

Chapter 6 moves from relations between people to examine relations between people and things, building on the observation that contemporaries themselves were uncertain whether the object of *Rechtstrieb* was “property” or “the person.” Here, the focus is on the practice of compulsory pawning of a debtor’s goods, which Suter argues “activated objects and objectified persons, repeatedly generating new confusions between the category ‘thing’ and the category ‘person’” (277). Pawning involved (re)assessments of value and alienability in which social and market determinants interacted in unpredictable ways. Even the debtor could be “pawned” or held hostage by being imprisoned for debt, a practice abolished in the Swiss Constitution of 1874.

The book opens with an introduction that provides an erudite, thoughtful, and thought-provoking rationale for the study, while a brief conclusion is devoted to drawing out the key stages in the secular shift from a predominance of local, (broadly) customary, and negotiated practices toward a normative system embedded in liberal capitalist property and exchange relations.

This is a sophisticated and ambitious work that goes beyond the familiar observations about networks of indebtedness to situate local relationships and practices in relation to the emergence of modernity in economic values and structures. In this respect, it is certainly groundbreaking in the historiography of German-speaking Europe, and can stand comparison with Anglo-American works such as Craig Muldrew’s *The Economy of Obligation* (New York: St. Martin’s Press 1998) and Mary Poovey’s *Genres of the Credit Economy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press 2008). Feliculously edited down from its original form as a doctoral dissertation, it very much merits translation into English for a wider readership.

Eve Rosenhaft

University of Liverpool

E-mail: dan85@liverpool.ac.uk

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Lou Martin. *Smokestacks in the Hills: Rural-Industrial Workers in West Virginia*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2015. xi + 239 pp. ISBN 0-252-03945-4, \$95.00 (cloth); ISBN 0-252-08102-6 \$28.00 (paper).

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In his fascinating first book, Lou Martin shows that when historians think about the twentieth-century working class, they must include

rural-industrial factory workers. According to Martin, “Locality shaped class identities and produced a myriad of working-class cultures across the country” (2). Building off recent trends in working-class history, political economy, and capital migration, *Smokestacks in the Hills* presents a local case study of the rise of a rural-industrial working class in Hancock County, West Virginia. Located not far from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, the first chapter shows that until 1900 the county remained a rural backwater of small yeoman farmers and a center for flour milling, sheep raising, and apple orchard farming in the Upper Ohio Valley.

Early in the book, Martin shows how corporations relocated to rural locales at the turn of the twentieth century to avoid labor unrest and transportation costs in the cities. Looking for stability following the cut-throat competition of the late nineteenth century, pottery towns like Newell and Chester, both in West Virginia, benefitted from the skilled labor in nearby East Liverpool, Ohio, and also from an available pool of cheap, largely female local laborers. Likewise, in 1909, Ernest Weir chose land near Holliday’s Cove for the site of his massive steel works and planned community of Weirton, West Virginia. Until 1950, Weirton was America’s largest unincorporated town, and Weir fostered a community that rewarded loyalty and punished unionism, with policing by the notorious “Hatchet Gang” (81).

The majority of the book focuses on the mid-twentieth century and the county’s working-class politics and culture. Martin successfully shows how rural-industrial workers differed from their urban counterparts. In Hancock County, industrialization produced a working class that easily maintained its rural traditions, forging a strong attachment to localism and a culture of “making do” (16). The latter built off rural traditions of household food production, subsistence farming, and hunting. No matter whether the workers were native West Virginians, African American migrants from the Deep South, or Eastern Europeans arriving from peasant backgrounds, all possessed these traits of “making do.”

Martin’s study runs counter to Jack Metzgar’s *Striking Steel* (Temple University Press, 2000), which argued that steelworkers had a natural affinity for the Democratic Party and the Congress of Industrial Organizations. Rather, Hancock County’s working class consistently voiced concerns about national unions and distant, impersonal bureaucracies, and favored a “local system of grievance and contract negotiations” (9). The International Brotherhood of Operative Potters (IBOP) used strikes judiciously and forced locals to follow a uniform pricing system. Their grievance procedure gave rank-and-file workers direct access to their national leaders, headquartered in East Liverpool, and executives at the Homer Laughlin China Company. Steelworkers also

supported a local brand of unionism. Weirton Steel consistently negotiated contracts with the Independent Steelworkers Union that were equal to, and at times superior, to those contracts won by the United Steelworkers of America. This localistic culture applied to politics as well. Between the 1930s and 1960s, voters supported the Democratic Party, but their values did not always align with the national party. The county's factory workers opposed right-to-work laws, yet elected conservatives who advocated limits on union power and supported a greater restriction of foreign imports (118). These ideas matched those of conservative Republican Arch Moore, who was elected to Congress for six terms in the 1950s and 1960s in an overwhelmingly Democratic district and then as the governor of West Virginia.

The book uses an excellent mix of primary sources. Martin takes advantage of the local grievance reports in the IBOP papers at Kent State, in Ohio, and he is one of the first historians to have access to the Arch Moore papers. It is Martin's use of oral histories, however, that makes the book cutting edge. Chapter 5 is particularly revealing, wherein his interviewees intimately describe their rural cultural practices after World War II. Men spent hours constructing their homes after long days at the mills. Frank Gregory, an African American migrant from South Carolina, recalled how he raised hogs and chickens in his yard in Weirton's North End (141). The importance of hunting to steelworkers also exemplifies a cultural tradition that remains a symbol of pride for many rural Americans. In terms of future research, this illuminating section is crucial for historians of the working class who may not appreciate the importance of self-help activities for working-class people in other rural areas of the country.

While Martin offers a convincing argument, his study would have benefitted from more discussion of how this "making-do" culture eroded by the late twentieth century. Free trade policies and the recession in the late 1970s were catastrophic for the county's industries. By the 1980s, Weirton Steel was saddled with pension and healthcare "legacy costs" (173). Steelworkers tried to maintain local control by agreeing in 1983 to an Employee Stock Ownership Plan. However, the illegal "dumping" of cheaper steel from South Korea and Russia doomed the company, which was eventually purchased by several international corporations in the mid-2000s (175–176). It would have been nice to see how the rural-industrial culture of "making do" declined as residents became more reliant by the 2000s on jobs at the nearby casino and racetrack.

Lou Martin's timely book provides many useful insights for historians of twentieth-century labor and political economy. His call for historians to reexamine the more localistic and conservative aspects of working-class agency would help in understanding the decline

of the New Deal order in the late twentieth century. By the 1940s, workers in places like Hancock County were urging politicians to limit labor's power and restrict social welfare spending. Finally, the fears and tensions felt by Hancock County workers in the twentieth century, their opposition to free trade agreements, and their support of conservative politicians provides needed insights into understanding the appeal of Donald Trump to rural working-class voters in the 2016 election.

William Gorby  
West Virginia University  
E-mail: [William.Gorby@mail.wvu.edu](mailto:William.Gorby@mail.wvu.edu)

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