
R E V I E W S

Creating the American West: Boundaries and Borderlands

by Derek R. Everett

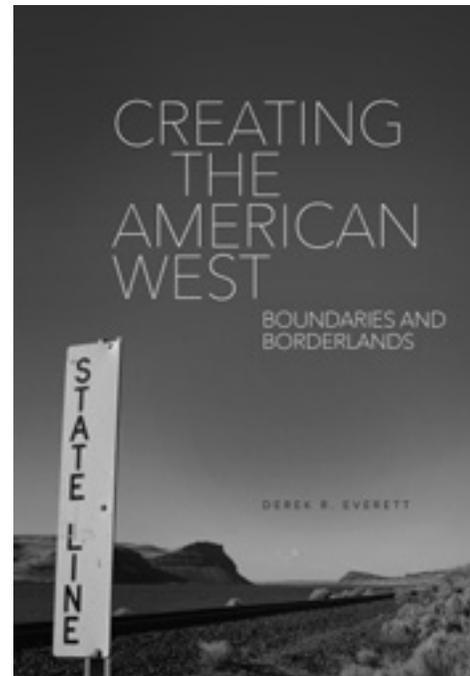
xv + 302 pages, illustrations, notes, index.

Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2014,
cloth \$29.95.

Forty-eight boundaries separate the states of the Trans-Mississippi West; embedded in each of these lines on the map are contests over politics, territory, and identity that have shaped the region. In *Creating the West: Boundaries and Borderlands*, historian Derek Everett focuses on state borders in the Trans-Mississippi West, or *intranational* (not international) boundaries, and argues that state boundaries—these internal lines that many casual observers take as naturally given—are critical borders central to the creation of the West.

After introducing his argument for the importance of the study of state boundaries, Everett turns his attention in chapters 1 and 2 to summarizing the United States' experience with border creation from the colonial era until the Louisiana Purchase. Chapters 3 through 8 offer case studies of boundary disputes (e.g., those concerning the boundary between California and Nevada, and the boundary between New Mexico and Colorado). Sadly for readers of this journal, not one of Kansas's borders is featured. Each of the case studies, however, is full of rich detail describing the political maneuverings to site state boundaries. Readers interested in boundary disputes in many states throughout the West will find a rich trove of rigorous scholarship and high-quality cartography throughout these case study chapters.

For all of their strengths, the case study chapters feel too limited in temporal scale and social scope. Everett argues that borderlands of all types "remain contested regions long after the ink dries on the treaties" (p. 224), but readers get only brief glimpses of that legacy; once the lines are drawn, the narrative quickly concludes. Extending the temporal scale to include more of the legacy of the new borders would have been an important addition. Similarly, expanding the social scope would have added a more robust set of stories. As it is, the key actors in Everett's discussions are politicians, governing bodies, large land owners, and interest groups. Granted, these may have been the key actors in line-drawing decisions. However, because borders are lines on the ground as well as lines on the map, it would have been valuable if Everett had provided more glimpses into how decisions made on the map impacted the lives of everyday borderland residents. Expanding the temporal or social scale of this book, even a little bit, would have been challenging given its already ambitious agenda, but a few more excursions into



the legacy and social impacts of the intranational borders would have added a rich layer of analysis.

The concluding chapter is perhaps the strongest—so strong, in fact, that I found myself wishing that I had read it before reading the case study chapters. In these few concluding pages, Everett offers guidance that could have helped answer some questions with which I struggled throughout the book: Why did the author choose certain border disputes instead of others? How can the set of case studies illuminate understanding of other border disputes in the Trans-Mississippi West? This strong concluding chapter offers not only guidance on these matters but also important statements that will help to reframe and refresh borderlands studies. Here, Everett argues strongly for a more central position for the study of intranational boundaries within the disciplinary space of borderlands studies. "After more than a century of neglect," Everett insists, "state boundaries deserve greater attention, both for their own merits and defects and as ways to conceive of a broader view of borderlands" (p. 228). Borders matter; and in *Creating the West*, Derek Everett has written an important text that will act as a model for future scholarship on the intranational boundaries that shape the Trans-Mississippi West.

*Reviewed by Jeremy Bryson, assistant professor of geography,
Weber State University, Ogden, Utah.*

Kansas City Lightening: The Rise and Times of Charlie Parker

by Stanley Crouch

365 pages, illustrations, footnotes, index.
Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2014,
cloth \$29.95.

