
R E V I E W S

A People of Two Kingdoms II: Stories of Kansas Mennonites in Politics

by James C. Juhnke

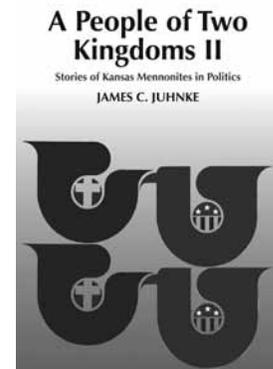
xiii + 324 pages, illustrations, appendices, notes, bibliography, index.

North Newton, KS: Bethel College Cornelius H. Wedel Historical Series, 2016, paper \$20.00.

Scholars and general readers who appreciated the significance of James C. Juhnke's 1975 *A People of Two Kingdoms* will be grateful that the historian has completed a second volume of Kansas's Mennonite history. Published by Bethel College, where Juhnke taught for much of the second half of the twentieth century, as part of the Mennonite college's Cornelius H. Wedel Historical Series, *A People of Two Kingdoms II: Stories of Kansas Mennonites in Politics* examines politics, broadly understood, from 1940 to 2014. Juhnke considers the way that "tolerant American democracy proved to be a powerful solvent" (p. 294) in eroding the "dualism of church and world" (p. 27).

From the World War II era onward, most Kansas Mennonites (like most pacifist Anabaptists elsewhere) lived with increasing ease in American culture. While young men of the World War II era faced a draft, conscientious objectors had a noble way, in the form of Civilian Public Service (CPS), of serving their nation while upholding their religious pacifism. This option was both a blessing and a challenge. Tensions with non-Mennonite neighbors had been one way of solidifying religious identity, though "public shame and embarrassment for Mennonite pacifists" (p. 30) undermined relationships in communities in central Kansas, in particular. Moreover, participating in the CPS represented a form of cooperation with a national project that was still rooted in violence and militarism. At the same time, the war demanded that Mennonites, in order to retain their distinctive identity, develop new leadership skills and models; it was, in short, increasingly difficult to be a "people of two kingdoms" when the political kingdom was providing opportunities for genuine contributions to improving the world.

Though "Mennonites had learned how to exercise political influence on the issue of conscientious objection," writes Juhnke with a hint of understatement, "they were not as highly motivated or equipped on the issue of civil rights" (p. 89). Even as they supported domestic missions that served African Americans and welcomed black children into their homes as part of the Fresh Air Fund, a not-for-profit program that continues to bring children from the city to rural summer camps or to live with host families in the country, most avoided the politics of civil rights—though they backed Lyndon B. Johnson's Voting Rights Act. As the white Mennonites of Kansas generally watched from afar, black Mennonites such as Vincent Harding led Mennonite engagement with the civil rights movement on



the national stage. It was an opportunity to exercise political and moral influence that most Kansas Mennonites missed.

In other ways, though, Mennonites made significant contributions to their local communities and to the state of Kansas. The postwar years saw a remarkable "surge of benevolent activity" that allowed Mennonites to meet "their need for a pacifist moral equivalent for military service" (p. 216). Mennonite groups came together to address mental health, disaster relief, education, and housing. As these groups "Americanized," they were able to serve a wider audience so that, today, the contributions of Mennonites to health care and mental health remain vital, especially to central Kansas.

In their opposition to such measures as the death penalty and war taxes, Mennonites in Kansas have not been as influential. By the 1980s and 1990s, many were finding their beliefs and politics informed by evangelical theology, and Mennonites increasingly expressed concern about abortion, gay rights, and prayer in public schools—all issues that mobilized their non-Mennonite Christian peers to join the Religious Right. Today, Mennonites continue to wrestle with the question of how far they can align themselves with any political party; many vote in "an enduring pattern" of protest (p. 26) given that, in the end, all political parties are at odds with the faith's historical peace teachings.

