Populism was the most important third-party political movement in American history. In the 1890s, Populists elected many state and local officeholders, not to mention a number of congressmen and United States senators. The party's famous Omaha Platform summed up two decades of reform ideas, and many of its planks and expressions of sentiment were later enacted into law. Although the strongest Populist showing in a presidential election amounted to less than ten percent of the national vote, the 1892 James Weaver-James Fields ticket carried five western states and finished second in a number of others. Populism clearly was a regional movement, with its base in the West and in the South. While the United States never came close to electing a Populist president, most of the plains states had at least one Populist governor in the 1890s.

Populism emerged in the wake of the economic hard times that marked the late nineteenth century. Though it was largely a farmers' movement, its ranks included workers and reformers of different stripes. On the Great Plains, wheat farmers were predominant; in the mountains, miners; and in the South, cotton farmers. But others rallied to the third party banner as well: Knights of Labor, prohibitionists, single taxers, socialists, and, in some locales, women's rights advocates. The movement grew out of earlier reform efforts, the most important of which was the Farmers' Alliance, an organization that encouraged political and economic education for farmers and promoted cooperatives. When alliancemen found the old parties resistant to implementing their political demands, many of them in the West and South opted to form their own party. In 1890, Inde-

pendent parties were organized from Kansas to North Dakota, and two years later they served as the base for a new national organization—the People’s party. It was not simply a farmers’ party, but in most places agrarian interests were predominant within Populist ranks.

The key Populist document was the Omaha Platform. Approved at the 1892 national convention in Omaha, Nebraska, it remained a reform benchmark for decades. Actually, the platform did not contain one new idea, as all of its planks and sentiments had been discussed at earlier reform meetings. The Omaha delegates simply approved a document that had been drafted at a Saint Louis Populist gathering five months earlier, but the adoption of the platform was the highlight of the Omaha convention. First, it urged government ownership of the railroads and telegraph. Second, it called for a sub-treasury plan, which provided for low-interest loans to farmers and government warehouses to store farm staples. Third, it sought the free coinage of silver in order to raise farm prices by increasing the amount of money in circulation. In addition, attached to this platform were expressions of sentiment concerning the direct election of United States senators, the initiative and referendum, and the progressive income tax, among other things. The Populists had devoted more energy to framing a statement of principles than they did to nominating their national ticket. They were never in a position themselves to implement their proposals at the national level, but some of those concepts, at least in modified form, later became the law of the land.²

As a political movement, Populism was relatively short-lived. It began as an independent third party on the Great Plains in 1890 and made its greatest impact regionally and nationally between 1890 and 1896. In the latter year, however, the William Jennings Bryan candidacy on the Democratic ticket (which Populists had not anticipated) undercut the movement’s appeal. As a result, the People’s party also nominated “the boy orator of the Platte” as its presidential candidate. This maneuver, known as “fusion,” was an understandable response to the Bryan candidacy, but it weakened the Populists’ identity as a separate party. They were never again a factor in national politics. (Of course, had Bryan won in 1896, it might have been a different story, as Populists would have been in line

for appointments and patronage. But, then, if Lee had won at Gettysburg in 1863, it would have been another story, as well.)

The fusion approach also appeared at the state level. Through this arrangement, which was sometimes tediously negotiated between the different parties, Populists were elected as congressmen, senators, and governors in several states, including Nebraska and South Dakota. Some Populists then and historians later criticized fusion as an abandonment of principle, but it was a strategy through which a minority party could elect some of its candidates and was absolutely crucial to the election of Populist governors in Nebraska and South Dakota in 1896 and 1898.\(^3\)

Populism left its mark on regional and national political history, and South Dakota was a part of this story. In fact, some have argued that the political phase of the movement started in South Dakota, because it was the first state to organize an Independent party in 1890. South Dakotan Henry L. Loucks, a Canadian-born reformer, edited the Dakota Ruralist, an Aberdeen-based Farmers' Alliance newspaper.

