

University, the University of Pittsburgh, and Point Park College (now University) periodically cohabitate with The Pittsburgh Playhouse, The City Theatre, Kuntu Repertory, and other major players.

However, dedicated theater-goers may find a fledgling company or favored personality missing. Notable omissions include Mark Lewis (praised by some, disparaged by others), a manager at the Playhouse during the tenure of the demanding ballet director Nicholas Petrov, and the work of youth-oriented theaters like Saltworks and The Playhouse Junior. Nevertheless, Conner's coverage is admirable, and she does not intend, nor can she be expected, to chronicle every group that existed.

Conner is a scholar and the book is often academically antiseptic, though not dispassionate, as a brief fictional introduction precedes each chapter. Chapter titles announce the author's affinity for social history (e.g., "Theater of Social Change," "Theater as Cultural Capital") but are not always cogently connected. For instance, for the denouement of chapter 5, Conner skillfully ties Duse's death to the cold, steel city. But the story does not support the chapter's wartime title, "Theater of Distraction."

With a few surprising exceptions, Conner remains neutral. Her discussion of racial issues surrounding Stephen Foster, minstrelsy, and T. D. Rice are objective. Later, however, she sides with those who blamed the exit of the American Conservatory Theater (ACT) on William Ball's ambition. While she documents actions of members of various boards of directors and advisors, Conner seldom elucidates the behind-the-scenes activities of "power brokers." That is a murkier scene to light. Regarding the ACT, Conner may be right, but board members who had the wherewithal to remove the "power brokers" must have worn blinders.

For readers seeking a glimpse of the inner workings of theater personnel and cultural brokers in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, *Pittsburgh in Stages* is a good start. For those who want a stimulating synopsis within an accurate social and political setting, this is it.

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*From the Miners' Doublehouse: Archaeology and Landscape in a Pennsylvania Coal Company Town.* By KAREN BESCHERER METHENY. (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2007. xxix, 305 pp. Illustrations, notes, references cited, index. \$45.)

Helvetia, located in Clearfield County, Pennsylvania, is the focus of archaeologist Karen Metheny's interdisciplinary study of life, society, and working conditions in an American company town. Established, owned, and controlled

by the Rochester and Pittsburgh Coal Company, Helvetia was constructed to extract and process bituminous coal for the vastly growing American consumer market. Its residents—mainly of eastern and southern European extraction—came to and lived there in company-built housing precisely for that reason. The primary period of interpretation is 1891 to 1947, key years in Helvetia's prominence as a coal-producing western Pennsylvania town. In the peak production years of the 1930s and 1940s, Helvetia's mines employed twelve hundred workers and supported as many residents. A company store was prominent, as were social organizations and outlets such as churches and a company-sponsored baseball team. Indeed, Helvetia was like many other company towns that dotted America's industrial landscape. And, like other such towns, it experienced deindustrialization. The mines officially closed in 1954, and a salvage enterprise purchased the town. Residents gradually relocated or passed away. In 1989, its last residents were evicted and most of the town was strip-mined, leaving behind few extant structures.

As the author explains, the study utilizes "multiple lines of evidence, including oral histories, documentary sources, and architectural, material, and archaeological evidence [to] reconstruct living and working conditions" in Helvetia (p. xvi). These sources suggest that residents created a physical and cultural environment that accommodated both their traditional ethnic ways of life and the expectations of the coal company. Moreover, residents played a more direct role in controlling their daily lives despite the restrictive and paternalistic rules of Rochester and Pittsburgh (R & P). R & P encouraged garden competitions, for example, but at the same time residents remained loyal to their familial traditions by growing produce and utilizing gardening techniques particular to their ethnicities. Likewise, archaeological evidence reveals that residents maintained traditional ethnic clothing styles and provides important clues on Helvetia's structures and town layout.

Oral histories in chapter 5 add to the richness of the research, complement the book's humanistic perspective, and enable former residents to reflect on work and leisure activities in Helvetia. Stories include those of "Rookie" Brown, who played for the town's company-sponsored baseball team and worked in its mines, and Veronica McKee, a lifelong town resident who lived in the former company store manager's house for more than fifty years. However, the oral histories are short on direct and in-depth quotes from the narrators and tend to favor the author's interpretations. And, while the book cites many important secondary works, it is missing several key comparative sources. These include John Gaventa's influential work, *Power and Powerlessness: Quiescence and Rebellion in an Appalachian Valley* (1980); Anne Mosher's *Capital's Utopia: Vandergrift, Pennsylvania, 1835–1916* (2004); Mildred Allen Beik's *The Miners of Windber: The Struggles of New Immigrants for Unionization, 1890s–1930s* (1996); and David Alan Corbin's, *Life Work and Rebellion in the Coal Fields: The Southern*

*West Virginia Miners, 1880–1922* (1981). Finally, the book is short on broader analyses of American deindustrialization and how Helvetia does or does not fit into such interpretations.

Overall, *From the Miners' Doublehouse* is an excellent interdisciplinary read that easily complements graduate-level courses on industrial and labor history, historic archaeology, ethnicity, and anthropology. Indeed, among its greatest contributions is that it combines historic archaeology with other methods of interpretation to provide a full and balanced look at life in Helvetia. Many of these towns are long gone from the American industrial landscape and have, unfortunately, escaped scholarly study. The author's interdisciplinary approach adds to a growing literature on American industrialization and deindustrialization. Finally, it contributes another chapter to a growing body of knowledge that describes and interprets human struggles for individual and communal identity in corporate absentee-owned mining and industrial locales of Appalachia.

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