history from its invention in 1886 to the cocaine scares of the Progressive Era to its World War II triumph to its iconic postwar status as an imagined unifying force to its current environmental and social challenges. Sometimes the plot lines become tangled up in this complex structure, as ideas and characters are picked up and dropped before they have enough time to emerge in full form. Even the concept behind the book’s suggestive and smart title, Citizen Coke, is not fully explained. The ideas of Coke and sovereignty are mentioned in the introduction, but they are not folded into the analysis in a consistent way until the last third of the book. Occasionally, there is just too much going on here.

Still, Elmore has written an important book, one that will become an essential addition to the growing literature on the history of capitalism in the United States. By following the money, Elmore exposes the global inter-workings of this latest iteration of capitalism. This moneymaking impulse seeks everything on the cheap. It risks little and takes as much as it can from the people who make the products, consume them, and have to live with the consequences. By doing this for Coke, Elmore also suggests new avenues of inquiry for the history of capitalism. He highlights the protean nature of American capitalism and the different forms it takes. Capitalism, in the end, is not one thing. It is many things with many implications. Why one strategy of profitmaking works when and where it does is worth studying because this tells us just about everything we need to know about people and profits, nature and artifice, society and culture, power and agency.

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David Mills’s Cold War in a Cold Land: Fighting Communism on the Northern Plains provides a revisionist analysis of the people of the Northern Great Plains during the Cold War. Mills focuses on Montana, North Dakota, and South Dakota. Among the things these people held in common was that they hosted Minuteman missile bases. Conventional wisdom holds that this brought a level of fear to a public that was otherwise courageous in its battles against the elements of the Northern Great Plains.

Mills’s research is broad and includes several archival collections. He has
also made good use of the oral histories of missileers (full disclosure: I con-
ducted several of those oral histories). The eight chapters are engaged in an at-
tempt to revise Cold War orthodoxies. Mills’s thesis—that these people
responded to the Cold War not with fear, but with a pragmatic determination
to take advantage of its opportunities—is a claim that challenges standard versions
of Cold War historiography. Mills characterizes Montanans and North and
South Dakotans as “pragmatic” and not isolationist when it came to interna-
tional issues; he asserts that they “saw subversives as a problem in major cities
and not in local communities” and “did not take the threat of internal subversion
very seriously”; they “rarely enacted laws aimed at Communists with the same
gusto as in other states”; and they “doubted the seriousness of nuclear war” (58,
59, jacket cover, 123).

This book is a refinement of his dissertation, and sometimes it shows. In
places, there is too much literature review and historiographical analysis and
too little engaging narrative of his subject matter. Thomas Isern, Mills’s disser-
tation advisor, stated: “Some of my fellow Baby Boomers . . . may have to find
some new excuse for our generational neuroses. Meanwhile, the rest of us can
delight in the details of Cold War history” that Mills presents (http://www.prairiepublic.org/radio/radio-programs-a-z/plains-
folk?post=61763). Although the latter is mostly accurate—there are a few in-
accurate details like stating FDR “declared war on Japan” and having police
“convict” people—the former assertion is problematic (10, 25). One can view
certain evidence as sustaining the idea that fear and trauma did not drive the
American public and specifically the residents of South Dakota, North Dakota,
and Montana, but there is significant evidence that points to a collective fear
that government propaganda may have succeeded in suppressing via the “fiction
of survivability.” All those “Bert the Turtle” movies and “duck and cover” drills
suggested one could survive a nuclear attack. Americans of the era who had
seen footage of the destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki knew on at least one
level this was false, but the government had succeeded in inducing a collective
denial of the ramifications of thermonuclear war. The subtitle of Dr. Strangelove
(1964), “How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb,” speaks vol-
umes.

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