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served as national president of the Southern Alliance (an organization that had state affiliates on the northern and central plains despite its name) and chaired the 1892 Omaha convention. James H. Kyle, a Congregationalist minister from Aberdeen, became one of the first Populists to serve in the United States Senate and was a contender for the Populist presidential nomination in 1892. South Dakota elected two Populist congressmen in 1896 and by narrow margins picked Populist Andrew E. Lee as governor in 1896 and again in 1898. During Lee's tenure, the state enacted the first initiative and

referendum law in the United States, a measure the insurgents had long promoted. The final chapter of South Dakota Populism was written in 1900, when all Populist candidates for statewide office were defeated. Earlier that year, the Populist national convention had been held in Sioux Falls.

South Dakota Populism is an important topic, but it has not received much attention from historians. The most accessible treatments of the subject, until this issue of *South Dakota History*, could be found in Herbert S. Schell's nineteen-page account in his *History
of South Dakota and Kenneth E. Hendrickson’s 1969 article in *North Dakota History.* In addition to these surveys, both of which are very useful, a total of five articles have been published on facets of this topic in the last twenty-five years, one of which appeared as recently as the summer of 1992. They are Roger Grant’s 1973 article on the initiative and referendum in *South Dakota History;* Steve Piott’s 1992 *Great Plains Quarterly* study on the same topic; Peter Argersinger’s 1983 discussion on election laws in *Midwest Review;* John Dibbern’s 1982 profile of the South Dakota Farmers’ Alliance membership in *Agricultural History;* and Larry Remele’s 1987 examination of the Dakota Alliance in *Montana, the Magazine of Western History.* And that is it.  

In comparison, there are two books on Populism in Nebraska; five in Kansas; two in Texas; and one book and parts of several others (excluding general state histories) on the topic in Oklahoma, which had not acquired statehood in the Populist era. With the excep-

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tion of neighboring North Dakota, no other state in the region has had so little published on its Populist movement. The diversity of scholarly viewpoints represented in the various studies done elsewhere further underscores the lack of attention given to Populism in South Dakota.

Nationally, many historians have written about this topic. Perhaps five major currents or approaches occur in this scholarship. First, there is John D. Hicks's classic study, *The Populist Revolt*, which appeared in 1931. Today, more than sixty years later, it remains one of the most useful accounts. Hicks treats the topic sympathetically, viewing the Populists as a basically progressive farm group that promoted issues that later were often accepted into law. In a manner of speaking, the Populists were the direct ancestors of many twentieth-century Progressives. While South Dakota gets little attention in this study, the state's insurgents are discussed. For Northern Great Plains Populism, Hicks is still essential reading. In fact, all scholarly discussions on Populism should begin with this book.

Not everyone who looks at the topic, however, has been satisfied with Hicks's treatment. In the 1950s, Richard Hofstadter issued the severest challenge in the early chapters of his *The Age of Reform*. Here, we see the darkest side of Populism emphasized. Hofstadter argues that its proponents were backward-looking, impractical, and often anti-Semitic. The book won the 1956 Pulitzer Prize for history and was widely assigned in college courses for more than a decade. For many nonspecialists, the *Age of Reform* was the work they read on Populism. Its publication caused a firestorm of sorts among historians and students who worked on the topic, however. Thus, a third approach to Populism is essentially reactive to the Hofstadter thesis. Perhaps the most useful work for our purposes here is Walter T. K. Nugent's *The Tolerant Populists*, which examines charges of

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SOUTH DAKOTA POPULISM

nativism and anti-Semitism in Kansas. This study may overstate its case, but it pretty conclusively demonstrates that Kansas Populists were a much more tolerant breed than Hofstadter had suggested. Norman Pollack illustrates another tack the reactors took. In a number of articles and a book, Pollack argues that midwestern Populists were authentic radicals and would have replaced the existing economic order with socialism had they had the chance.

At the same time that Nugent and Pollack were answering Hofstadter, others began applying social science techniques to the study of Populism, attempting to delineate who its proponents really were. Here, Stanley Parsons’s article on Nebraska Populists led the way, soon to be followed by quantitative studies in a number of states.

