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*The Heyday of American Communism: The Depression Decade.* By Harvey Klehr. New York: Basic Books, 1984. Pp. xiv -l- 511. Notes, index. \$26.50.

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stable, slave-based plantation system of the 1700s. While covering familiar terrain, he synthesizes recent scholarship handily.

Next, using contemporaneous documents, Kelso untangles the involved progression of his James River locale within this broad sweep. His focus is on the Littletown and Kingsmill tracts and their primary owners, the Pettus, Bray, and (Lewis) Burwell families. Thomas Pettus, who sold Littletown to the Brays in the 1660s, was a transient. With the aid of a single tenant and the expectation of returning to England, he made a handsome, but not substantial, profit from his sot-weed holdings. On the other hand, James Bray II put his small inheritance into Littletown and forged a stake in the Virginia soil as a leading planter by 1700. The Burwells, owners of Kingsmill, who eventually married into the Brays and thereby acquired Littletown, were even wealthier. In short, this particular Tidewater history conforms to the composite of a maturing plantation culture marked by increasing gradations of wealth and led by an inbred gentry seeking self-sufficiency.

Finally, working within Hume's and James Deetz's framework, Kelso looks at his architectural and artifactual discoveries. Here his effort is most prodigious. He has scrutinized endless postholes and root cellars, and assiduously catalogued shards of pottery and glass. The result is further corroboration of his and Morgan's interpretation. Perhaps due to the instability of the market or his projected departure, Pettus owned only a modest earthfast "hall-parlor" house, whereas the long line of Burwells lived in a brick manor at the center of an expanding, self-enclosed community complete with formal garden, dairy, and slave barracks.

Archaeological pitfalls and some questionable historical generalizations, especially regarding slave life notwithstanding, Kelso has broken valuable new ground. By reconstructing the friable fragments of soil and relic within a historical mold, he has produced a sturdier theoretical vessel regarding daily colonial life.

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*The Heyday of American Communism: The Depression Decade.* By HARVEY KLEHR. New York: Basic Books, 1984. Pp. xiv + 511. Notes, index. \$26.50.

Harvey Klehr's *The Heyday of American Communism* is the first full-scale history of the American Communist Party during its most influential decade. As such, it fills in the last remaining gap in the written record of

the Party's past, providing an account that links Theodore Draper's works on the early Communist movement with books on later Party activities by Maurice Isserman, Joseph Starobin, and David Shannon. Klehr has gathered together an impressive array of sources including not just Party records, newspapers, and memoirs, but government files obtained under the Freedom of Information Act. Using these materials he describes the American Communist Party's popular rise and fall in the 1930s through its "Third Period," its People's Front, and its still broader Democratic Front of 1938-39, to its contraction after the Nazi-Soviet Pact. Yet despite the large number of sources he has compiled, his careful recounting of policies, and the great possibilities his topic affords him, Klehr has told only half the story of American Communism in the 1930s, and *The Heyday of American Communism* will disappoint anyone looking for a work more in keeping with the "new" histories of Communism and Communists.

Klehr's focus is a narrow one. Although he makes a perfunctory attempt to explore who joined the Party and why, his real interest is not the organization's rank-and-file, but those in command, the power they wielded, and "the ultimate source" of that power (p. xi), Moscow. Klehr emphasizes that "while Party policy might have been applied in America, it was being made abroad, not to suit the needs of American Communists but to satisfy the needs of the Soviet Union" (p. 416). Russia's influence, he argues, was not only the critical aspect of Party life, it was what doomed the CPUSA to marginality, superfluity, and failure. Such an argument, when combined with his focus on the Party elite, produces a monochromatic portrait of the Party, emphasizing its contradictions and dilemmas. Consequently, the reader is left to ponder why such a weak, confused, and irrelevant organization had any "heyday" at all. It is not a question Klehr answers, or even attempts to address.

Klehr's focus on the American elite and its ties to Russia obscures the Party's appeal to certain groups in American society. His chapter on young people, for example, chronicles the growth of the Young Communist League in the 1930s, but it concentrates on the YCL's line, which is to say "the same demands emanating from Moscow" (p. 308) that so hampered older Communists. Klehr correctly identifies the anti-war movement as the center of student activism in the 1930s; he never, however, explains its popularity, and, again, the reader is left to wonder whether the anti-war issue was merely a tactic or something that sincerely excited Communist youth. Klehr generally avoids terms like "manipulated" or "duped," but he clearly sees such a process at work in Party activities, particularly during the People's Front. Implicit throughout the work is the notion that cynical Party bureaucrats peddled an insincere Russian line to gullible Americans. Because Klehr never really confronts the appeal of the Party in the 1930s, because he concerns himself with

policies from above rather than enthusiasm from below, he misses one whole side of the movement.

Had he looked more closely, he might have found a more complex picture of the American Communist Party. For many, Communism was an attractive alternative to welfare capitalism because it answered the concerns of a floundering nation. Its unemployed councils, its union activities, and its anti-fascist rhetoric appealed to groups the New Deal did not always reach; "it urged life to believe in life," according to one former member. To this rank-and-file, directives from Russia meant less than the Party's daily activities, and while Comintern policy certainly proscribed a very clear set of limits on American policy, there was still room for creativity and for adaptation to American circumstances. Klehr never really asks what motivated the average Party member to make sacrifices for the revolution, a question which might have yielded a very different book.

To its credit, *The Heyday of American Communism* is carefully researched and well documented, and it provides a useful and much needed institutional history of the American Communist Party in the 1930s. It is, however, an incomplete accounting of the Party's appeal, its supporters, and its own unique place in American history.

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*A Man and an Institution: Sir Maurice Hankey, the Cabinet Secretariat, and the Custody of Cabinet Secrecy.* By JASON P. NAYLOR. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984. Pp. xi + 419. Endnotes, bibliography, index. \$59.50.

For more than two decades as secretary to the British Cabinet and the Committee of Imperial Defence, Sir Maurice Hankey played a seminal role in the evolution of the Cabinet Secretariat (referred to later as the Cabinet Office) from its origins in 1916 up to the threshold of the Second World War. This well-written and informative study brings into focus Hankey as administrator, advisor, and confidant of five successive Prime Secretariats (referred to later as the "theoretical framework," Professor Naylor explores the impact of Hankey and the Secretariat on the development of modern Cabinet government. The Cabinet Secretariat formed the central agency for the "preparation and disposition" of Cabinet business, assisting in the creation of prime ministerial government. The Secretariat also served as the custodian of Cabinet secrecy. Hankey urged the Cabinet to restrict the availability of official minutes and papers in an effort to maintain a cloak of secrecy around the decision-making process.