Yet Mennonites continue to engage politically in diverse ways. Juhnke notes that from World War II to 2014, thirty Kansas Mennonites ran for office, seventeen as Democrats (with six winning), twelve as Republicans (with nine winning), and one as an independent (Reform Party). Since then, at least one more—Tim Hodge of Newton, a Democrat—has taken a seat in the Kansas State Legislature. Given the continued heated nature of politics; widespread anger at Sam Brownback—led tax reforms; and renewed resentment toward national political leaders, including members of Congress, in the wake of a nasty 2016 presidential campaign, Mennonites will have to continue to decide how far their religion can go politically. A gracious chronicler, Juhnke will need to write faster if he wants to keep up with the changes.

Reviewed by Rebecca Barrett-Fox, assistant professor of sociology, Arkansas State University, Jonesboro.

Making the White Man's West: Whiteness and the Creation of the American West

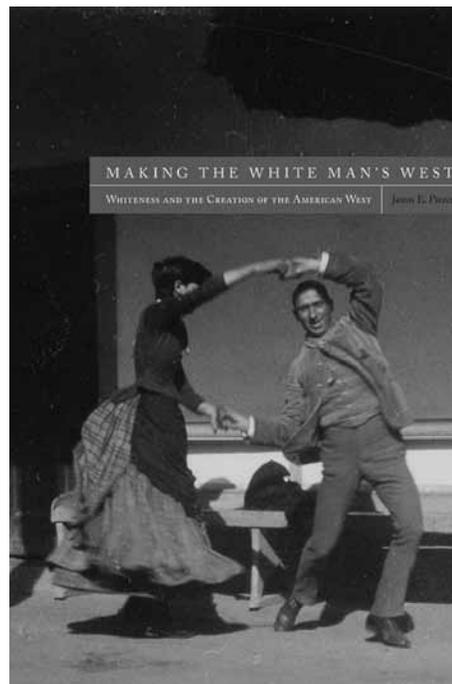
by Jason E. Pierce

xxv + 296 pages, illustrations, index, bibliography.
Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2016, cloth
\$45.00.

Jason E. Pierce proposes to explain how ideas of whiteness informed both popular impressions of the West and the way in which the diverse region was settled and later largely controlled by white people. He initially calls on the popular history written by Theodore Roosevelt rather than that of Frederick Jackson Turner to talk about the white conquest of nature and the West, which is a wise way to tilt the reader toward popular contemporary notions about the region. Roosevelt's account of a restorative West that could affirm white manhood is likely familiar to many readers, but the countervailing image of the West as a place unsuitable for or dangerous to white racial constructs is probably less so. Pierce's balance of these two versions of the white West and his ability to connect them cohesively mark *Making the White Man's West* as an excellent contribution to the general study of western history.

The analytical base of this study is race, as the title implies, and the period under study is mainly the nineteenth century. The author demonstrates that changing concepts about how white people envisioned the utility of the West reflected changing constructions of both whiteness and the West. His historical questions strike at the heart of the meaning of the West for many white people: Would it be a "dumping ground" for people of color or a refuge for white people? Some white historical figures believed initially that people of color in the West, in combination with the region's environments, would lead to racial degeneration among whites. They feared, for example, that the climes of southern California would breed indolence. Later, those gentle conditions would of course be considered invigorating and even capable of relieving white people from the battle against nature. The book follows the way in which the West was evoked by politicians, boosters, scientists, religious leaders, and many others in one of these two frameworks.

While the first half of *Making the White Man's West* focuses on how and why the West might have endangered white people, the second half explains how it was recreated as a white refuge. The author explores several rather wide-ranging subjects that help him make his case, such as border violence in Texas and the Mormon construction of Utah. Whether through violence or demographic change via northern European immigration,



the West was slowly carved into a white space. Pierce also demonstrates that the denial of citizenship rights, whether through violence or deception, clearly served as another tool in this uncoordinated project of region building.