While some argued that these techniques would be used to confirm a more conservative view of the movement, that has not proven to be the case. Parsons, to be sure, finds the Populists to be pragmatic agrarian capitalists, but Robert Cherny’s 1981 social science treatment of Nebraska Populists portrays them as agrarian radicals. Nugent also did a quantitative study of Kansas Populist legislators and concludes that they were a pretty progressive lot. Method in itself does not determine point of view.

A fifth perspective on Populism might, for lack of a better name, be called the social movement approach. Lawrence Goodwyn’s Democratic Promise, which appeared in 1976, was the first attempt to cover the entire topic since Hicks’s treatment. It argues that Populism was the product of earlier involvement in the alliance cooperative movement. “To describe the origins of Populism in one sentence,” writes Goodwyn, “the cooperative movement recruited American farmers, and their subsequent experience within the cooperatives radically altered their political consciousness.” They built “a movement culture,” complete with hundreds of lecturers

11. Cherny, Populism, Progressivism and the Transformation of Nebraska Politics.
and newspapers, that energized their crusade. The heart of Populism was the Omaha Platform, and its key plank was the subtreasury plan. In Goodwyn’s view, historians have been misled by counterfeit insurgents who diluted the authentic Populist message and promoted “free silver” as a panacea. This study and especially a later abridgement of it have received wide circulation. For many, it has become the one book to read on this subject.  

Robert McMath's *Populist Vanguard* appeared in 1975. A history of the Southern Alliance, it provides an explicit treatment of this topic as a social movement. While discussing the cooperative experience, McMath also explores the entire range of alliance activities, examining the efforts of women as well as men. *Populist Vanguard* has not received as much attention as the Goodwyn work, but its insights may be more helpful to students of the South Dakota Populist experience. Other historians, including Julie Roy Jeffrey, have also added to our knowledge of Populism as a social movement.

With so much scholarly work on Populism both nationally and on the state level, it is remarkable that Populism on the Northern Great Plains has not received more attention. The articles in this issue of *South Dakota History* constitute a new departure in the study of Populism in this state. They include a comparative treatment of the topic in the Dakotas, a detailed account of Andrew Lee’s two terms as governor, a narrative of Populism in one locale, and the first study of the Knights of Labor in this region. Never before have we had so much scholarly attention on this subject in print at one time.

D. Jerome Tweton’s essay offers a bold comparative sketch of Populism in the two Dakotas. While it focuses entirely on the move-
This Dakota Ruralist cartoon outlines the points of the subtreasury plan, one of the major planks in the Populist platform.

ment's leadership, this treatment is compatible with much of Goodwyn's approach in that it portrays the subtreasury plan as the key element of Populism. The North Dakota Populists had a shallower analysis of the movement than did their South Dakota counterparts, who stuck with the Omaha Platform and, at least in some cases, were willing to entertain socialist solutions to economic problems. Tweton virtually expels North Dakota Independent governor Eli Shortridge from Populist ranks for his betrayal of the cause. Here, he makes a convincing case. Some, however, may think that he exaggerates the unity within South Dakota Populism and its commit-
ment to fundamental Populist principles. His essay, like Jeffrey Ostler’s recent article on Kansas, Nebraska, and Iowa in the Western Historical Quarterly, shows the possibilities for comparative work on this topic and should encourage others to undertake similar studies here and elsewhere.17

Terrence Lindell’s article provides an interesting contrast to Tweton’s analysis. First, Lindell reminds us that state politics is distinct from that on the national level. Andrew Lee had his hands full with local issues and did not have much time to promote the Populist principles that attracted Tweton’s attention. Lindell does a good job in pointing out the difficulties that the fusion governor had, as well as his shortcomings in dealing with them. Still, in comparison with what earlier occurred in North Dakota, perhaps Lee deserves a little more credit. Lindell’s account is in keeping with early scholarly treatments on South Dakota Populism and may be another illustration of what one historian sees as “the Populist tragedy that the methods by which they created a political coalition powerful enough to win elections often left it without power to enact laws.”18

