth of agriculture and industry from the 1880s until after World War II. Unlike other regions of the country, the midwestern experience did not revolve around the transfer of population from the countryside to the city. Since agriculture and industry followed parallel rather than intersecting paths of development, urban industrial labor was recruited from outside the region (southern and eastern Europeans, African-American migrants from the U.S. South), which contributed further to the widening social gulf between farm and factory. Meanwhile, Nelson argues, white collar work (service, retail, government) was slow to develop in the region. When a “simultaneous collapse” swept agriculture and industry in the 1970s and 1980s, there was little economic activity in the region that could absorb the suddenly “surplus” workforce being expelled from farms and factories. It is this historical pattern, Nelson contends, that has given the Midwest its regional distinctiveness.

This framework will prove useful to future researchers, whether they are working inside the midwestern region or comparing it to other regions. It will provoke insightful questions about the relationships among elements of a regional economy. Indeed, Nelson is to be commended for his effort to offer a framework rather than simply to provide a narrative history. Yet any such framework can be problematic, because its architect must decide to leave things out as well as put things in. And this is where I think readers of the *Annals of Iowa* will have problems with *Farm and Factory*.

Scholars in our part of the Midwest (Minnesota and Iowa) will be troubled by Nelson’s geography, which is heavily weighted towards the east (that is, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Michigan) while excising North and South Dakota, Missouri, and Nebraska. This selection gives less significance to those states where the farmers’ and labor movements tended to have a more dynamic and constructive relationship with each other than had been the case in more industrialized parts of the Midwest. Thus, Minnesota and Iowa scholars will be surprised by Nelson’s depiction of a veritable chasm between these movements, when our experience and research speaks to a more complex, mutually influencing pattern.

Nelson also seems determined to identify regional causes for key regional patterns, when other scholars might look more for national (or even international) causes. Developments need not have regional causes in order to contribute to distinctively regional patterns. Nelson's efforts to identify regional causes for the economic crises of the 1970s and 1980s seem unnecessary and even ill-advised, given the prominence of such wider factors as deindustrialization, corporate relocation, and the decline of manufacturing.

Also troubling is Nelson's tendency throughout *Farm and Factory* to concentrate on institutions and organizations to the detriment of the exploration of everyday social life. Consequently, "history" is presented as the evolution of institutions rather than as the transmission of workers' and farmers' experiences from generation to generation, as it is in Shelton Stromquist's *Solidarity and Survival: An Oral History of Iowa Labor in the Twentieth Century* (1993). Indeed, at the level of analysis Nelson has chosen, workers and farmers appear more often as acted upon by historical forces rather than as historical agents acting in their own behalf. Farmer and labor movements also appear to have had less of a long-term impact on this region than we might expect. And social cohesion seems overestimated while social conflict seems underestimated.

While these concerns amount to more than "quibbles," I want to emphasize that they arise only after an appreciation of the value of *Farm and Factory*, and that they pertain more to the author's decisions about what to leave out of his framework than to his construction or application of it. This book will prove to have long-term value for midwestern scholars despite its problems.

*Way's Packet Directory, 1848-1994: Passenger Steamboats of the Mississippi River System since the Advent of Photography in Mid-Continent America*, compiled by Frederick Way Jr. Revised edition with a new foreword by J. W. Rutter. Athens: Ohio University Press, 1994. xviii, 625 pp. Illustrations, indexes. \$34.95 paper.

*Upper Mississippi River Rafting Steamboats*, by Edward A. Mueller. Athens: Ohio University Press, 1995. viii, 341 pp. 285 duotones, maps, appendixes, index. \$44.95 cloth.

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There is no steamboat listing more valuable than Fred Way's *Packet Directory*, and this revised version, now available in paperback, is a must for any serious river historian. Way's *Directory* identifies virtually all known steam-propelled vessels that carried passengers on the

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