The wide scope of subject areas exemplifies the strength of the argument. The sources frequently reflect the views of eminent members and institutions of white society, such as Charles Lummis, and boosters of that establishment. As such, the reader does not always have a sense of how less influential white people helped shore up the vision. However, we do certainly see how immigrants from northern Europe tilling the vast Plains and building a Zion in Utah were integral to the conquest. The role of white women too seems obscured by the ideas and thoughts of the men who often dictated the narrative of the white West. Nonetheless, the organization of the evidence is compelling.

Ultimately, Pierce presents the power of the white perspective on the West. Whichever white belief about the region was in vogue at a given time had a correlation to what the West's reality became. Pierce suggests to the reader that while westerners still contend with this white intellectual shadow, the effect is mutable.

Reviewed by Meg Frisbee, assistant professor of history, Metropolitan State University of Denver, Colorado.

The Earth Is Weeping: The Epic Story of the Indian Wars for the American West

by Peter Cozzens

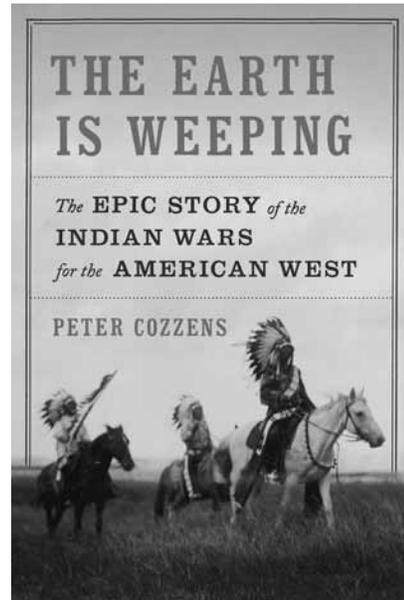
xxi + 544 pages, illustrations, notes, bibliography, index.
New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2016, cloth, \$35.00.

From time to time, the historical discipline is visited by a nonacademic practitioner who provides a breath of fresh air for topics that have lingered too long in ideological orthodoxies and/or on dry conference panels. Peter Cozzens, who comes to historical writing from a career in the military and foreign service, is one such practitioner. As of this morning, he had written seventeen books on the U.S. Civil War and the American West. In addition to this résumé and impressive oeuvre, Cozzens compiled and edited the five-volume *Eyewitnesses to the Indian Wars: 1865–1890* (Mechanicsburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 2001–2005), a project that ideally positioned him for the work under review.

The Earth Is Weeping taps this wealth of primary sources as well as a small library of secondary sources to update the tragic and disturbing story of the Indian wars in the American West. Following the time frame of Dee Brown's classic, *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee*, this book spans the period from 1864 to 1891. It is divided into four parts, roughly delineated by decade, and spans the Great Plains, including western Kansas, in addition to the central Rockies and far West. *The Earth Is Weeping* provides a comprehensive, detailed, and nuanced military history of the struggle for hegemony in the American West. Cozzens notes that he was motivated by Brown's work in that Brown was biased toward the Indian perspective, a view that Cozzens felt needed some balance. Providing such balance is essentially the goal of *The Earth Is Weeping*.

Normally, when I hear a white author vowing to provide "balance" on an Indian wars topic, I raise my shield, expecting rationalization of and apologetics for Euro-American behavior, and I confess to having done this when I began Cozzens's book. The defensive posture was unnecessary. By "balance," Cozzens meant that Brown had not captured the nuances of the story from the perspective of the American military. There is no rationalization or apologetics, only much-needed context regarding, for example, the confusion in the chain of command from policy makers in Washington, D.C., to the U.S. Cavalry units in the field. Cozzens also provides detail and nuance regarding the role of the cavalry's Indian allies, for example the Crow, the Pawnee, and especially the different factions of the tribes at war with the government. The egalitarian and loosely constructed societies of indigenous Americans have always been both a boon for freedom of movement and expression and a bane for self-defense against the invader.