Daryl Webb, in his narrative of Brown County Populist activities, provides us with one of the first local studies on this topic in the Dakotas. Unlike the Tweton and Lindell essays, Webb’s article also looks at Populism as a social movement. Here, key figures like James H. Kyle, William E. Kidd, and Robert W. Haire took part and helped shape the movement. This treatment provides us with detail on Populist parades, rallies, and camp meetings. Historians of Populism in the Southwest have frequently referred to encampments, but this article shows that they also occurred on the Northern Plains. One of the strengths of Webb’s study is its attention to factionalism and divisions within Populist ranks. A number of Brown County activists, including Kidd and Haire, were socialists, and the split between


18. Peter H. Argersinger, “Populists in Power: Public Policy and Legislative Behavior,” Journal of Interdisciplinary History 18 (Summer 1987): 105. Lindell’s M.A. thesis offers the most complete treatment of the political history of South Dakota Populism to date and covers much more than a journal article can. See Terrence J. Lindell, “South Dakota Populism” (M.A. thesis, University of Nebraska, 1982). Howard R. Lamar has offered a more positive assessment of South Dakota Populism than Lindell and others have, suggesting that it “played a major role in adapting South Dakota politically to the new realities by confronting and discussing them in unorthodox terms.” The Populists, he contends, “established a precedent for political flexibility that made it easier for Progressive and future third-party movements like the Nonpartisan League and the protest groups of the 1930s to be heard” (Lamar, “Perspectives on Statehood: South Dakota’s First Quarter Century, 1889-1914,” South Dakota History 19 [Spring 1989]: 13-14).
them and more moderate party members took its toll. These divisions help explain the estrangement that occurred between Kyle and Populist legislators when he sought reelection to the United States Senate in 1897. More local studies will enrich our knowledge of Populism here and elsewhere.

Erling Sannes’s Knights of Labor study is the first in print on the topic anywhere in the region and demonstrates what can be turned up when a persistent researcher goes to work. Historians previously overlooked the importance of this group in South Dakota. Sannes, however, shows us that the knights were an important labor organization in a number of towns and that they actively promoted woman suffrage and the initiative and referendum. While Father Haire’s involvement was already known, we learn of other priests who took part in the cause as well. The knights were an important part of the Populist coalition, at least in the early period, and Sannes has done an excellent job of restoring their place in the state’s history. Unfortunately, we do not yet know what happened to them in most communities after 1891. Though the knights were an important element in the third-party cause, a large portion of their membership balked at breaking with the old parties. A similar situation occurred within the ranks of the alliance in South Dakota and other states. Sannes’s study joins a growing body of scholarship on the knights, including the work of Leon Fink on Kansas City and Ralph Scharnau on Iowa.19

These four essays add significantly to our knowledge of South Dakota Populism, but much remains to be done. First, we need to know more about how the Farmers’ Alliance functioned here. To date, with a few exceptions, most of the discussion has been in terms of its political role. Simply stated, we need to know what else it did, including cooperative efforts, educational programs, and social activities. The only published study on the alliance in South Dakota is John Dibbern’s article on the group in Marshall County. It is an impressive piece of scholarship, but it is concerned almost entirely with constructing a profile of the organization’s membership. As a consequence, it does not tell us what these individuals did in the alliance itself, nor does it discuss what ultimately happened to the organization.20 In South Dakota, it seems to have gone into decline


soon after the Knights of Labor did. The Independent political movement seemingly killed off the organizations that gave it birth. Then, when Populism declined into irrelevance, there was nothing left. That may be a lesson that some people learned about third parties that helps to explain why they did not reenlist when others came along. Whatever the case, more needs to be learned about the alliance in this state.

Populist conventions, rallies, and camp meetings often included the whole family. Harper's Weekly labeled this gathering "A Populist Picnic in South Dakota."

