

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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*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

aims in the style of the late William Randolph Hearst.

Ironically, Hearst played a major role in the evolution of the *Post-Gazette*, and Thomas deftly explores the mysterious machinations between the notorious yellow journalist and Paul Block Sr. that assured the success of the enterprise on the eve of the Great Depression—and simultaneously reduced Pittsburgh readers' options from five newspapers to three.

The Block family (which maintains control of the paper to this day) eventually bought Hearst's newspaper properties and in 1961 entered into a joint-operating agreement with its rival, the Scripps-owned *Pittsburgh Press*. When editorial employees struck the *Press* in 1992, the *Post-Gazette* was forced to cease publication as well. After an eight-month strike, Scripps sold the *Press* to the Block family. Some of the *Press* staff went to work on the *Post-Gazette*, but the *Press* was never published again. Bad feelings over the strike continue to linger in the newsroom and the city.

Thomas's book is well-written and rich with anecdotes. The casual reader without a particular rooting interest in Pittsburgh may find the book's episodes on local politics and long-forgotten newspaper disputes tedious. But such is the stuff of local daily news. And in the days before cable news and the Internet accelerated the homogenization of regional cultures, the stuff of local daily news was compelling and urgent to the people who shared community through their reading of it.

For many years, too much journalism history has focused obsessively on a few influential publishers, such as James Gordon Bennett, Joseph Pulitzer, and William Randolph Hearst, and on New York City. *Front-Page Pittsburgh* is a valuable addition to a growing wave of scholarship that looks beyond this "Big Apple Syndrome" to explore the richness and variety of journalism that evolved west of the Hudson River.

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MIKE DILLON

*Historic Sacred Places of Philadelphia*. By ROGER W. MOSS, photographs by TOM CRANE. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005. xiii, 314p. Illustrations, glossary, bibliography, index. \$34.95.)

A sequel to Moss and Crane's *Historic Houses of Philadelphia* (1998), this sumptuously illustrated large-format volume surveys churches and synagogues within the City of Philadelphia, with emphasis on ones erected before 1900 and reasonably accessible to visitors. Not intended as a detailed history of a building type, it combines relatively brief essays on fifty houses of worship (out of the sixteen thousand congregations in the city) with a short introduction that begins with William Penn's establishment of a colony offering "Freedom of their