

interested in urban studies, criminal justice, African American studies, sociology, and women's studies will find *Colored Amazons* essential reading.

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LILLIAN SERECE WILLIAMS

*Wobblies on the Waterfront: Interracial Unionism in Progressive-Era Philadelphia.* By PETER COLE. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2007. x, 227 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$40.)

Peter Cole has high ambitions: to rescue Local 8 of the National Industrial Union of Marine Transport Workers from obscurity. He succeeds admirably. Local 8, based along the Philadelphia waterfront, deserves serious scholarly treatment. It was the largest and most enduring union formed under the aegis of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) in the first decades of the twentieth century. Local 8 represented a remarkable alliance of white and black workers, and the union, while pragmatically fighting for improved working conditions for its member longshoremen, held to revolutionary principles. In unearthing the history of Local 8, Cole revives interest in the IWW, contributes to longstanding debates on American trade unions and the lives of African American workers, and illuminates a period in the labor history of Philadelphia that has been greatly neglected.

Cole first describes the backbreaking and perilous work of Philadelphia longshoremen, hostile ethnic and racial relations among dockworkers in the city during the nineteenth century, and successive failures at unionization. In the spring of 1913, IWW organizers began mobilizing sugar refinery workers, and the initiative spread to nearby docks. On May 14, 1913, thousands of longshoremen walked off their jobs in an IWW-inspired strike. Within two weeks, following street fighting among strikers, strikebreakers, and the police, ship owners conceded, granting wage increases, overtime pay, and reduced hours. Abiding by their anarcho-syndicalist ideals, IWW leaders refused to sign and be bound by a contract, insisting that the dockworkers could strike whenever they saw fit.

Local 8 thus emerged and maintained a stronghold for nine years. Cole offers no single explanation for the IWW's success on the Philadelphia waterfront. The union benefited from extraordinary local leadership, most notably that of Benjamin Fletcher, an African American dockworker. The IWW committed to mobilizing across ethnic and racial lines, and with African Americans comprising a majority of the longshoremen, Local 8 repelled employers' efforts to break the union by hiring black strikebreakers. The employers themselves were divided, and Local 8 also faced minimal challenges from mainstream unions (the International Longshoremen's Union, an affiliate of the American Federation of Labor, had not earmarked Philadelphia for organization).

Local 8 withstood economic downturns and government repression when its leaders were imprisoned for sedition during World War I. However, the union did not survive rifts within the IWW that were spurred by the Bolshevik Revolution, divides within the African American community that accompanied the arrival of new migrants from the south, and a unified campaign by employers in Philadelphia in the early 1920s against Local 8 and for operating on an open-shop basis (hiring black workers new to both the city and the solidarities forged by the IWW). On splits among radical trade unionists, Cole relates—as well as he can with the available sparse evidence—the efforts of Communists to dissolve Local 8 for the union's anarcho-syndicalism—the so-called Philadelphia Controversy.

Cole's research and engaging narrative are to be applauded. But, Local 8's radical, interracial trade unionism still remains elusive. Perhaps greater attention by the author to the community lives of dockworkers would have afforded deeper understanding. Also, brief comparisons with other instances of enduring organizing of white and black workers would have also clarified whether Local 8 was a story of unique circumstances.

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WALTER LICHT

*Rising from the Wilderness: J. W. Gitt and His Legendary Newspaper, the Gazette and Daily of York, Pa.* By MARY A. HAMILTON. (York, PA: York County Heritage Trust, 2007, xvi, 342 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$29.95.)

For more than fifty years, the *Gazette and Daily* of York was one of the most remarkable and controversial newspapers ever published in Pennsylvania. Owned by Josiah William (J. W.) Gitt, the newspaper earned a reputation as an extremely liberal daily. Gitt transformed a struggling paper into a vehicle for his radical views, one that backed a Progressive Party candidate for president, questioned the cold war, and supported the civil rights movement.

In her exhaustively researched book, Mary A. Hamilton provides an insightful look at Gitt and his unusual newspaper. Hamilton, a retired professor of journalism and former staff member at the *Gazette and Daily*, uses Gitt's personal correspondence, interviews with former staff members, and the paper's archives to tell the curious story of how the unwavering liberal voice not only emerged, but managed to survive, in conservative York County. Some in the community labeled Gitt a "Communist" and called his publication a "nigger" paper. Yet, to others he was a voice of reason during a pivotal period in American history.

Born in Hanover, Gitt graduated from Franklin and Marshall College and attended the University of Pennsylvania's School of Law. He practiced law for