Second, while Sannes’s article amounts to a quantum leap in new information about South Dakota labor history, we still have big gaps in our knowledge about organized labor here in this era. Where did the state’s small number of building trades and railroad unionists line up politically? Samuel Gompers did not support Populism. Did South Dakota American Federation of Labor (AFL) unionists follow his lead? What kind of relations existed between the knights and the AFL? What did the knights do politically after their organization declined? How important was the knights’ experience in this state?

Third, while Hofstadter’s cranky Populist thesis is no longer in vogue in the study of plains Populism, we would benefit from a scholarly treatment of the related topics of nativism and anti-Semitism and “the paranoid style in politics” of South Dakota Populists. To date, no historian has explored these themes in print. Such an inquiry requires a close look at third-party newspapers and Populist speeches. References to “Shylock” were commonplace, and the following comments from the *Dakota Ruralist* suggest that further study is warranted: “Even at the expense of being called a heretic, we are opposed to permitting the Jews through Baron Rothchilds [sic] to continue crucifying Christ by oppressing His people. We concede that they are just as selfish, relentless, and cruel as they were 1900 years ago and that is why we so earnestly protest against permitting them to control the commerce and industry of this nation.”

Fourth, the role of women in political and social movements is now a popular topic. To date, however, the only printed reference to a South Dakota woman Populist may be in Goodwyn’s bibliographical essay. “One also senses,” he wrote, “that women played a more prominent role in the agrarian revolt than the present study suggests. The evidence is both tantalizing in implication and difficult to gather. Suggested points of entry: the careers of Annie Diggs of Kansas, Sophronia Lewelling of Oregon, Bettie Gay of Texas, Luna Kellie of Nebraska, Ella Knowles of Montana, Sophia Harden of South Dakota, and of course, the author of the famous injunction to farmers to ‘raise less corn and more hell,’ Mary Elizabeth Lease of Kansas.”


23. *Dakota Ruralist* (Aberdeen, S.Dak.), 27 June 1895. This article went on to state: “The power of the Jews through Rothchilds [sic] and associates to crush the Christian church was never so apparent as at present when so few of his ministers dare preach the pure doctrines of the lowly Nazarene and when a brave Christian preacher has the courage [of] his convictions and denounces the money changers as Christ did, he soon finds the doors of his church closed upon him.” For a brief discussion of anti-Semitism in regard to South Dakota, see Lindell, “South Dakota Populism,” pp. 156-57n.11, who points out that such references were not exclusive to the Populists but can also be found in Republican papers of the period. See also Brian J. Weed, “Populist Thought in North and South Dakota, 1890-1900” (M.A. thesis, University of North Dakota, 1970), pp. 35-37. Weed offers a close reading of the themes treated in the *Dakota Ruralist*. For an extended study of both editor Loucks and the newspaper, see Thom Guarnieri, “H. L. Loucks and the *Dakota Ruralist*: Voices of Reform” (M.A. thesis, South Dakota State University, 1981).

sought out information on women Populists in this state. Sophia Harden was married to a prominent alliance figure, but she herself was active in both the alliance and the woman suffrage movement. For example, she served as the state secretary-treasurer of the farm organization and vice-president of the State Equal Suffrage Association.26

While South Dakota women did not have the vote during the Populist era, the Independents ran Susan W. Hassell for state superintendent of schools in 1892 and Kate Taubman in 1896.26

26. Ibid., 29 Sept. 1892; Aberdeen Star, 29 Oct. 1896. The fact that Populists nominated women as candidates for public office, however, did not mean that they were unreservedly in favor of woman suffrage. Although both the South Dakota Farmers’

Frequently mentioned in Populist newspapers and speeches, Shylock represented oppression by wealth and power and conveyed overtones of anti-Semitism.
Mary E. Lease attained national prominence as a Populist speaker, but the role of women in general in the Populist movement has yet to be fully documented and understood.