Unlike Brown's book, *The Earth Is Weeping* also provides a source-based analysis of the cavalry officers in the field,



including and especially the generals. George Crook, Nelson Miles, Oliver O. Howard, Alfred Terry, George Armstrong Custer, and others come under Cozzens's scrutiny. For instance, Crook's strategies worked well against the Apaches in the southwestern desert but were disastrous on the northern plains. Custer did not blunder into self-destruction at the Little Big Horn; he took risks, as he had previously, but this time, things did not go his way. Miles was well regarded and largely trusted by Native Americans but had to betray a faction of Apaches because of a presidential directive. Many officers and soldiers thought that what government officials asked them to do, often at the behest of western voters, was barbaric and tragic. Cozzens shows that there were many occasions when the military tried to avoid a slaughter, just as there were many occasions when it precipitated one. It turns out that this story is, like all history, complicated. This book is a reminder that this history was made by imperfect human beings—on all sides.

Cozzens is a military man who understands the need for maps, so these are provided for each theater of operation. Numerous photos and drawings are also provided to assuage the reader's curiosity. Regarding criticisms, there are occasions when descriptions of personality traits are confusingly contradictory—for instance, for General Miles and Geronimo. People are contradictory, to be sure, but it would have helped for the author to acknowledge these contradictions plainly. Nevertheless, this is a powerful book that not only is a welcome addition to the historical literature of Kansas and the American West but also helps to redefine it.

Reviewed by Douglas S. Harvey, independent scholar, Kansas City, Missouri.

Gender and the Jubilee: Black Freedom and the Reconstruction of Citizenship in Civil War Missouri

by Sharon Romeo

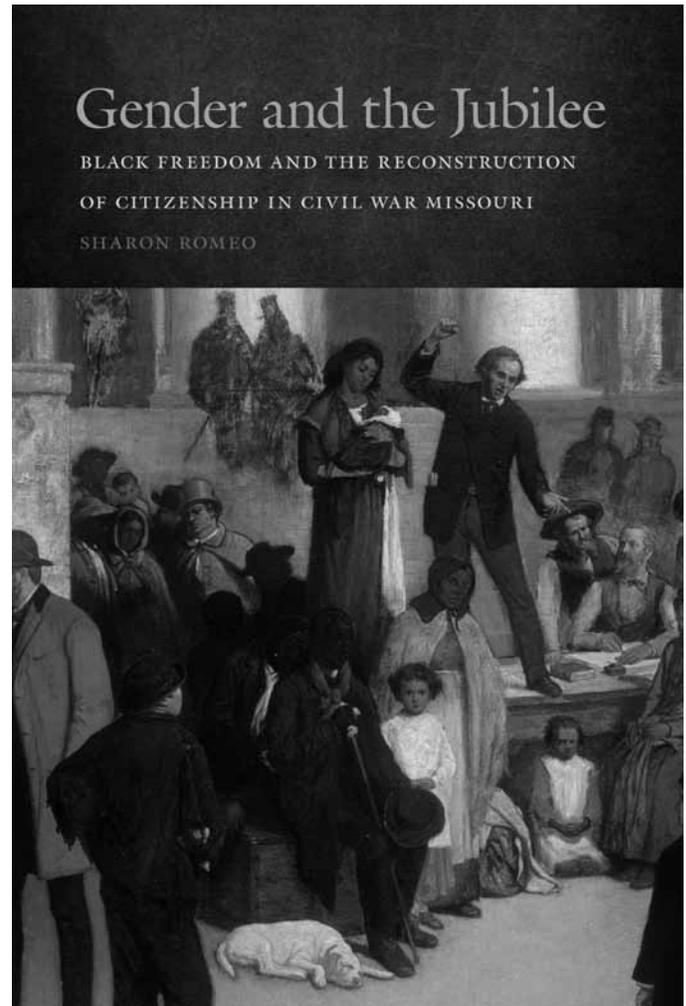
xii + 192 pages, illustrations, notes, index, bibliography.
Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2016, cloth \$59.95.

