

maintained cordial relations with Lincoln and worked on behalf of his reelection in 1864. He would support every Republican nominee for president with greater or lesser enthusiasm for the rest of his long career.

The chapters on Cameron's service as secretary of war are the best in the book. They supersede the account in Erwin Bradley's 1966 biography, *Simon Cameron: Lincoln's Secretary of War* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 1966). From this point on, although Cameron had a second act in politics—further service in the US Senate and never-ending maneuvering behind the scenes to advance the political interests of his son Donald—the book loses momentum, drawing increasingly heavily on secondary sources, and highlighting Cameron's personal virtues. At points in the final chapters, it is a virtual gloss on Bradley's book, enhanced somewhat by exploiting newspaper clippings and an occasional manuscript collection.

Kahan could have done more intensive research in relevant manuscripts. He missed significant Cameron material at Dickinson College and Lancasterhistory.org, for example. The occasional important book for his purposes, notably Mark Summers's *The Plundering Generation* (Oxford University Press, 1987) is overlooked. Still, *Amiable Scoundrel* has merit, not least because Kahan has drawn on much of the best scholarship relevant to Cameron published in the past half-century. He recounts the basics about Cameron's career in an informed and accessible way. Kahan's closing riff that there is "much to admire" in Cameron as a personality (292) is, unfortunately, beside the point. It is Cameron's influence on policy, or lack thereof, that we need to understand better, as well as the impetus for his tendency so consistently to cross invisible moral lines in advancing his personal interests. Perhaps the secret of Simon Cameron is that there was no secret—that playing the game was what it was all about.

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Chloe Taft. *From Steel to Slots: Casino Capitalism in the Post Industrial City* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016). Pp. 336. Notes, index, illustrations. Cloth, \$39.95.

The turn of the twenty-first century witnessed the decline of much of what was left of industrial America. Social changes, along with new innovations, together transformed the old structure based on industrial output into a system based

more on information and service. This transformation occurred in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, where a tsunami of casino capitalism overtook the city and the decayed Bethlehem Steel site. For those of us who lived there at that time, it was easy to feel overwhelmed. The change was far and away more than those caught up in it could comprehensively see, study, analyze, or recount.

Bethlehem Steel seems to be a model of the transition from an industrial to a postindustrial society. In *From Steel to Slots: Casino Capitalism in the Post Industrial City*, Chloe Taft describes and analyzes this transformation in a case study of Bethlehem Steel. Don't expect easy answers. She argues that the transition of Bethlehem from an industrial center to casino capitalism "is a complicated narrative" of economic rebirth that "is not necessarily a firm break from the past, nor is it inevitable." What emerges from Taft's analysis is a "blurred understanding of past present and future" (4). Overall her narrative is an expression of loss and perhaps betrayal by unrelenting historical forces.

Part of south Bethlehem is a time capsule stocked with the crumbling infrastructure remnants of "The Steel," populated with the memories of those whose lives depended on it. This is what stands out most in the story. Taft does her finest work when portraying the conflict between the old guard, represented by former steelworkers, and the newcomers, representing the casino interest. Former steelworkers were burdened by the sentimental memory of what once was. Taft notes this at a ceremony for the opening of the casino. A former steelworker spoke: "Bernie subverted the celebration to instead emphasize his grief at the plant's closure." Even if you are unfamiliar with social change and the pain that often comes with it, Bernie's words and feelings should not have surprised anyone.

This transition helped to create greater inequality, visible in the disruption of Bethlehem's labor markets. The displacement of industrial labor has intensified the gap between returns to capital and returns to labor. On the other hand, it is also possible that technology's displacement of workers may, in aggregate, result in a net increase in safe and rewarding jobs. Labor may still be a factor, but based more on talent and ability than physical labor. This will lead to market segmentation with "low skill/low pay" and "high skill/high pay," which in turn will lead to an increase in social tensions. In the short run at least, what's left is the memory of a once thriving, once dominant, once seemingly permanent industrial steelmaker synonymous with a city.

For me, what stands out in Taft's analysis in this transformation is the view from the position of its victims—blue-collar America. There is something disturbing about the sense of loss and hope between those caught up in

the past and those trying to manage in an uncertain future—the transition between hope and aspirations and the reality of a casino capitalism. It may be that I am somewhat cynical about what appears to me to be a blind worship of the past. Still, I cannot help but be moved by a book that so compellingly tells a story of loss and change.

Bethlehem, according to Taft, has always been a player in the global marketplace beginning with its founding in 1741 by Moravian Church missionaries. As the headquarters for the Moravians' North American operations, the Church played an influential role in the development of the city. Similarly, Bethlehem Steel was a global company that just happened to be located in Bethlehem. Because they were both closely connected to the city, in turn they were connected to each other. Consider, for example, that it was the Moravian Church that sold the Bethlehem Steel Company the land in south Bethlehem, which would become the headquarters of one of the largest steel producers in the United States. With close connection, their culture and ideas penetrated the culture of the city.