Because nothing has ever been published on any South Dakota woman Populist, I am taking the liberty of quoting a biographical sketch of Hassell from the Dakota Ruralist:

Mrs. S. W. Hassell, candidate for state superintendent of schools on the people’s party ticket of South Dakota, was born at Grinnell, Iowa, in 1856, maiden name being Susan Whitcomb, her parents emigrating from the Green Mountain state. She graduated from the high schools of that city.
in 1870 and from the classical department of Iowa college, same city, in 1877. In 1881 the degree of A. M. was conferred upon her by the same institution. From 1877-80 she had charge of the high school at Grinnell. In 1880 she was married to Mr. R. B. Hassell, well known throughout the state as an attorney and writer. They moved to Baker City, Montana, where Mr. Hassell had charge of the city school, with Mrs. Hassell as assistant. In 1883 they removed to Redfield, this state where she has since resided. Since the founding of the college at Redfield, five years ago, she has given some time to the work, but for three years past she has been principal of the normal department and professor of English literature. Mrs. Hassell has been constantly employed in school work since graduating, and therefore eminently qualified for the position to which the convention, with great unanimity nominated her. We believe, if elected, Mrs. Hassell will prove to be worthy and well qualified and will give to the state a record that all will be proud of. 27

One of the more curious omissions in the current scholarship concerns women in the South Dakota alliance. As already mentioned, John Dibbern's 1982 article is the only published study on this organization, but he does not mention that women were in its ranks. Yet, the Marshall County Farmers' Alliance records upon which he has based his work show the names of more than fifty women members. 28 By my calculation, that means that women made up approximately eight percent of the membership. While some suballiances in this county did not record any women on the rolls, others listed them as local secretaries. State census and courthouse records could probably also provide enough information to construct a profile of alliance women (i.e., place of birth, ethnicity, children, wealth of husband and wife, and so on). I note in passing that relatively few of the Marshall County women were married to men with obvious Norwegian names, though Dibbern found that Norwegians were predominant in the alliance. Does this mean that non-Norwegian alliancemen were more receptive to having their wives participate than Norwegian men were? I do not know the answer, but somebody can research women in this county and a number of other South Dakota counties through the same alliance membership books that Dibbern used. In at least one county (not Marshall), a suballiance elected a woman, Etta Rowland, as president in 1891. 29

This topic and others suggest that South Dakota Populism can be studied as a social movement as Robert McMath has done elsewhere. The Webb article on Brown County discusses Populist encampments, and the Dakota Ruralist reports on similar affairs in other counties, particularly in the summer of 1894. How widespread

27. Dakota Ruralist, 8 Sept. 1892. See also the Ruralist for 29 Sept.
were they in South Dakota? Some historians have stressed their importance in Kansas and Oklahoma in both the Populist and Socialist eras. Perhaps they were more prevalent on the Northern Great Plains than we realized. Peter H. Argersinger and McMath have both argued that the alliance was a surrogate religion for many of its members. Argersinger quotes Kansas Populist leader and later United States senator William A. Peffer, who said, “These meetings to a large extent, and in many instances wholly, take the place of churches in the religious enjoyment of the people.”

While one of the differences between agrarian radicals in the Dakotas and their counterparts in the Southwest may have been their relative lack of religiosity, we know precious little about the involvement of clergy in South Dakota Populism other than that of James Kyle and Father Haire. Perhaps pastors and priests played a more important role than their lack of mention in the scholarship suggests. Two Presbyterian ministers had difficulties with the Home Mission Society reportedly because of their involvement in this movement. One of them, Rev. J. Brown of Wilmot in Roberts County, was an 1894 Populist candidate for state senate. Another Protestant minister, Rev. J. C. Johnson of Britton in Brown County, identified himself as a Christian socialist and was a strong proponent of the subtreasury plan. How many other clerics stood up for Populism in South Dakota?

We do not know how important this cause was in the daily life of its supporters in the region. For some, it probably did not have much meaning. They may have voted for Populist candidates and gone to a few meetings, but that was it. For others, however, Populism was much more important. Goodwyn talks of “a movement culture” in Populist strongholds, and the Webb study provides hints of it in Brown County. More research on this topic is in order. Speeches, picnics, and encampments, along with the third-party press and discussion among those of like mind, helped sustain Populist convictions here and elsewhere.