Sharon Romeo's gendered assessment of African American women's quest for freedom during the Civil War enriches our understanding of the transition from slavery to freedom during these intense years in American history. Their story is framed against the chaotic conditions in the border state Missouri, where early battles raged to keep the state in the Union despite Governor Claiborne Fox Jackson's southern sympathies. The author rightly begins the study in St. Louis, where a small but "politically active" (p. 13) slave community witnessed the *Dred Scott* Supreme Court decision in 1857, along with public slave auctions. In spite of these inauspicious beginnings, women turned the city into a haven for those seeking freedom, increasing the black population by 600 percent between 1860 and 1870 (p. 33).

Here, and in other areas of the guerrilla-torn state, women shrewdly utilized tensions between the Union military and the proslavery proclivities of the civil government to their benefit. Because those who remained loyal to the Union could technically retain their slaves, the military and the female slave population learned to use martial law as a tool for freedom. Testifying against southern sympathizers could earn women and their children emancipation certificates or passes to safer Union zones. Classified as "contraband," slaves could legally be confiscated from the enemy and emancipated. Romeo specifically points to the provost marshals as the key means women used to liberate themselves and to establish their rights as citizens. As the military endorsed these women as credible witnesses, a precedent was set for African Americans to legally testify in America's court system, another important step in the emancipation process and further verification of legitimate citizenship.

In addition, the author discusses how individual Union soldiers were often eager to help women escape slavery, particularly Kansas soldiers operating in the area who had witnessed the atrocities committed by proslavery Missourians during the Bleeding Kansas years from 1854 to 1856. Slaves frequently gathered at military camps for safety or were conducted by soldiers into safe zones, with soldiers frequently snatching enslaved people away right under the eyes of their masters.

Clearly grasping the concepts of liberty and citizenship so long denied to them, black women were remarkable in their savvy legal maneuvers to gain freedom and in their tenacity. For example, they fought to obtain the benefits awarded to the



wives of African American men serving in the Union Army. The Union granted immediate emancipation to the men but not to their families, even as many family members lived alongside their soldiers in army camps. Chapter 5, "The Legacy of Slave Marriage," discusses the difficult task of proving the legitimacy of their marriages when the right to legal marriage had long been denied to enslaved men and women. Legal marriage was a status much desired by many black women after years of enforced illegitimacy.

Toward the end of her study, Romeo underscores the essence of these women's achievements. While the women lost access to military courts after the war, "they gained entry to the official courts of the state apparatus" (p. 95). By asserting their rights, "these formerly stateless women had claimed a nation" (p. 95), and their extraordinary success deserves recognition.

Reviewed by Lani Kirsch, independent scholar, Overland Park, Kansas.

Black Hills Forestry: A History

by John Freeman

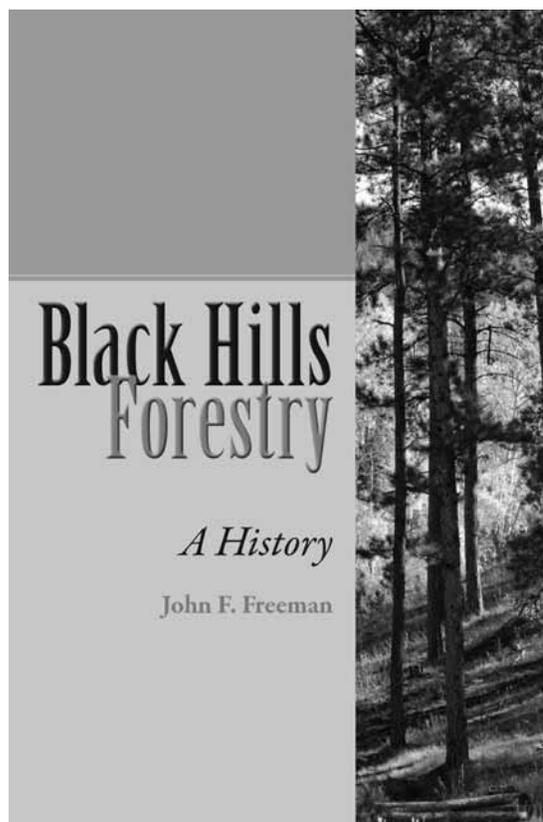
xiii + 246, illustrations, bibliography, index.
Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2015, cloth
\$34.95.

