

Disaster, January 22, 1959 (1999), a straightforward and objective account of the event. This follow-up book digs into the event's deeper meaning; how it affected the rescued miners, the surviving family members, and the community. It provides the subjective web of personal and collective memory in a well-organized and moving fashion. Interviews are organized in concentric circles starting with the rescued miners, the wives and siblings, the children, and then through poems, songs, and memorials uncovering the communal memory. There are stark accounts of the survivors as they climbed along the edge of life and death; powerful memories of family dreams and premonitions; the moment of hearing on the radio, at school, or from a neighbor that there had been an "accident at the mines"—a phrase that struck fear in the hearts of mine communities for generations.

One of the interviewees tells one of the coauthors: "Some of your questions have pried some things open" (p. 170). In fact many things are pried open in this book: the deep bitterness that virtually everyone felt toward a company that ignored warnings and ample evidence of impending breakthrough, then offered no condolences or reparation; the corruption of union officials; the incompetence or collusion of mine inspectors; the bitter divisions that emerged between two groups of rescued miners that got separated, causing the larger group of twenty-five to wander in terror for seven hours.

Almost as much as the interviews, nearly eighty photos and illustrations inject the reader into the event and the lives of those who lived it: children with the father they will lose, a happy wife and husband a year before the disaster, service photos, wedding pictures, family portraits after the event with bewildered faces and visible pain. In recent years, the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission has made a sustained effort to broaden the public's understanding of history beyond the battlefields and political leaders. Central to this effort has been a growing recognition of the importance of labor history to the understanding of Pennsylvania's heritage. This book by the Wolenskys makes a significant contribution to that process.

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CHARLES MCCOLLESTER

A Capitol Journey: Reflections on the Press, Politics, and the Making of Public Policy in Pennsylvania. By VINCENT P. CAROCCI. (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2005. x, 298p. Illustrations, index. \$39.95.)

A Capitol Journal is a narrative of Vincent Carocci's life in which the author reflects on his more than forty years of service in journalism, government, and the private sector. Part autobiography and part memoir, the author includes passages

about his entire life, but scholars and journalists will focus mostly on those sections that deal with Carocci's career in Pennsylvania government. Elected public officials frequently write such accounts, but few staff members of the state legislature or executive branch have done so. More impressive is the candor with which the author addresses his subject matter. Admittedly, this is not a history, nor is a balanced product the end result. Carocci's story is a traditional insider's account of the events he participated in and witnessed, but that observation in no way diminishes his insights and observations.

Carocci worked at various times for the *Johnstown Tribune Democrat*, the UPI, and the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, and he certainly reflects with great fondness on the halcyon days before Watergate when reporters covered the state capitol. He clearly has a penchant for the romantic, and for cigar chomping, hard-driving, hard-drinking, storytelling reporters of a bygone era. He laments what he sees as the changes in his old profession, viewing it now as too combative, too confrontational, and too ideological.

Political insiders will take particular delight in Carocci's recounting of his days as a Pennsylvania state senate staffer. Carocci was a Democratic staffer in the 1970s and early 1980s, and he describes the internal Democratic Party reorganizations and in-fighting, providing keen insights into the operation of the state legislature and of the colorful personalities who served in it. Many of these senators no longer serve, including Tom Nolan, William Duffield, Craig Lewis, Joe Ammerman, and Henry Messinger, but the section on Vince Fumo, who still serves, is likely to draw special interest.

The heart of the book, however, covers Carocci's observations about six governors. He assesses the political skills, personal qualities, and legislative activities of governors from David Lawrence to Robert P. Casey. But his service on Governor Casey's senior staff and his assessment of Casey will probably be remembered as the book's most significant contribution. Carocci's firsthand observations of the late governor's two terms offer a unique perspective.

Two are worth special mention. Casey's campaign consultant James Carville, who eventually ran Bill Clinton's successful presidential campaign in 1992, resuscitated his own career by managing Casey's gubernatorial victory in a hard-fought campaign over Bill Scranton in 1986. After the election, Casey continued to consult with Carville when the governor faced a variety of political and governance problems, an advisory role Carville played that has been little known. Notably, Carville recommended and Casey carried out a major staff reorganization, saving the governor from the internal chaos that was plaguing his administration.

Casey's national stature was solidified by his strongly held pro-life views on abortion, which put him at odds with the leaders of his own party. He asked, but was refused permission to address the Democratic National Convention in 1992. The governor did not particularly like Bill Clinton and told the *New York Times* in April 1992 that the future president was a "blip," incurring the wrath of the

Clintons. Casey found Clinton, “too smooth, too cute, too slippery,” and the bad blood continued. Casey remained estranged from Clinton and refused to campaign for him in 1992 and boycotted a Hillary Clinton appearance in Lackawanna County in that campaign. The governor remained a Democrat to the end, however, and would not endorse George H. W. Bush. At no time afterwards, did Casey lift a finger to campaign for Clinton. According to Carocci, Casey considered Clinton a “blot” on the presidency and ranked him just on par with Richard Nixon.

Carocci is an excellent storyteller and has some insights into Pennsylvania politics and government not available at the moment anywhere else. Anyone searching for a classic insider account, complete with anecdotes and analysis, will find the book profitable to read.

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G. TERRY MADONNA

Front-Page Pittsburgh: Two Hundred Years of the Post-Gazette. By CLARKE M. THOMAS. (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2005. xii, 332p. Notes, bibliography, illustrations, index. \$34.95.)

In the 220 years since the *Pittsburgh Gazette* debuted in a small frontier outpost west of the Alleghenies, the city has seen its fortunes ebb and flow. By 1910, Pittsburgh was the nation’s eighth largest city; today it ranks fifty-fourth and is losing ground. The steel mills that fueled Pittsburgh’s growth—and inspired a nineteenth-century visitor to describe the city as “hell with the lid off”—are nearly all gone, and with them the smoke and ash that sometimes reduced daytime visibility to ten feet.

The issues, the people and the printing presses that produced that first edition of the *Gazette* long ago turned to dust. And yet, as Clarke M. Thomas points out in *Front-Page Pittsburgh*, one thing has remained constant: “From the outset,” he writes, “the *Gazette* reflected the propensities that would run through its history: a serious nature, a friendly attitude towards business, involvement in community affairs, and openness to varying opinions—within limits” (p. 6).

Today, the *Post-Gazette* is a successful anomaly: A family-owned daily in a two-newspaper town. Like all newspapers in today’s era of corporate oligopoly and technological convergence, its stability is relative. And, also like other papers, the *Post-Gazette* has yet to discover a profitable way to compete with or assimilate the Internet, but it survived past challenges because it was able to successfully adapt to changing realities. It has weathered mergers, a major strike that left Pittsburgh readers with scarcely any printed news for eight months in 1992, and an incursion by ideologue publisher Richard Mellon Scaife, a conservative who uses his sheet, the *Pittsburgh Tribune-Review*, to further his political