This new biography of Kansas City–born Charlie Parker is well crafted, placing him within the rich context of the first half of the twentieth century. Crouch provides new information and helps the reader understand what it meant to be alive then, especially for African American musicians. With superb contextualization and consummate storytelling, Crouch traces Parker’s life through his nineteenth year, when Parker returned to Kansas City in 1940, after sojourns in Chicago and New York City.

Crouch’s research is exquisite, and he writes skillfully and colorfully, providing many historical references—for example to Francisco Vázquez de Coronado, Wild Bill Hickok, buffalo soldiers, the Little Bighorn, Joe Lewis, the Great Depression, the Harlem Renaissance, the 1939 New York World’s Fair, and Pearl Harbor. The writing is sophisticated and enhanced by Crouch’s African American perspective. “Traffic was thick as freckles on the face of a red headed cracker” is a typically evocative image from this colorful African American wordsmith, and such earthiness gives the book genuine appeal (p. 268).

Crouch’s understanding of jazz improvisation is uncanny, and indeed he accurately casts improvisation as the essence of jazz, combining elements intuitive, spontaneous, raw, and meticulously planned. This notion of improvisation, Crouch proposes, is essential to the American fabric; he observes that the Old West was “enlivened by the provocative tension between the thrust of individual liberty and the desire for order and safety. Out there in the West, that tension made for an improvised world” (p. 42). French film director Jean Renoir amplifies this tension between liberty and order and safety, stating, “It is practically the only question of the age, this question of primitivism and how it can be sustained in the face of sophistication” (p. 114). Austrian writer Hermann Broch added, “The civilization of an epoch is its myth in action. In jazz, the myth in action was the discovery of how to use improvisation to make music in which the individual and the collective took on a balanced, symbiotic relationship, one that enriched the experience without distracting from it or descending into anarchy” (p. 116). Crouch explains jazz performance style with his term “infinite plasticity”—the “affinity for distortion” derived from African cultures, and his analysis of how society helped shape the aspirations, demeanor, philosophy, performance style, and music of African Americans is one of the book’s greatest strengths (p. 124).

The most poignant insights come from Crouch’s interviews with Parker’s first wife, her sister, and his childhood friends. Many of these conversations date from 1981 and help



us understand the complex, young Parker. Much of the information is not flattering yet incredibly revelatory. Crouch addresses complex issues like minstrelsy and ragtime and how white American society viewed African Americans. Underlying all is Crouch’s attention to the desire of African Americans, historically, to make themselves known on the basis of demonstrated ability, individuality, and style. This concept contributed to Parker’s desire to create an innovative style—one that challenged listeners, while opening avenues of expression for others.

The book’s four parts, plus epilogue, devote much space to Kansas City and the Midwest. Crouch’s detailed description of life in Kansas City, the third great jazz center, and the region’s territory bands, is quite good. *Kansas City Lightening* is thoroughly researched, informative, engaging, and succeeds in creating an extraordinary sense of time and place. It is as approachable for jazz aficionados as novices due to Crouch’s consummate skill as a writer and storyteller. Surprisingly, Crouch does not refer to Nathan W. Pearson’s book *Goin’ to Kansas City*, which contains many interesting interviews. That he uses his own interviews with some of these individuals may explain the omission.

Reviewed by Alfred W. Cochran, professor, School of Music, Theatre, and Dance, Kansas State University, Manhattan.

To Govern the Devil in Hell: The Political Crisis in Territorial Kansas

by Pearl T. Ponce

292 pages, illustrations, notes, index.

DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2014,

cloth \$39.95.

For over a century and a half, journalists, novelists, poets, playwrights and historians have offered a wide range of interpretations of the violent and chaotic period of Kansas history known as Bleeding Kansas. The vast majority of these works have focused on the vital question of explaining the actions and motivations of proslavery and antislavery citizens who battled over the future of Kansas. Readers of this journal are certainly familiar with this rich historiography. Pearl Ponce's *To Govern the Devil in Hell: The Political Crisis in Territorial Kansas* has the goal of broadening our perspective, revising our understanding, and reinvigorating the debate over this critical era. As Ponce explains, "Of equal importance, but far less illuminated, is the question of why the government, both local and national, allowed the violence to continue unstaunched for so long. The question is fundamentally about governance—its existence, exercise, limits, and continuance—and it is why 'Bleeding Kansas' and the answers its study holds still matter more than 150 years after its admission to the Union" (p. 3). *To Govern the Devil in Hell* is a major contribution to both Kansas and American political history and is deserving of a wide audience. The author argues that intuitional failures, including indifferent presidents and Congress's chaotic governance of the territory, largely explain why the violence persisted.