Although John F. Freeman's 2008 book, *High Plains Horticulture: A History*, may have merely highlighted forestry in western Kansas and Nebraska or inadequately covered the topic, as one reviewer hinted, *Black Hills Forestry: A History* undertakes an in-depth look at the field of forestry. Freeman's newest work focuses on the forests of South Dakota rather than the High Plains, but the two works nonetheless involve a very similar narrative: nineteenth-century humankind and nature (along with policy makers) locked in an epic battle for dominance and control.

In the book's preface, Freeman acknowledges that he is not an environmental historian or an expert in the field of forestry; he has, however, produced a book that professionals in both fields, among others, will enjoy reading. *Black Hills Forestry* progresses through the history and development of the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) as we know it today, focusing mostly on the development and efficiency of timber sales from the Black Hills National Forest as the national model. As a result of this narrow focus on forest policy and the bureaucratic management of forests as a product, the book gives only a partial picture of the environmental and ecological history of the Black Hills forests, but is nonetheless richly researched.

Freeman describes the Black Hills National Forest as the most commercialized example in the nation and in the management model of the national forest system as a whole, but he leaves the reader wondering whether all national forests are the same, because no other examples are closely examined or used for analogy. If no others are worthy of comparison, then can the South Dakota forest truly be called a flagship forest? Freeman asserts that the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 was largely based upon an earlier bill, negotiated by Senator Tom Daschle (D) of South Dakota, which negotiated a reorganization of the management of the Black Hills National Forest. Therefore, he suggests that it is a flagship forest. Freeman's position will, no doubt, provoke argument and discussion from the forestry and historical communities in the coming years.

Throughout the book, Freeman traces the continuity of Gifford Pinchot's suggestion and application of science-based forest management in the USFS and shows how Pinchot's theory, to conserve forests for the greatest good over the longest period of time, has been renewed in today's sustainable-yield and interdisciplinary forestry practices. Chapters 3 through 7 detail the development of the Black Hills forests under the auspices of conservation through use, which allows for mining contracts and cattle- and sheep-grazing leasing, along with



timbering and sawmills, all within national forests. Chapters 8 through 12 present the reactions to these policies of visitors, local landowners, and environmental protection groups. Freeman shows how through the courtroom, litigants were able to achieve many small victories, such as ending the practice of clearcutting, a forestry practice in which most or all trees in an area are cut down, within the boundaries of the national parks. He also unravels the sometimes contradictory idea that forest health and longevity are in fact, according to USFS research, improved and protected by the thinning and selective harvesting of trees on a regular basis.

Despite being almost apologetic for the history of industrial logging in national parks, as a whole, *Black Hills Forestry* is very well written and represents the most up-to-date work on the "New Forestry" attitude of today's USFS. It provides a glimpse of how the overall health of forests is being accounted for in wild spaces. In Freeman's opinion, the two remaining problems or risks facing national forests today are suburban/residential encroachment on forest borders and pine-beetle infestation. Some would argue that the USFS precedent of placing private logging, cattle, or mining industrial interests over the interests of preservationists, tourists, and environmentalists is a greater concern, but this is not a book that questions or challenges the federal forest policy.

Reviewed by Theresa Young, independent scholar, Topeka, Kansas.