

After briefly providing the context for the rise of spiritualism and discussing key figures in Philadelphia's spiritualist community, Hoover tells of the rise and fall of Katie King, a ghost initially dreamed up in London by Florence Cook, a supposed medium. Cook portrayed the character of Katie King from 1871 to 1874, telling audiences that she was the late daughter of the fierce pirate Henry Morgan and that she could carry messages between the dead and the living. For a brief time the charade was lucrative. Cook was soon exposed as a fraud, however, and forced to retire the act. Learning of King through newspapers, two con artists, Nelson and Jennie Holmes of Philadelphia, resurrected the spirit for audiences in their city. For a time, Katie King commanded a large audience of believers in the City of Brotherly Love, even becoming a special favorite of the wealthy philanthropist Robert Dale Owen. Hoover's narrative deftly explores how the con was created, perpetuated, and, ultimately, exposed.

Philadelphia Spiritualism provides an interesting contribution to this period in Philadelphia history. Because the intended audience is the general reading public, the book does not include footnotes or endnotes, but a list of primary sources is provided. The weakest aspect of the work is its failure to analyze the role that spiritualism played as a cultural response to changes in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Numerous studies of spiritualism have variously couched it as a response to the rise of scientific thinking, as an expression of anxiety in an era of political and social upheaval, or as a progressive movement that embraced women and marginalized figures, both as mediums and as the spirits with whom they interacted. Hoover might have drawn on any of these cultural frames to better anchor the book in the context of this historical movement, and this more nuanced contextualization would have provided readers with a better insight into the cultural concerns of Philadelphians at that time.

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The Homestead Strike: Labor, Violence, and American Industry. By PAUL KAHAN. (New York: Routledge, 2014. 166 pp. Illustrations, appendices, notes, bibliography, index. Cloth, \$135; paper, \$29.95.)

Paul Kahan quotes Mark Twain at the outset: "History does not repeat itself, but it does rhyme" (4). Indeed, echoes of late nineteenth-century class conflict, inequality, and exploitative working conditions resonate in disturbing ways today, and Kahan's acknowledgment that "contemporary events inspired [him] to write" about this iconic 1892 labor battle is refreshing (4). Current relevance provides one of two compelling reasons that Homestead warrants renewed attention, the other being that Paul Krause's *Battle for Homestead*, the best devoted, extant treat-

ment of this topic, is twenty-three years old and over five hundred pages long. Kahan's take appears in a Routledge series aiming to deliver concise accounts of pivotal episodes in US history while offering students "a window into the historian's craft" (vi).

The Homestead Strike succeeds in both objectives. The book consists of six chapters, which present, respectively: biographical background on Andrew Carnegie and Henry Clay Frick; a survey of US labor history; a summary of events preceding the lockout in Homestead; a narrative of the conflict in political-economic context; an account of immediate repercussions; and an assessment of Homestead's meaning for subsequent US history. Impressively, these chapters fill just over one hundred pages. With the appendix's nine primary documents, numerous "bubble" inserts on related issues, and a companion website, the book is a marvelous teaching tool.

Its pedagogical value, however, lies sometimes in its shortcomings rather than its virtues. Kahan names Carnegie and Frick the "most important individuals involved in the Homestead strike" but renders them as caricatures of venality, ruthlessness, greed, and hypocrisy. One need not sympathize with steel moguls to see that such depictions exemplify—albeit with a different class inflection—what E. P. Thompson called "the enormous condescension of posterity," always a pitfall of the "historian's craft" worth discussing with students.

Such portrayals undermine Kahan's entirely reasonable analytical intention to defend the strikers. The industrialists' decisions set the conflict's gears in motion, but arguing that Carnegie and Frick drove every element of violence at Homestead not only strains credibility (neither man was physically there) but also implies that the rank-and-file steelworkers' violence constituted a brute reaction to the employers' machinations rather than an expression of historically specific radicalism. Homestead workers had politics worth understanding. In trying to exculpate them, Kahan obscures them instead. More attentive editing would also have removed inexplicable errors (the Pinkerton barge floated up the Monongahela, not the Ohio River; Johann Most was never nicknamed "Johnny") and a woeful omission: a chapter entitled "American Labor History, 1600–1892," cannot simply ignore slavery.

In assessing Homestead's legacy, Kahan cites the continued existence of the United Steelworkers (USW) union as evidence that the Homestead strikers lost their own battle but "won the war" (105). Today's steelworkers might demur, working as they do in an industry racked by layoffs, intense foreign competition, and declining union strength. Critical readers, observing the world around them, should question the notion that any war was won. They might even take inspiration from the Homestead strikers and renew the fight, sounding history's rhyme once more. We can hope.