Ponce's primary strength is her ability to identify and analyze the political failures of many individuals along with the inadequacies of the political system. Central to understanding the shortcomings of both President Franklin Pierce and President James Buchanan is that "neither Pierce nor Buchanan was able to accurately identify what Kansans wanted, and so both continued to push policies that were increasingly untenable" (p. 6). As for the national legislative branch, her verdict is equally harsh. She writes, "In the end, Congress was fragmented, disorganized, and ultimately disinterested to settle the conflict in the territory" (p. 209). Beyond detailing the frequently flawed decisions made by territorial governors, Ponce's exhaustive research finds that "From the commission of the first governor on June 29, 1854, to the end of its territorial status six and one-half years later, frequent absences and vacancies led to the installation of 26 different executive terms before statehood was granted. This instability in the territory's most important post contributed to Kansas's upheaval" (p. 199). Her concluding sentence clearly describes the consequences of the shortcomings and failures of nineteenth-century American democracy as it played out in Kansas Territory: "The violence that erupted in 1856 heralded a future where finding a solution to managing expansion and its challenges proved harder than resorting to war" (p. 213).



Drawing on the current literature of politics and sectionalism in antebellum America, Ponce untangles the complex interactions between events inside and outside of Kansas Territory. *To Govern the Devil in Hell* also reflects the work of a scholar who understands the value of primary research. Archival material from New Haven, Connecticut, Topeka, and the Kansas State Historical Society Archives is effectively marshalled. Political personalities and political views are brought to life by impressive use of contemporary newspaper accounts, legislative speeches, official documents and pamphlets. Ponce has an ear for memorable political phrases. For example, she finds Mississippian and Secretary of the Interior Jacob Thompson warning fellow Democrats in January 1858 of their predicament when it came to continued support for the Lecompton Constitution, "We are like the man who held the wolf, to hold is bad enough; to let go is inevitable death" (p. 178).

As territorial governor from September 1855 to August 1856, Wilson Shannon encountered the full measure of violence, murder, and the limitations of attempting to govern Kansas. Shannon later returned to Lawrence, Kansas, to practice law. When asked about his time as governor, his favored response—a phrase that gives the book its colorful title while effectively capturing its central argument—was "To Govern the Kansas of 1855 and '56, you might as well have attempted to govern the devil in hell!" (p. 3) Thanks to Ponce's book we can now fully appreciate the historical meaning of Shannon's words.

Reviewed by Bruce Mactavish, assistant professor of history, Washburn University, Topeka, Kansas.

Breadlines Knee-Deep in Wheat: Food Assistance in the Great Depression

by Janet Poppendieck

xxiv + 376 pages, notes, index.

Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014, paper \$34.95.

This is a timely reissue of an important book. First published in 1986, *Breadlines Knee-Deep in Wheat* explored the advent of federal food assistance during the 1930s. Poppendieck, now perhaps the most prominent sociologist of food assistance, sought to understand how this form of welfare arose in the context of the New Deal, and why it eventually became subordinated to the commercial farm support programs administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). She rightly argues that the deficiencies and injustices created by the program's absorption into the USDA in the late 1930s limited the nation's ability to fight poverty and distribute its agricultural abundance for many decades thereafter.

Given Poppendieck's clear identification with what we might today term the forces of "food justice," as well as her implicit disdain for the USDA, one strength of the book is her willingness to view the "farm problem" sympathetically and to narrate the general distress of the Great Depression together with the farm distress of the 1920s and 1930s. Indeed, readers of *Kansas History* might not only appreciate Poppendieck's clear narration of the farm problem but also welcome her inclusion of a Carl Sandburg poem about the Sunflower State. "The more hogs I raise," a Jayhawker explains in 1928, "the worse my mortgages get . . . we don't have to stand for this skin game if we're free Americans" (p. 15).

