

The book closes by comparing the responses to the 1927 flood with those to Hurricane Katrina, warning that the two events foreshadow the future if we continue to assume that we can control the environment. An ambitious work, Parrish's book should be a model for those who study society's response to natural disasters.

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Persistent Progressives: The Rocky Mountain Farmers Union. By John F. Freeman. Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2016. 216 pp., \$22.99, hardback, ISBN 978-1-60732-432-4.

John Freeman's work provides a case study of how a group of small-to-mid-sized farmers and their allies, principally in Colorado, responded to agricultural trends in the twentieth century. Freeman argues that the Rocky Mountain Farmers Union (RMFU) possessed roots in the populist protests of the 1890s against "land speculators, wholesalers, and monopolists—in sum, the vices of modernization" (x). Though Freeman's goal is to present a "holistic view of the RMFU," he clearly sympathizes with its aims, even if he is occasionally critical of its management and strategies (x).

While the book lacks a central argument, it provides a trajectory for the RMFU that moves from a focus on local chapters and small-scale cooperatives in the early twentieth century to greater centralization, emphasis on political lobbying, and engagement with consumers by the latter part of the century. After identifying the ideological roots of the RMFU and explaining the crops grown in its regions, Freeman provides a case study in the development of a local union chapter, explaining how unionists in the town of Peetz attracted members and developed cooperatives that incorporated diverse ventures such as grain storage, phone service, and an oil station. Chapters Three and Four center on the RMFU's growth and leadership from the 1930s through the 1960s. Freeman places the organizing activities of the RMFU—including a campaign against the exploitative practices of chain grocery stores—astride its expanding menu of cooperatives, which grew to include property, health, life, and accident insurance. In the final three chapters, Freeman details how the RMFU resisted the decline of family-based farming by engaging sympathetic consumers, recruiting non-farmers to join its insurance cooperatives, and supporting retail ventures that allowed farmers greater control over processing and distributing their produce.

The strengths of *Persistent Progressives* are in Freeman's analysis of the RMFU's evolving ideology and his use of case studies. For example, for the period from 1965 to 2000, Freeman explains how RMFU leaders sought to forestall the loss of small farms in Colorado. He then provides examples of how the union tried to prevent municipalities from buying water rights held by farmers, worked to halt the proliferation of concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs), and lobbied politicians to obtain greater income parity for small farmers.

While Freeman offers varied examples that illustrate the RMFU's philosophy and actions, he largely neglects contextual analysis that could have given the book greater relevance. The reader never receives a clear picture of the farm blocs that opposed the RMFU such as the Farm Bureau. In addition, Freeman points to a late twentieth-century divide between union members who embraced sustainable agriculture and those who continued to monocrop and use pesticides. Yet Freeman rarely shows how those divergences played out. I had hoped to understand how the RMFU fit more broadly into agricultural history and was often disappointed.

Nonetheless, for readers looking for examples of how farmers and consumers resisted the "bigger is better" mantra within American agriculture during the twentieth century, *Persistent Progressives* offers great utility.

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No Depression in Heaven: The Great Depression, The New Deal, and The Transformation of Religion in the Delta. By Alison Collis Greene. London: Oxford University Press, 2016. 336 pp., \$34.95, hardback, ISBN 978-0-19-937187-7.

No Depression in Heaven is an expertly crafted and carefully researched examination of religion, race, and politics during the Great Depression. Locating her study in Memphis and the Arkansas and Mississippi Delta, Alison Collis Greene begins by explaining that even during the prosperous 1920s this region was marked by economic hardship, environmental instability, and racial tension. In times of crisis, churches and voluntary organizations offered a modicum of relief to the struggling masses. But the crushing realities of the Great Depression exposed the financial and structural limitations of these charitable institutions. The New Deal, then, elicited a sense of optimism from the white Protestant establishment who aspired to join forces with the government to bring forth future stability.