

not in itself fill the huge needs for more curricula based on native culture and history. It is, however, an important resource for teachers and those interested in the history of the northern Plains Indians.

Walter C. Fleming
Montana State University-Bozeman

Radicalism in the Mountain West, 1890–1920

SOCIALISTS, POPULISTS,
MINERS, AND WOBBLIES

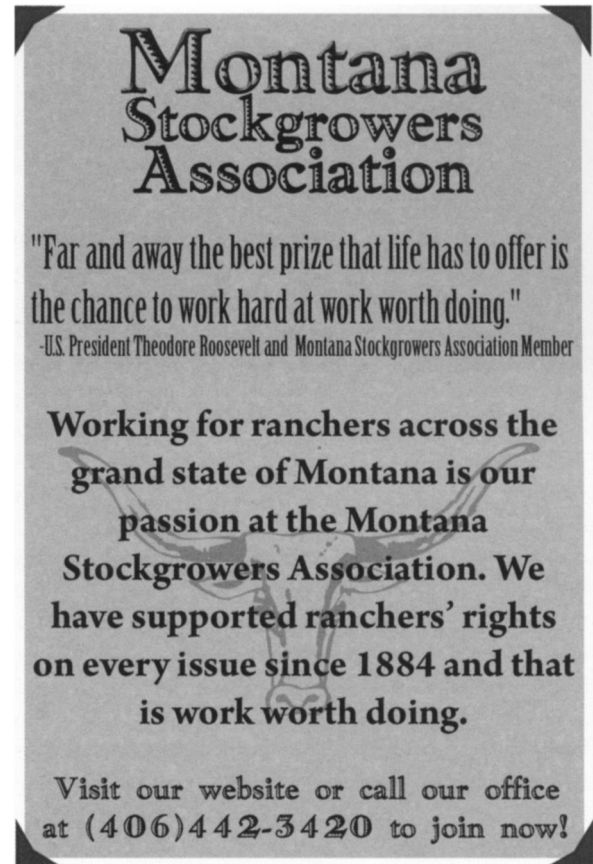
David R. Berman

University Press of Colorado, Boulder, 2007. Illustrations, tables, appendix, notes, bibliography, index. xiv + 386 pp. \$39.95 cloth.

It is remarkable that in the more than half a century since David Shannon, in his 1955 classic *The Socialist Party of America*, urged historians to survey socialism's regional parts, few historians have done so. As David Berman's *Radicalism in the Mountain West* proves, Populist and Socialist politics in the region, defined as Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah, and Wyoming, have much to tell us about labor, capitalism, and dissent.

Radicalism in the Mountain West, Berman contends, was rooted in the Populist challenge of the 1890s. This splash of protest, however short-lived, provided leadership, working-class consciousness, and a voice for citizens increasingly resentful of capitalism and corporate power. By 1901, organizations like the radicalized Western Federation of Miners (WFM) and the new Socialist Party of America had emerged as the standard-bearers of socialist ideas—not coincidentally in the states where Populism had enjoyed its greatest influence. As socialism found a foothold, Colorado, Montana, and Idaho became politically promising for Socialist candidates, and Eugene Debs, the party's perennial presidential candidate, steadily proved himself as a viable third-party contender. There was dissent within the ranks, however; the 1905 formation of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) revealed a growing militancy, while the trial of William Haywood siphoned more sympathizers to the radical left. Still, by 1910, a more moderate message of municipal socialism, devised in part to compete with "thunder-stealing" Progressives, resulted in political victories, including a mayoral win for Butte's Lewis Duncan.

By the end of the decade, the socialist movement was facing significant obstacles: challenges from IWW, apathy among party members, and antiradicalism fueled by the repressive climate of World War I. But the party did retain voter loyalty in many communities, and as Berman makes clear, western Socialist candidates outperformed those in



most other states. These western officials adopted tempered reforms over time, experienced typical party infighting, faced varied religious and ethnic challenges, and were characterized by sympathy for the left wing of the party.

Berman's survey of radical politics in eight states is impressive, but it does have a few flaws. For example, some readers may wonder if the experiences of the Mountain West Socialists and their relationships to the national party were either typical or atypical. Abrupt chapter conclusions also pique the reader's curiosity. Chapter 9, for example, teases us to think about the Spokane free speech fight of 1910—but we never learn more. The influence of propagandizing and the press should be better stressed, especially as subscriptions to national publications such as the *International Socialist Review* and *Appeal to Reason* remained important throughout the period. Finally, Berman offers sound coverage of the Butte Miners' Union, WFM, and IWW, but we might also wonder about competition with Samuel Gompers and the American Federation of Labor, particularly during the union's heightened political efforts of 1906.

Taken as a whole, *Radicalism in the Mountain West* makes a significant contribution to our understanding of radical politics in these states and, I hope, represents a renewed interest in western socialism.

Jeffrey A. Johnson
Augustana College, Sioux Falls, South Dakota