history at once dramatic and turbulent has resulted. In a country that experienced more labor violence than any industrialized nation, the American coal mining industry stands out for its sheer bloodiness.

A significant part of this history is ably chronicled in this new book by Priscilla Long. Broad in the sweep of its subject, sympathetic in its understanding of the miners' struggles, Where the Sun Never Shines is a welcome addition to our growing knowledge of the industry that freed America of energy dependency and provided the fuel for the industrial revolution. As the author correctly points out, "The industrial revolution emerged from the early coal industry rather than the other way round." And that revolution, which began in Great Britain two centuries ago, continues to transform the world.

Despite its scope, the book is not, as the subtitle suggests, a history of the entire coal industry in the United States. Such a work probably is beyond the capacity of a single volume. Largely absent, for example, is the story of the bituminous, or soft, coal fields of Western Pennsylvania, the upper South, and the Middle West. Rather, the author concentrates first on the development of the anthracite, or hard coal, industry in northeastern Pennsylvania; then, in the second part of the book — and for this reviewer, the most informative — Long focuses on the rise of the industry in the West, notably in Colorado.

Following a summary review of the early uses of coal in England, with attendant technological innovations such as the pump and steam engine that quickly established the basis for other industries, the author quickly shifts to North America. There, beginning in the 1820s in the wild frontier region of northeastern Pennsylvania, the American coal industry got its true start. Much of the story told in the chapters on anthracite already is familiar because of the work of earlier historians, but the author does provide a good synthesis of the subject. She describes the craft nature of the early industry, the efforts of the coal operators to gain control of the workplace, and the subsequent rise, and

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applied in the soft coal regions because of the usually horizontal lay of the coal beds. In the anthracite fields, where most of the coal seams pitched upward and downward, coal cutting machines had limited use. The craft nature of the industry there was more difficult to break. Still, as large corporations gained control of the industry after the Civil War, and management asserted its power, the struggles of anthracite workers came to parallel those of their brethren in the soft coal fields.

The author is at her best in the second part of the book, which describes the development of coal mining in the West. Like other recent historians of the region, she assaults the romantic myth of the West as a social safety valve and frontier of expanding opportunity. In the coal fields of Colorado, for example, the destruction of the Indians and their culture coincided with the rise of a brutal exploitative capitalism. The owners of the railroads and mines looked on the Indians, the land, and their workers as either obstacles to be removed or resources to be indiscriminately plundered and used. Coal provided the energy source for the West's industrialization in the final decades of the 19th century, but the cost in human suffering and to the environment was immense. The ravages of eastern mining were repeated in the West with a vengeance.

Out of these coal pits of misery came workers who, with their women and children, engaged the operators in several of the most savage labor conflicts in American history. These mine workers, either veterans of the older eastern coal fields or newly arrived immigrants from Europe and also Asia or Mexico, eventually overcame their ethnic differences and organized under the banners of the International Workers of the World and the United Mine Workers of America. Though sometimes not well served by their unions' leadership, they used their coal communities as bases from which to fight for better wages and working conditions. Their struggles culminated in the great Colorado Fuel and Iron strike of 1913-1914, which resulted in the Ludlow massacre of workers and their families in April 1914. The workers responded with an armed uprising; an alarmed President Wilson sent in federal troops to restore order. For the first time, as an observer noted, an industrial conflict had brought the nation to the verge of civil war and revolution.

The Colorado Fuel and Iron strike and the class conflict it engendered did not bring an end to the workers' struggles. Miners and their families would go on fighting for their rights down to the present, as the recent Pittston strike in the southern fields demonstrates. But the events in Colorado that spring of 1914 cemented bonds of solidarity among the ethnic mine workers that gave them definition as Americans. The cauldron of conflict involving labor, big business and the federal government helped to gradually change public attitudes and set the stage for the long-coming recognition of labor rights and reforms of the New Deal.

Richard E. Sharpless
(Sharpless is co-author, with Donald L. Miller, of The Kingdom of Coal, a history of the anthracite industry and culture in the United States.)

Coal, Class and Color: Blacks in Southern West Virginia, 1915-1932
By Joe William Trotter, Jr.

WEST Virginia has some of the richest lodes of bituminous coal in the United States. It turns out that it also has one of the richest seams of black social history. Joe Trotter, the son of a black West Virginia miner and now a history professor at Carnegie Mellon University, has laid bare a good part of that lode. His study is well-crafted, richly documented, and quite instructive.

The author's central theme is "proletarianization," defined as "the process by which southern rural and semirural blacks became new industrial workers and crystalized into a new class." (Page 1) Trotter sees this proletariat as shaped not just by external forces — the coal industry and white racism — but also by the activities of black miners and middle class folks themselves.

The external forces were powerful and oppressive. In the 1880s and 1890s young black men who migrated from rural Virginia to the mines of West Virginia were forced to take the dangerous job of loading coal deep underground; the few who worked above ground were confined largely to the dangerous task of brake man. Miners' families lived a restricted life. Their housing was company owned and controlled, their schools, theaters, baseball teams and social welfare institutions were rigidly segregated. Their children were long denied higher education; before World War I they had not one(!) school.

Despite segregation and appalling work conditions, between World War I and the 1930s, expanding coal production attracted new migrants from the deep South (especially Alabama), causing West Virginia's black population to increase by about 50 percent, peaking at 60,000. Job discrimination also increased as blacks lost positions as supervisors, even of all-black labor gangs. On the plus side, they gained increased access to skilled positions such as brake man, working behind a white motor man. Most, however, remained confined to dangerous, wet and poorly ventilated underground work. All miners, of course, suffered, but there was a clear pecking order. Native whites prevailed in the most desirable jobs above ground: immigrants, who had formerly worked with blacks in the most undesirable jobs, increasingly refused such work and succeeded in out-bidding blacks for the better jobs.

A major strength of Trotter's analysis is that he stresses that blacks