The Iowa Precinct Caucuses: the Making of a Media Event

Recommended Citation

Hosted by Iowa Research Online
supported conservative political and social causes, such as the Spiritual Mobilization Movement of the 1950s. After the death of his uncle F. E. in 1945, F. K. promoted family identity and cooperation into the fifth generation of Weyerhaeusers. Although one of his first assignments was as a salesman in Iowa, F. K. and the Weyerhaeusers had limited direct impact on twentieth-century Iowa.

Charles Twining, former historian of the Weyerhaeuser Company, provides a clear narrative of F. K.'s life, based closely on the Weyerhaeuser Family and Business Papers at the Minnesota Historical Society. Excellent maps and numerous photographs assist the reader. Scholars will be disappointed by the absence of footnotes, but Twining has deposited annotated copies of the manuscript at two repositories.

Twining wisely does not try to duplicate *Timber and Men*, the comprehensive business history of the Weyerhaeuser interests written in the 1960s with F. K.'s encouragement. He does provide additional details about some of F. K.'s activities, such as his involvement with Allied Building Credits, which financed housing construction during the New Deal. There is surprisingly little, however, on F. K.'s influential role in the Weyerhaeusers' adoption of sustained-yield forestry practices in the 1920s. There may not be much that is new in this biography, but Twining has written a useful book for readers interested in either forest history or the functioning of twentieth-century American elite families.


REVIEWED BY NORMAN E. FRY, SOUTHEASTERN COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Hugh Winebrenner's book examines the media's influence on the Iowa precinct caucuses and the campaigns of presidential candidates who start in Iowa. To make his point, Winebrenner relies on an extensive use of tables detailing the results of the precinct caucuses, polls by national polling organizations, the number of days candidates spent in the state, expenditures by candidates' organizations, and the amount of time the major networks spent covering the caucuses.

Winebrenner's assessment of the caucus leads him to the same conclusion he drew in the 1987 edition of this book: the Iowa caucuses are a poor predictor of success in other presidential caucuses or primaries. Yet the caucus remains important as a "mediality," an event controlled by media coverage. Winebrenner attributes the influence of the
caucuses to the cooperation and collusion of state parties, presidential candidates, and the national and local media. Winebrenner clearly shows that success in the Iowa caucuses does not bring success in other states, but his line of argument falls short of proving the collusion of state parties, candidates, and the media in the preservation of the Iowa caucuses as a national event. This book, however, should be read by students and scholars interested in the process of candidate selection and its most unique forum, the Iowa caucuses.


REVIEWED BY WILLIAM M. FERRARO, ULYSSES S. GRANT ASSOCIATION

This handbook provides a wealth of practical advice for all documentary editors, especially those new to the field or just starting a project. It defines terms such as audience, selection, transcription, annotation, emendation, proofreading, and indexing, and suggests appropriate methods for carrying out each task. Concepts can be grasped quite readily because the handbook reproduces useful examples from published documentary editions, microforms, books, and newsletters. Important considerations facing all editors, such as understanding copyright restrictions, working within the constraints of available monetary resources and time, establishing clear and explicit standards of presentation, and being consistent, unify the nine substantive chapters devoted to editorial procedures.

This work admirably fulfills its stated goal to give examples of usage to guide both experienced and prospective editors. It should also be a valuable resource for members of historical societies and individuals considering the publication of documents in their possession. In their effort to be even-handed and thorough, however, the authors consciously limit normative judgments. Some sense of what really seems to work well, without necessarily denigrating other approaches or methods, would have been desirable. Also, the emphasis is almost entirely on historical documents published in print or on microfilm. There is little here to assist those interested in editing short stories, poems, or other creative pieces, and those seeking to disseminate documents via the Internet or some other electronic medium must refer to home pages (helpfully indicated in the text) where such issues are under investigation.