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Publisher Routledge

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Labor History

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:

<http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/title~content=t713436999>

The Archaeology of Collective Action: The American Experience in Archaeological Perspective, by Dean J. Saitta

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To cite this Article Pfothenauer, Louise(2009) 'The Archaeology of Collective Action: The American Experience in Archaeological Perspective, by Dean J. Saitta', Labor History, 50: 3, 372 – 374

To link to this Article: DOI: 10.1080/00236560903021581

URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00236560903021581>

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Chicago's Progressive Alliance is an exceptional book. Leidenberger has made sense of a complicated historical movement, and in so doing he has provided an interesting model for other historical topics. In other words, to what degree have cross-class alliances shaped other struggles in American history? Furthermore, Leidenberger highlights the importance and conservative nature of functionalism and pluralism relative to a democratic movement. His work here might also have application elsewhere – for instance, with the history of the civil rights movements. With *Chicago's Progressive Alliance*, Leidenberger has opened the door for other historians to explore similar alliances and struggles in other cities and states. Taken together with Franch's biography, historians now have a comprehensive history of Chicago's street railways and the class conflicts that they incited.

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The Archaeology of Collective Action: The American Experience in Archaeological Perspective, by Dean J. Saitta, Gainesville, University Press of Florida, 2007, xx + 160 pp., \$24.95 (paper), ISBN 9780813030708

The Archaeology of Collective Action: The American Experience in Archaeological Perspective by Dean J. Saitta is based on information gathered as part of the Colorado Coalfield War Project. Saitta, a professor of anthropology at the University of Denver, worked on this project in collaboration with faculty and students at the University of Denver, Binghamton University, and Fort Lewis College. This team of scholars completed oral histories and archaeological fieldwork at the site of the Colorado Coalfield Strike of 1913–1914, specifically the Ludlow Tent Colony.

In this book, Saitta provides the reader with an interesting new perspective on historical archaeology and its use in the reconstruction of the history of collective action in the United States. He suggests that despite the written histories, the story of the Colorado Coalfield Strike is still incomplete and undervalued. In fact, the story of collective action in America as a whole and its effect on modern life is not fully understood. He stresses that implementation of a critical archaeological methodology can provide the necessary insight to produce a less biased, more inclusive history of collective action and promote positive social change.

According to Saitta, the Colorado Coalfield Strike was one of the most dramatic examples of open class warfare in American history. It also was crucial to the creation of many of the rights that we enjoy today. Over a fifteen-month period – from September 1913 to December 1914 – coalfield workers and management were in conflict. Striking workers were evicted from company housing, ending up living in tent colonies and relying on aid from strike funds and other sources. Contemporary media was flooded with accounts of the conflict. The strike's estimated seventy-four deaths (the Ludlow Massacre on 20 April 1914 alone was responsible for twenty-five, including two women and eleven children) outraged the

American public. Even though the strike was broken in December 1914, the United States Commission on Industrial Relations became involved in 1915 by holding a series of hearings. In the end, the commissioners ruled in favor of the workers' right to organize, and congressmen introduced legislation to ban child labor and to reaffirm the eight-hour workday.

Saitta uses the first part of the book to provide background on the methodologies and theories of archaeology that have been used in the past and the ones that he uses in his case study. He identifies previous case studies that were based on the archaeology of race, gender, and class forms of collective actions and discusses how their findings can be applied to the Colorado Coalfield War Project. Chapter 5, specifically, is a brief history of the strike, placing it in a national context and noting other progressive-era clashes between capital and labor, and the establishment of the United Mine Workers. This chapter also explores the demographics of the workers in terms of gender, race, and class, and summarizes the events which occurred during the fifteen months of the strike and the immediate aftermath.

After discussing the background, the author turns to a case study of the excavations at the coalfield strike site. The goal of the project was to answer a few specific questions about collective action, including: how the shared domestic experience of families in company towns reinforced the class solidarity built up among men in the mine shafts; how the families supported themselves once on strike; how class consciousness was maintained for an extended period of time given the considerable ethnic diversity within the camp; and finally to what extent coal camp life improved after the strike.

In order to answer these questions, Saitta and the Colorado Coalfield War Project team examined the tent community layout, the ethnic organization of the colony, the actual tents themselves and their cellars, and the evidence of food and material goods. Previous studies, original testimonies and documentation were employed to help explicate the meaning of what was excavated. The case study shows that archaeological findings support written documentation in some instances but not in others. For example, written accounts indicate that among the miners there was little or no race or nationality barrier. Personal artifacts, such as religious medallions excavated at the site, indicate strong ethnic associations, yet other items such as clothing, specifically buttons, are similar throughout the site. In this case Saitta agrees that there is little evidence to indicate that ethnicity caused a segregation of residents at the colony. The issue of the rifle pits indicates dissidence between archaeological and textual sources. Testimonies by Colorado militia to the Commission on Industrial Relations emphasize the existence of numerous rifle pits within the Ludlow tent colony. Excavations at the site, however, did not clearly identify any such features.

Even after ten years, the Colorado Coalfield War Project is still a work in progress. There is more education as well as excavation to be done. An important part of the project is the outreach programs designed to bring about a greater understanding of the impact of the coalfield strike on the United States today. While this book will appeal to scholars, students, and those simply interested in the area of labor history, it definitely will appeal more to those with a background and interest in archaeology. Saitta's level of discourse and numerous references presume more

than a basic knowledge of archaeology. Saitta concludes that the project is moving in the right direction. It has addressed the issues of the working class, connected with a new audience through educational outreach, and demonstrated that archaeology can contribute to a better understanding of the American experience. Whether or not you agree with Saitta's final assessment, the Colorado Coalfield War Project certainly is a worthwhile undertaking, and he does his best to present the information in a logical and compelling format.

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Working the Skies: The Fast-Paced, Disorienting World of the Flight Attendant, by Drew Whitelegg, New York, New York University Press, 2007, xi + 290 pp., \$20.00 (paper), ISBN 9780814794081

For the purposes of this review, I want to state three key biases at the outset. First, I am not a professional historian, let alone a specifically labor historian. This is not an apology but rather a way of drawing attention to the problem of professional identity and the crafting of 'history'. Second, I am an aspirational feminist who has studied airline companies as sites of sexual identity and contestation. In short, I have a critical interest in the subject of the book under review. And third, my notion of historiography is rooted in Gabrielle Durepos' and my 'ANTI-history', which is an approach that draws on Actor-Network Theory to reveal the multi-vocality and problematic nature of attempts to construct studies of the past. Thus my review of any historical account examines not only the *what* but the *how* of the story. It should also alert the reader to the partiality of my own account.

Let me begin by saying that this book is long overdue. Those toiling with the issues of gender and commercial aviation will concur that, until now, comprehensive studies have been few and far between. Georgia Panter Nielsen's and Arlie Hochschild's studies of flight attendants, which date back to the early 1980s, are still the standard works. Whitelegg revisits much of the earlier work and brings our understandings of United States flight attendants through to the present. But it is not a simple updating of the story. Nielsen, a flight attendant and historian for the Association of Flight Attendants, structures her story around the feminization of the profession and related problems of women's unionization. Hochschild, a sociologist, structures her account around the notion of emotional labor. Whitelegg, a geographer with a strong interest in myths and ritual, structures his story around the notion of space.

Whitelegg views space as a variable, contextual social construct. He uses this notion to weave together a number of existing accounts and a series of interviews into three broad periods: the 'predestination phase' (1930 to the start of World War II); the 'destination phase' (the 1940s to the early 1970s); and the 'postdestination