All this said, however, Poppendieck's primary analytical concern is the myriad ways in which agricultural policy imperatives first shaped and then overtook the programs that distributed food to the needy. Policymakers correctly framed the farm problem as one of overproduction, and the solution as production control and surplus management. With the problem so framed, the conflict between abundance, purposefully restricted, and such widespread need and human suffering became all but inevitable. In a masterful early chapter, Poppendieck demonstrates how the conflict first arose during a fight over drought relief during the Hoover era. The government had already begun to acquire stocks of wheat and cotton in a quest to stabilize farm prices, and this warehousing of grain and fiber prompted the nation's first debate over the morality of hoarding and the viability of distribution. Not only did the government eventually release these stocks to private charities, providing a precedent for more extensive projects during the New Deal; the wheat debate also introduced many of the questions that would continue to shape the relations between farm and food assistance policy. Would government distribution help or hurt regular markets for farm products? Were people really as hungry as advocates insisted? Would direct government assistance create dependency and indolence?



During the New Deal, production control became a national policy that many Americans experienced as a set of stories about the slaughter of pigs and the destruction of cotton. Public methods for the processing and distribution of farm products were quickly established, argues Poppendieck, but as a "moral safety valve" (p. 128). The federal relief establishment and the agricultural establishment shared responsibility for the program, but developed no uniform standards, and so they left hungry people at the mercy of state and local authorities. A major shift in federal welfare policy around 1935, combined with a new source of permanent funding for surplus management programs, set the stage for total USDA control and the subordination of food assistance to commercial farm imperatives and pervasive anti-welfare sentiment.

In our current climate of food fights and contentious nutrition politics, many of the book's questions remain relevant. While a network of dedicated anti-hunger activists and supportive politicians successfully severed many of the linkages between food assistance and the commercial farm program in the early 1970s, the overarching institutional framework remains largely intact, and the structure of farm bill negotiations throws together advocates for the poor and the malnourished with agricultural, food processing, retail, and environmental interests. The book remains necessary reading for the student of history interested in food policy, and is now available for the contemporary food activist mystified by these structural arrangements. The literal crown of the reissue is a new epilogue, of over fifty pages, taking the story from the 1980s to the present, and analyzing the resilience and expansion of the food assistance programs, along with their current challenges.

Reviewed by Sarah T. Phillips, associate professor of history, Boston University, Massachusetts.

A Step toward Brown v. Board of Education: Ada Lois Sipuel Fisher and Her Fight to End Segregation

by Cheryl Elizabeth Brown Wattley

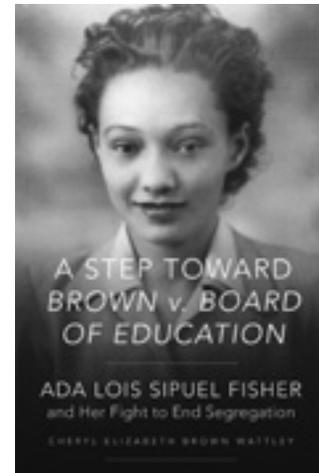
xvii + 305 pages, illustrations, notes, index.
Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2014,
cloth \$24.95.

In 1949 Ada Lois Sipuel Fisher became the first African American to attend the University of Oklahoma's law school. She had first applied three years earlier and been denied admission; Oklahoma law required segregation in its educational facilities. With the assistance of the local branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), Sipuel Fisher challenged her exclusion in court, pointing to the obvious fact that because Oklahoma had no other law schools, she was left with no in-state options to pursue a legal education. Her litigation efforts, which would soon be joined by lawyers in the NAACP's national office, including Thurgood Marshall, eventually reached the United States Supreme Court. In 1948 the Court ruled in Sipuel Fisher's favor, causing Oklahoma's political leaders to engage in a series of desperate evasive maneuvers, including the overnight creation of an all-black law school in Oklahoma City. Sipuel Fisher refused to attend this patently unequal substitute. Oklahoma eventually backed down, leading to Sipuel Fisher's triumphant desegregation of the law school.