As a longtime resident of Bethlehem, it is difficult for me to see beyond the victims, some of whom were related, and others friends. This book allowed me to imagine what my life would have been like had I worked at The Steel, an option not totally open to me because the work force was primarily white ethnic. However, the option was available to many of the people I knew and grew up with. The Steel was everywhere. This is why for me, at least, the book was a portal into my own family's history to a time when The Steel dominated everything about Bethlehem in general and south Bethlehem in particular. While my connection to Bethlehem Steel was relatively marginal, I nevertheless found the book curiously moving in that it allowed me to rethink the tradition-bound industrial world that surrounded me as I grew up.

For many years Bethlehem Steel has been entwined with the city it called home, but not all residents of Bethlehem shared equally in the opportunities it provided. The context of the city of Bethlehem is the environment in which Taft attempts to piece together present and past and to clarify the history somewhat. We know what happened. No one was cast against type. But there is also an absence: Those who, like myself, lived in Bethlehem in the shadow of The Steel, in the culture and economy dominated by its shade, but yet who were not vested in it directly are missing. Where are those who were either indifferent or were celebrating the demise of the steel industry? What about those who looked to remake an outdated community?

Many who accepted the change understood that they were on the brink of a technological revolution that would fundamentally alter their lives, work, and how they related to one another. In its scale, scope, and complexity, the transformation was unlike anything Bethlehem experienced before. While it was unfolding, one thing was clear: the response had to be well integrated and comprehensive, involving all stakeholders from the public and private sectors. Such a change, however, shouldn't be seen as entirely a matter of outside victors and local victims. In fact, locals—who were and were not vested in The Steel—were important players. This transformation from steel to casino was also an inside job that included a powerful alliance of developers, realtors, financiers, and government officials whose political and economic fortunes were tied to the transition and rapid growth of their municipality.

Those local players were supported by a wider circle of boosters in the media, utilities, chambers of commerce, and government. They strove to increase the value of land and its revenue streams from property taxes, rents, and profits. They tied the transformation and growth not just to benefit particular elites but as the basis for broad sociopolitical consensus. The overarching development goal was the attraction of capital investments that would help to make the transition successful and with limited cost and pain.

George Orwell wrote, “Who controls the past, controls the future; who controls the present, controls the past.” Who was in control of the transition? Taft, it appears, believes that it was outside forces, a global economy, outside developers, and casino moguls. For example, she writes that “memories do not have obvious value, particularly for developers with no connection to Bethlehem's past.” This may not be totally accurate. What isn't clear in the book is how change came as much from within as from without. To an extent, it was an inside job. Consider that Bethlehem Steel rose out of the Moravian settlement. The Moravians embedded their culture into the city to the extent that is hard to discern. The Steel, it can be argued, did the same, but its impact was clear and evident. Here it becomes interesting to note that Moravian College graduates were involved in the development. In other words, the developers were not outsiders with no connection and memories of Bethlehem but locals engrossed completely in the history and culture. So, you might argue, the Moravians are still players in directing Bethlehem's future—two hundred years later.

More precisely, to invoke George Orwell, it's the same players who since the beginning have controlled the city's past, present, and future—re-imaged the future—to perhaps their own benefit: “local actors have invoked the past and

exploited the memories to both interpret and shape the risk-based landscape of global capitalism since the cities founding.” It seems obvious to me that the Moravians have an unseen, if not appreciated, control over the past, present, and future control of Bethlehem’s history. Looking at events in Bethlehem more closely, the lead players in this transition had ties to the Moravian community. The lead developer and co-founder of Beth Works was a graduate of Moravian College, as was his primary rival, who teamed up with Foxwoods Casino. Furthermore, the developer and part-owner of Martin Towers was also a Moravian College grad, as was the mayor of Bethlehem. They, like myself, were not vested directly in Bethlehem Steel—none of them, as far as I know, had any interest in The Steel—that is, in working there. And there were many more like them who fall outside of this book’s central narrative.

From *Steel to Slots* portrays the transition from industrial to postindustrial as a narrative of winners and losers propelled by an expanding global neoliberalism. It portrays a new world, greased by fluid monetary assets and facilitated by online communications. We have yet to find ways to manage and control this world. In this sense it would appear that the world economy has become a speculative game, one that values steel mills no more than casinos, and casinos no more than anything else. Still, to me, the economic and cultural cost—the human cost—of turning Bethlehem Steel into a casino has been too steep.

Because this was part of my history, I could not help but admire this analysis, the back story, and the individual players, the former steelworkers, and the casino magnates cast as the villains. I lived parts of this book and I remember something different. The book is not about me. Nevertheless, it is true to its source materials, and it shines a welcome light on the story of people directly affected by The Steel’s demise.

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Andrew R. Murphy. *Liberty, Conscience & Toleration: The Political Thought of William Penn* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016). Pp. 320. Notes, index. Cloth, \$74.00.

In this intellectual biography of William Penn, Andrew Murphy uses Penn’s writings to trace the development of his political theory while placing