

The AFL-CIO was initially optimistic when Reagan gave way to George H. W. Bush in 1989, mainly because “the new president did a much better job of listening to labor” (p. 150). Indeed, Bush was less overtly hostile than Reagan had been, though the federation still faced structural challenges. For example, one of Reagan’s anti-labor tactics was to appoint pro-business representatives to the National Labor Relations Board, which was responsible for upholding the rights of workers to vote to organize themselves. Although workers had an easier time organizing in the early 1990s, it still “proved difficult to translate election victories into contracts” with employers, especially in the South (p. 178).

When Democrat Bill Clinton was elected president in 1992, the federation found renewed hope after twelve years of Republican rule. However, Clinton proved unable to pass health care reform or labor legislation, two of the AFL-CIO’s major priorities. Furthermore, Clinton passed the North American Free Trade Agreement “with considerable zeal,” which created lasting resentment among labor organizers (p. 184). The subsequent George W. Bush administration, nearly as anti-labor as Reagan’s, caused the AFL-CIO to endure “many setbacks” (p. 264). The book ends with the early years of Barack Obama’s presidency. Although Obama finally passed health care reform, labor reform remained unattainable, and Minchin gives him a mixed review.

As the chapter descriptions make clear, Minchin’s main concern is high-level Washington politics, and he relies on heretofore unexamined sources from presidential libraries to tell this very recent story. He has little to say about the activities of local union chapters, the experiences of individual workers in their workplaces, or other more specific topics in labor history. He also does little to place the events he describes in the broader macroeconomic context of de-industrialization and the emergence of the digital age. None of this, however, should diminish the value of Minchin’s impressive book, which will serve as a useful launching point for scholars hoping to investigate these issues further.

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WILLIAM MICHAEL CAMP

Scratching Out a Living: Latinos, Race, and Work in the Deep South. By Angela Stuesse. California Series in Public Anthropology. (Oakland: University of California Press, 2016. Pp. xiv, 312. Paper, \$29.95, ISBN 978-0-520-28721-1; cloth, \$85.00, ISBN 978-0-520-28720-4.)

Angela Stuesse has written an exceptional book about the poultry industry and its workers in Scott County, Mississippi, during the 1990s and the early twenty-first century. She did not do it alone but had the help of collaborators, including immigrant workers, former industry executives, workers’ center colleagues, union representatives, civil rights historians, and many others. This “collaborative writing process” was central to her “activist research approach” (p. 243).

Scratching Out a Living: Latinos, Race, and Work in the Deep South reads in part like an exposé akin to what Upton Sinclair’s *The Jungle* (1906) did for Chicago’s meatpacking plants or what Edward R. Murrow’s *Harvest of Shame* (1960) did for migrant agricultural labor along the eastern seaboard. Stuesse

makes plain the exploitation and horrors of the poultry industry. I have not eaten chicken since reading the book.

But Stuesse focuses even more attention on the social and economic relationships within Mississippi's Latino and African American poultry working communities. Her core concerns include, first, the racial landscape that Latino migrant workers entered when they arrived in Mississippi; second, the enduring divisions between African Americans and Latinos and the solidarities that she herself played a role in forging; and third, how her activism as a scholar both shaped and was shaped by the communities she worked with in Mississippi.

For historians of the South, *Scratching Out a Living* will be of greatest interest because of how Stuesse contextualizes the recent arrival of diverse Latin American immigrants—from Mexico and Central and South America—in a place shaped by segregation, racial hostility toward African Americans, economic despair for many, and riches for a few. As historians have noted, during this era of neoliberal globalization, employers recruited an exploitable migrant workforce that received abominable wages for extremely difficult work. These new immigrants disrupted the black/white binary that had, Stuesse argues, defined southern race relations before their arrival and in many ways embodied the new social and economic realities of the region's shift from agricultural to mechanized factory work.