While far from forgotten, Sipuel Fisher's story is usually overshadowed in civil rights histories by other breakthroughs in the NAACP's legal assault on segregated education. In 1950 the Supreme Court gave the NAACP what the Court had refused to do in Sipuel Fisher's case: a holding that segregation in legal education was inherently unequal. The Court also struck down Oklahoma's policy of admitting black graduate students but then subjecting them to segregation within university facilities (a policy Sipuel Fisher herself endured for a time). And of course the ruling that overshadowed all others came in 1954 when the Court ruled unconstitutional segregated education at all levels in *Brown v. Board of Education*.

Another reason Sipuel Fisher's battle occupies a relatively minor place in civil rights history is because the Supreme Court broke little new legal ground in deciding her case. A decade earlier the Court had ruled that Missouri could not evade its constitutional requirement to provide equal education by paying for African American students to attend graduate school in another state. To dispose of Sipuel Fisher's case the justices required nothing more than a cursory "per curiam" (unsigned) decision, issued just days after oral arguments, citing that earlier decision. Considered simply as legal precedent, all that Sipuel Fisher's Supreme Court victory added was language indicating that equal in-state educational opportunities had to be provided without delay.

In *A Step toward Brown v. Board of Education: Ada Lois Sipuel Fisher and Her Fight to End Segregation*, Cheryl Elizabeth Brown Wattley brings Sipuel Fisher's story out of the shadows. Wattley is unabashedly celebratory toward her subject.



"The humanness of her legal fight became my obligation to describe," she explains. "The victory should not outshine the warrior's fight" (pp. xii–xiii). Wattley supplements her subject's own words (Sipuel Fisher wrote an autobiography) with an impressive amount of research into state and local sources. She details Sipuel Fisher's upbringing in segregated Oklahoma, her education in all-black schools, and the events that brought her to national prominence as a civil rights pioneer. Wattley also delves into Oklahoma's ugly history of white supremacy (particularly virulent in Norman, home of the University) and the history of resistance to racial oppression by leaders in the African American community.

One theme that emerges from the book is that by the 1940s, white Oklahomans' commitment to segregation was notably divided. When Sipuel Fisher applied to the law school, the university's segregation policy had few defenders among university leaders and faculty. They refused to admit Sipuel Fisher because state law required them to do so. Student polls showed strong support for desegregation. A thousand white University of Oklahoma students, in coordination with the NAACP, organized a demonstration to protest the state's creation of a separate black law school. When Sipuel Fisher eventually attended the law school, she was met with mostly supportive students and professors. When a new era announced itself, in the form of a mobilized black community backed by federal court orders, most white Oklahomans were willing to break with the past, unlike their neighbors to the south.

As a work of narrative history, *A Step toward Brown* is too often weighed down by repetition and excessive detail—both genre hazards of litigation history. The book's prose might be overly dramatic for some tastes. Nonetheless, Wattley's reconstruction of Sipuel Fisher's legal challenge is an unquestionable contribution to the history of race relations in Oklahoma as well as the history of the national battle for civil rights in the middle decades of the twentieth century.

Reviewed by Christopher W. Schmidt, associate professor, Chicago-Kent College of Law, Chicago, Illinois.

The Life and Legends of Calamity Jane

by Richard W. Etulain

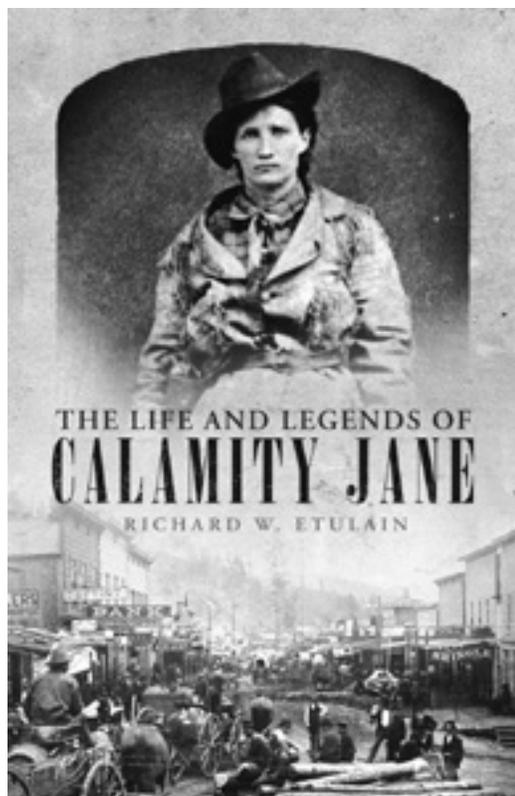
xviii + 381 pages, illustrations, index.

Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2014,
cloth \$24.95.

In 2004 HBO launched *Deadwood*, a television series centered on the famous South Dakota boom town of the late nineteenth century. Running three seasons and winning eight Emmy Awards, the show's popularity reflects Americans' continued fascination with the "Old West." The show includes numerous characters, both real and fictional, but perhaps none more complex than Martha "Calamity Jane" Canary. Actress Robin Weigert expertly plays a drunken Calamity wandering the streets of Deadwood, a depiction, Richard W. Etulain demonstrates in *The Life and Legends of Calamity Jane*, "so condensed that it limits the needed full portrait of her" (pp. 312–13). According to Etulain, *Deadwood* writers are not alone in their ambiguous and historically inaccurate portrayal of Calamity Jane. Rather than adhering to the traditional biographical format, the author combines "the story of her life" with discussion of "the ever-shifting interpretations of Calamity from her own time to the present" (p. xiv). The result is an effective examination of Jane's actual and mythical narrative.

Advancing no particular thesis or theory, Etulain's work utilizes an extensive array of primary source materials to separate fact from fiction. His biographical overview, while not offering breakthrough scholarship, vividly recounts Martha Canary's dramatic transformation from Missouri orphan to Wild West heroine Calamity Jane. Readers accustomed to the stereotypical portrayals of Jane are instead confronted with a complex, and even tragic, frontier woman. The strength of Etulain's study and its distinctiveness from previous biographies rests on his clear and concise presentation of historical material. He presents convincing positions on contentious subjects such as Calamity's birthplace, her various "husbands" and her employment as a prostitute, resulting in a narrative both descriptive and engaging.

It is Etulain's examination of the Calamity Jane myth, however, that most clearly illustrates his passion and knowledge of the subject. Occupying the final four chapters, this section traces "the most significant novels, movies and biographies about Calamity," while providing thorough plot summaries so that "readers can understand the complex, shifting images of Calamity—from those created during her own life to those of the early twenty-first century" (p. xvi). Etulain's study places particular emphasis on contemporary journalists and newspapermen, arguing that such men, along with Calamity herself, proved crucial in establishing the heroine's popular image as an "independent-minded, free-spirited female" prone to "unorthodox behavior and controversial actions" (pp. 200–201). The author successfully shows, however, that such portraits of Calamity are far from universal; we have good evidence that Jane was a conventional wife and mother,



searching for peace and stability in an ever-changing frontier environment. Etulain further indicates the important, if not always historically accurate, role played by Hollywood and historians of the American West in keeping Calamity's memory alive. He points out how for much of the twentieth century, no coherent image of Calamity Jane existed, as historians grappled with conflicting source material and filmmakers blended roughness and romanticism. Even after noted western scholar James D. McLaird published several articles and books based on "thorough research" and "balanced, defensible conclusions," the name Calamity Jane continued to represent an array of diverse meanings, a position unlikely to change in the near future.

By the time of her death in 1903, Calamity Jane was synonymous with the Wild West, her memory seared into the American public's consciousness. Richard Etulain's well-researched and compelling narrative is not only a valuable addition to the Calamity Jane story but also an important work within the field of the American West, one that clearly demonstrates the power of collective memory over historical events. Even if the American public is not yet ready to abandon its fascination with this lively, albeit unorthodox, heroine of the Old West, this study goes a long way in establishing a more accurate and historical Calamity Jane.

Reviewed by Jennifer Zobelein, PhD candidate, Kansas State University, Manhattan.

An Agrarian Republic: Farming, Antislavery Politics, and Nature Parks in the Civil War Era

