

A Part of History Overlooked

Missing Stories: An Oral History of Ethnic and Minority Groups in Utah. By Leslie G. Kelen and Eileen Hallet Stone (Salt Lake City: University of Utah, 1996).

Reviewed by Jessie L. Embry, Oral History Program Director, Charles Redd Center, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

HOW DO NON-MORMONS FEEL ABOUT living in Utah? *Missing Stories* answers many such questions. These are the people's words and not interpretation. As Helen Papanikolas explains in the introduction, "This is not a book of scholarly history. It is a book of voices, voices of speakers who desperately want us to know how life was for them and their forbears in Utah" (1).

In 1982 the Oral History Institute received a small Utah Humanities Council grant to conduct interviews. From a modest beginning, the project grew to 729 interviews, including photographs, with Utes, African Americans, Jews, Chinese, Italians, Japanese, Greeks, and Chicano-Hispanos. Each section includes an introduction by a member of the ethnic group or a knowledgeable scholar, followed by eight to ten interview excerpts. The book is beautifully illustrated with the narrators' photographs.

I applaud the Oral History Institute for collecting and preserving these stories. I can only imagine the problems of transcribing and translating the stories of first-generation Japanese.

I enjoy the variety of people represented. Chiyo Matsumiya was a picture bride who came from Japan to marry; Jim Yoshiho Tazoi was born in Garland, Utah, and fought in Europe during World War II. Many interviewees have now passed away, and I am thrilled their stories were preserved.

Most interviewees describe their lives in their own communities. A few mention their interactions with Mormons. Their complaints about Latter-day Saints hurt me. I want to scream, "That's not true." But then I calm down and realize the people are telling their stories. I learn how a non-Mormon sees me. Vito Bonacci, an Italian immigrant and union organizer, explains, "Utah was a rough state to organize in because Mormons were against it. And in this state, if you ain't got them behind you, you ain't going to get nowhere. ... I [still] don't know why they don't believe in it. But I work[ed] for a lot of strong Mormons. And they were always trying to tell me they were better than we were." Bonacci befriended a Mormon bishop at work, "but every time we argued about something, he said, 'You're in the minority. We are [the] real Americans'" (274).

Missing Stories, however, is not without shortcomings. For example, it is difficult to read. Oral historians debate on how to transfer the spoken word into a written text. Some tran-

scribe verbatim to preserve the flavor; others (like myself) edit to make the manuscript more readable. For example, I would rewrite Bonacci using standard English. I would not include brackets. I know from reading some of the Oral History Institute's original transcripts that these interviews have been edited. I think the interviews needed more editing, and the editors needed to provide more explanation of the editorial policy in the introduction.

For me, *Missing Stories* is a primary document, an invaluable collection of stories. But it should not be read

cover to cover. The organization is hard to follow; I am not sure why some of the interviews are called prologue and epilogue. Short excerpts are often intermixed with longer stories. The notes at the end of chapter are oversimplified and unnecessary. There is no index, so it is impossible to look up one subject. Even a listing of the interviewees' names would make it easier to locate information.

Despite these concerns, *Missing Stories* does tell an important part of Utah history that has been overlooked. It is a valuable primary source that Utah and Mormon historians should use.

Issues of Individual Freedoms

Friendly Fire: The ACLU in Utah. By Linda Sillitoe (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1997).

Reviewed by F. Ross Peterson, Professor of History, Utah State University, Logan, Utah.

AT FIRST, THE TITLE OF THIS BOOK seems a bit misleading and confusing. "Friendly fire" became popular during the Gulf War as a description of how American troops were killed by their comrades during desert skirmishes. However, a reading of this volume illuminates the reality that Utah society does have the capacity to destroy some of its own citizens through discrimination and denial of civil rights.

Linda Sillitoe has chronicled the Utah chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union's brief history through a focus on leaders, lawyers,

and court cases. As a journalist, Sillitoe emphasizes particular individuals and cases that brought considerable attention to the ACLU. Although she discusses numerous First Amendment cases as well as prisoners' rights and discrimination issues, her greater contribution is to show how the ACLU champions the issues that make democracy work.

Utah is particularly unfriendly turf for the ACLU and its causes. The organization is often targeted as the "anti-Christ" that only cares about prisoners, homosexuals, radicals, and religious dissenters. In fact, some blamed the ACLU for the destruction of family values by their attacks on public prayer, use of religious facilities for public meetings, and challenging Utah's cable decency act. At the core of the conflict are the two century-long constitutional battles concerning the