We also need to learn much more about what happened to Populists as their movement faltered and then disintegrated. It is not news that Pettigrew tried to mend his fences with the Republi-

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32. For a discussion of some of these activities, see Hazel Lucile Heiman, “A Historical Study of Persuasion of the Populist Impulse in South Dakota” (Ph.D. diss., University of Minnesota, 1969).
cans and later became a Democrat, or that Father Haire joined the Socialists, but we should look long and hard to track the political odyssey of other ex-Populists, including those who were journalists. Here, historians can chart what happened to both third-party leaders and voters. South Dakota political history in the twentieth century is in dire need of more solid research, and these kinds of explorations will contribute to our understanding of that topic. How many followed Haire, William E. Kidd, and Freeman T. Knowles into the Socialist camp? Obviously, it was not many, for the South Dakota Socialist vote was never strong, but Socialist miners in Lawrence County enlisted and then backed their ex-Populist congressman Knowles and his comrades at the ballot box.33 Haire, of course, is an interesting character who deserves more attention, as do Kidd and Knowles. Is there a direct connection between the Knights of

Labor, Populism, the Western Federation of Labor, and Socialism? I do not have the answer, but the topic is worth exploring. Still, Populist ranks were much greater than the Socialists could ever command anywhere in the state, and we know that most of them went back to the Republicans. This fact raises another question: How committed to Populism were these Populists?

To answer these questions, of course, will take an enormous amount of work, but I suggest that a study of what happened to activists and voters after the Populist era is one way of providing some clues. Is there any legacy of their earlier political nonconformity? Are they more loyal to candidates who had marched beside them earlier in dissenting ranks? Do they disproportionately support the Nonpartisan League, which emerged in the World War I era, close to two decades after Andrew Lee left office? How many of them were like Thomas Ayres, the Populist governor’s secretary, who later ran against Peter Norbeck for the United States Senate on the Farmer-Labor ticket? How many of them turned up in the insurgencies of the early twentieth century? How many ex-Populists took part in the Farmers Union and the Farmers Holiday? Were “twentieth-century populists,” to use a term advanced by Theodore Saloutos and John Hicks, ex-Populists and the sons and daughters of ex-Populists?

These areas call for additional research, and most of them can be served by work at the local level. To be sure, I would welcome a narrative history of South Dakota Populism along the lines of Gene Clanton’s Kansas Populism, but at this stage we can benefit from a number of narrower studies that trace the history of the alliance movement in a particular locale. Various local activities call for further study, including the efforts of different reform groups such as prohibitionists, Knights of Labor, and others in the formation of the

34. Jonathan Ezra Garlock wrote: “The Knights’ contribution to the growth of an American socialism, struggling to be born during the intense ideological and political stress of the period, must be reexamined. . . . Both the Western Federation of Miners and the IWW were established in areas and communities where the Knights had organized successfully before them; finally, the People’s Party, which sought to create a broad reform coalition, looked for support from Knights and socialists” (Garlock, “A Structural Analysis of the Knights of Labor: A Prolegomenon to the History of the Producing Classes” [Ph.D. diss., University of Rochester, 1974], pp. 208-9).

35. Ayres emerged first as a leader of the Nonpartisan League and later of the state’s Farmer-Labor party. When he died in 1932, he was the editor of a left-wing weekly newspaper in Aberdeen. See Dakota Free Press (Aberdeen, S.Dak.), 10 June 1932.

36. Theodore Saloutos and John D. Hicks, Twentieth-Century Populism: Agricultural Discontent in the Middle West, 1900-1939 (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, n.d.).
Independent movement, or the course of local politics in the Populist era, or the involvement of women in the Farmers’ Alliance and Populist episodes, or cooperatives, or the aftermath of Populism. Such studies would add to those in this issue of *South Dakota History*, filling in the blanks in our knowledge of the state’s past and helping others better understand the history of Populism and the region.
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