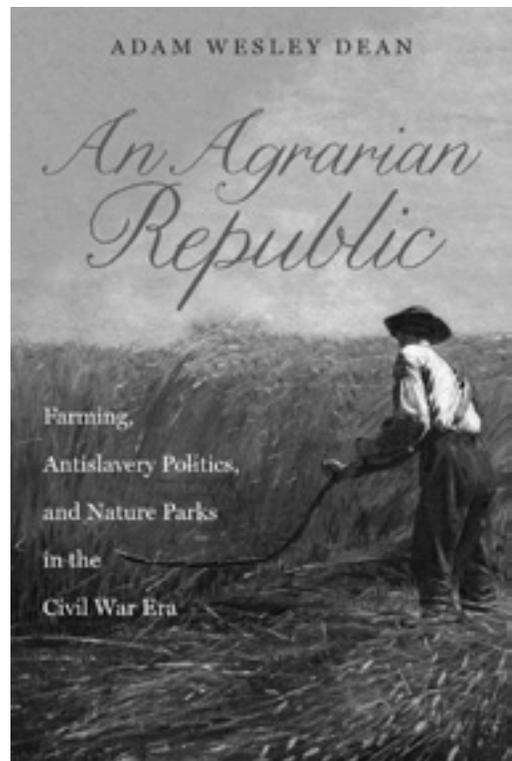
by Adam Wesley Dean

ix + 230 pages, notes, index.

Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015,
paper \$29.95.

In *An Agrarian Republic: Farming, Antislavery Politics, and Nature Parks in the Civil War Era*, Adam Wesley Dean challenges a classic stereotype of mid-nineteenth century America: that the period pitted an industrial North against an agrarian South. Recently a number of historians have argued that the South was in fact more industrial (or at least more “capitalist”) than it is often portrayed, but Dean makes a different historiographical intervention. He argues that the Republican Party—sometimes presented as the political apotheosis of a rapidly changing North—was in fact deeply rooted in agrarian values and a concern for farmers’ futures, at least during the party’s first three decades of existence. Dean argues that a more accurate division of the Civil War era is between two competing visions of the future of an agrarian nation.

The book is chronologically organized. Dean begins with the familiar issues of western expansion and slavery politics as exacerbated by the Mexican-American War, focusing on Northern perceptions of the dangers for land-use practices inherent in slavery’s spread. Free-soilers believed that slave agriculture wasted soils and promoted the migration of people and the dispersal of capital, conditions inimical to the formation of prosperous farm communities. This belief in the virtues of yeomen and the hazards of plantations spurred the formation of the Republican Party, Dean asserts, and appeared in the debates over the Kansas-Nebraska Act, the writings of such cultural critics as Frederick Law Olmsted and Hinton Rowan Helper, and the 1856 presidential campaign. During the Civil War, Northern concern about proper forms of land management continued in places like California. And with Southerners absent from Congress, Republicans acted on their agrarian agenda. Wartime measures such as the creation of a Department of Agriculture, the Morrill Act, and the Homestead Act “focused on turning the West into an agrarian society of white farmers who, by tilling small plots of land for many generations, would build ‘civilized’ communities and develop loyalty to the Union” (p. 82). Dean finds evidence of Republicans’ continued agrarian interests in the creation of western wilderness parks Yosemite and Yellowstone, as well as in the faction of the party that opposed park-making on the grounds that it removed public land from the homesteading program. He also connects Reconstruction and western Indian policy through this agrarian vision, arguing that Republican prescriptions for modernization in both the South and West was to settle freedpeople and Indians on their own tracts of land, completing Jefferson’s vision by creating virtuous yeomen from the nation’s politically marginal people. Dean notes of Reconstruction-era ideas about Southern whites,



freedpeople, and Indians: “Republicans had an environmental view of citizenship. Proper citizens, besides becoming Christian and adopting Victorian values, farmed the soil in ways deemed by white Americans to be responsible” (p. 136).

The chapter on wilderness parks is the least effective part of the book. For all Dean’s effort to tie park-making to Republican visions of proper land use, the connections seem forced, though, here too, there is food for thought. The discussion of the ways in which Reconstruction shaped the party’s agrarian views is the most engaging and interesting, reaffirming recent scholars like Heather Cox Richardson, who argues for greater unity in explanations of the West and the South during Reconstruction.

There is little completely new in *An Agrarian Republic*, but Dean does a good job of taking the familiar details of mid-century America and reassembling them in a new light. He argues that the Northern agrarian vision, and efforts to make it a reality, united various elements of the period that historians have largely treated as unrelated, western policy, Reconstruction, and nature parks among them. Dean also suggests that the values of rural America are perhaps more central to understanding the nation in the nineteenth century than is the now-dominant historiographical theme of industrialization (even if the latter ultimately proved victorious). There is much to think about in this good book.

*Reviewed by Drew Swanson, assistant professor of history,
Wright State University, Dayton, Ohio.*