Historians will likewise appreciate the depth of Stuesse's ethnographic analysis, which offers more details about the interiority of Latino immigrant and African American communities than do most historical archives. Historians will be familiar with both groups' mutual recriminations—some Latinos view African Americans as lazy, while some African Americans view Latinos as foreigners—but Stuesse also offers a new look at dynamics inside poultry processing centers and their surrounding communities, including housing markets and the organizing methods that Latinos and African Americans have relied on to combat their exploitation. Inside the factories, African Americans still hold some of the better-paying and more desirable jobs, but Latin Americans often occupy a more privileged position in their communities and Scott County's racial hierarchies.

Stuesse firmly believes that the best way to overcome such divisions is through solidarity and collaboration. She even taught a course on these topics during her field work, through which African American and Latino workers came to know one another and to see their own hardships mirrored in others' struggles. This belief informed Stuesse's research and writing. She has various names for her approach, all of which gesture toward collaboration, empathy, and democratic practice and fall under the umbrella of activist research. Historians may find her methods controversial given our pretention of neutrality and objectivity, but Stuesse persuasively argues that her approach can increase "methodological rigor" because her work went through several rounds of critique and revision following her dialogue with interlocutors and stakeholders (p. 243). Historians might consider how our practices can be more collaborative and democratic.

Stuesse should have paid more attention to the consumer side of the equation and to how demand shapes industry practices. It struck me that Tyson Foods

may reach a different segment of the market than the farm-to-table crowd, and I want to know more about the differential economies of different producers. While reading, I thought about a 2011 *Portlandia* episode where diners at an upscale restaurant inquire about how their chicken was raised before leaving to inspect the farm it came from. Historians who write about earlier periods will also bristle at Stuesse's assertions that some of what she describes goes back to the 1980s, as the roots certainly extend deeper. Still, *Scratching Out a Living* is one of the finest books in the recent wave of scholarship on Latino migrant workers in the Nuevo New South.

Northwestern University

GERALDO L. CADAVA

Religion and Resistance in Appalachia: Faith and the Fight Against Mountaintop Removal Coal Mining. By Joseph D. Witt. *Place Matters: New Directions in Appalachian Studies.* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2016. Pp. [viii], 284. \$50.00, ISBN 978-0-8131-6812-8.)

This volume is a welcome addition to the growing body of scholarship on grassroots opposition to mountaintop removal coal mining in Appalachia. Drawing on interviews with regional activists, Joseph D. Witt uncovers a range of religious outlooks that intermingled with activists' sense of place and understanding of nature at the height of a revitalized, direct-action movement against surface mining between 2005 and 2015. Activists' decisions to organize were informed by Catholic, mainline Protestant, and evangelical traditions as well as by modern scientific and countercultural thought. In the midst of these campaigns, activists applied religious frameworks to develop organizational strategies and to respond to regional residents who supported mountaintop removal. What makes this study so fascinating is how Witt takes a "lived religion" approach to examining these beliefs, meaning, he considers "how boundaries between religions remain permeable" (p. 50). Activists' views existed in dialogue with each other, just as they existed alongside other regional residents' conceptions of place, identity, community, and environmental stewardship. Hence, the religious beliefs that informed anti-mountaintop removal activism often overlapped or existed in creative tension with each other, fostering "new perspectives and directions" within the movement (p. 197).

Witt identifies three dominant religious frameworks that informed the resistance: the evangelical notion of "Creation Care," the Catholic and mainline Protestant emphasis on social justice, and "earth-venerating or 'dark green' spirituality" (p. 13). The Creation Care movement emerged out of a document that leaders of the Evangelical Environmental Network drafted in 1994. Regional activists applied this national movement's central tenet: that people are called to be good stewards of God's creation. They believed that environmental degradation reflected humanity's sinful nature, and they often described coming to environmentalism as akin to being "born again" and grounded their opposition to mountaintop removal in scripture (p. 104). Many Catholics and mainline Protestants espoused "eco-justice" perspectives that led them to critique not just mining but also economic and political structures that existed primarily "for the economic gain of a privileged few" (p. 62). Witt's treatment

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