

gradual abolition are not nearly as developed as some other sections of Jackson's work. Jackson shows that Benezet's ideas impacted the passage of certain pro-abolition laws in Pennsylvania, but he seems to equate the passage of gradual abolition acts in the Mid-Atlantic with those judicial and constitutional decisions in Massachusetts and Vermont that ended slavery faster than in the Mid-Atlantic (122–23, 123n85). Though he clarifies that the gradual end of slavery in Pennsylvania took decades to accomplish, Benezet would have found the freedom, or lack thereof, that gradual abolition laws actually produced appalling to his own sense of abolition (219). A more sustained discussion of the mechanics and engagement of Benezet in the issues involved in the move toward gradual abolition and the aftermath of that process, especially in Pennsylvania as Benezet's death preceded the passage of the New York and New Jersey laws, could have provided an excellent addition to an otherwise solid work.

In the end, Jackson's book provides scholars with both a needed and engaging look at a critical abolitionist figure in a transnational framework. *Let This Voice Be Heard* is another important step in solidifying the necessity of an Atlantic approach to the study of slavery and abolition.

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Francis Ryan. *AFSCME's Philadelphia Story: Municipal Workers and Urban Power in the Twentieth Century*. (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2010. Pp. 320. Illustrations, appendix, notes, bibliography, index. Cloth, \$40.00.)

In the early twentieth century Philadelphia had a strong reputation as being anti-labor. Irish, Italian, and black municipal laborers were at the mercy of city politics and ward bosses where they found it very difficult to advance into positions other than street cleaners, trash haulers, and other less desirable jobs. Jobs were awarded based on personal relationships and favoritism. Corruption was rampant.

It is against this historical backdrop that Fran Ryan details the trials of Philadelphia's public sector workers throughout the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. It is a remarkable story that here, for the first time, is told in a comprehensive and engaging manner. Indeed, Ryan's study is likely

to be the most far-reaching study of municipal workers and their union to be completed to date and he deserves much credit for this important contribution.

It stands to reason that city workers would seek to organize against Philadelphia's state of corruption and ward boss control in the early twentieth century. It was in this environment that municipal trash haulers and street sweepers, headed by William J. McEntee, sought union protection first through the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, then by affiliating with the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees or AFSCME. A strike of municipal trash workers—known as the “garbage riots”—in early 1938 led to AFSCME affiliation later that year, a move that was recognized by the city's mayor. In July 1939 AFSCME Local 222 signed its first contract with the city. For the first time workers were given some say over work rules and were granted holidays and given a few other concessions short of pensions and health and welfare benefits. However, workers weren't protected from the continued favoritism of ward bosses and shifting political winds in the City of Brotherly Love.

In the 1940s a large sanitation strike led to some wage increases and, by the 1950s, AFSCME became a partner with Mayor Joe Clark in the broader public sector reform movement in Philadelphia. By the late 1960s AFSCME in Philadelphia was part of a larger movement that resulted in a watershed for public sector workers with the enactment of Pennsylvania Act 195 in 1970 that permitted public sector workers to unionize statewide. In Philadelphia AFSCME was now firmly established and recognized to the point that Mayor Frank Rizzo granted a 7 percent wage increase in 1978 to unionized workers.

By the 1980s AFSCME—a union that originated in Wisconsin—numbered over one million strong nationwide. Pennsylvania was one of its footholds as it organized tens of thousands of municipal and state employees. However, it was in the generally antiunion environment of the 1980s that AFSCME in Philadelphia would begin to have its influence contained despite the fact that it maintained a level of militancy. Problems with leadership, including the indictment and conviction of Earl Stout, its president, and a subsequent contested election, didn't help matters.

In the late 1990s the union successfully negotiated with the city's Rendell administration for 4 percent pay increases per year over the life of a four-year contract. Yet this occurred in the wake of major concessions in 1992 that included Rendell gaining the right to contract out city services and reduce health care benefits among other givebacks. The city faced an unprecedented financial crisis for which Rendell sought major concessions from workers to regain solvency. And he largely succeeded.

The American labor movement has suffered severe setbacks in recent decades. The one area in which it seemingly maintained a stronghold was in the public sector. However, even that doesn't seem to be the case anymore as public officials, including those in Pennsylvania, have sought or are seeking concessions, wage freezes and rollbacks, and increased contributions to health, welfare, and pension funds. Indeed, one needs only look at the actions of Wisconsin's governor and assembly to see that public sector workers have been under attack. Yet they have fired back with much vehemence that has even gained some public support. Indeed, *AFSCME's Philadelphia Story* shows how public sector workers banded together in the wake of opposition much like public sector workers are attempting to do so today. Perhaps the author sums up it up best when he states, "AFSCME's Philadelphia story is a fitting one in this historic city of hope, telling how a set of poor men and their families forged what would become the most powerful working people's organization in the nation."

AFSCME's Philadelphia Story is extremely well researched and contains a comprehensive bibliography that includes author interviews with key players and workers. The book's numerous photographs, many of which come from Temple University's Archives, enhance the story. In addition, Ryan writes with an ease that makes the sometimes complicated world of labor history easier to follow and understand. The book is highly recommended for those interested in urban affairs, labor history, public policy, political science, and, of course, history. It is, indeed, an excellent contribution to a slowly growing literature on twentieth- and early twenty-first-century Pennsylvania history.

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Sean Safford. *Why the Garden Club Couldn't Save Youngstown: The Transformation of the Rust Belt*. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009. Pp. xviii, 224. Charts, graphs, appendixes, notes, bibliography, index. Cloth, \$29.95.)

Why is it that some cities in the so-called American Rust Belt appear to have successfully weathered the crippling industrial declines of the 1980s, while other cities remain trapped within a cycle of infrastructural decay and population