
R E V I E W S

The Rivers Ran Backward: The Civil War and the Remaking of the American Middle Border

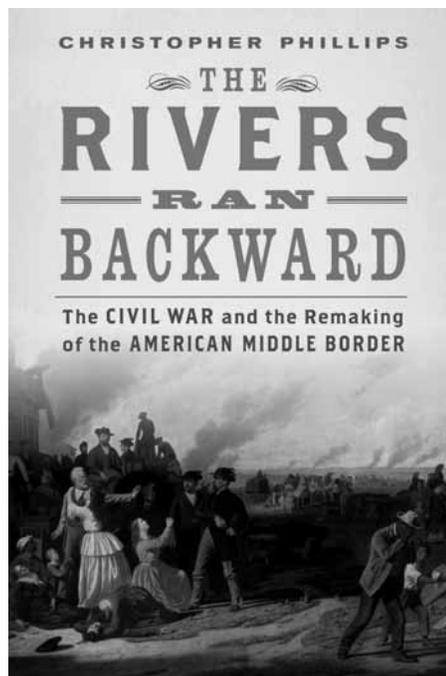
by Christopher Phillips

xvii + 505 pages, illustrations, notes, bibliography, index.
New York: Oxford University Press, 2016, cloth \$34.95.

In his thoughtful and insightful work *The Rivers Ran Backward: The Civil War and the Remaking of the American Middle Border*, Christopher Phillips, professor of history at the University of Cincinnati, challenges the notion of the Ohio River as a dividing line between North and South, abolitionist and proslavery elements. Instead, the “middle border” of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Kansas—all “free”—and Missouri and Kentucky—both “slave”—presents a far more complex reality that is infinitely more gray than black-and-white.

This “middle border” was largely moderate regarding the issue of slavery during the antebellum period, Phillips maintains, with blacks being held in slavery or indentured servitude or being subject to discriminatory Black Codes in the “free” states, while slaveowners in Kentucky and Missouri were often at least relatively Unionist in their political sentiments. This situation changed with the coming of the Civil War, and Kentucky’s unsuccessful attempt to declare itself neutral in 1861 was emblematic of the dilemma faced by many in the region as they attempted to find a middle road. This was not to be, and the aforementioned border states were the earliest to feel the hard effects of war as conciliatory policies were abandoned early by federal authorities; loyalty oaths, confiscation of property and levies “to compensate ‘undoubted Union men’ for property damage by guerrillas or saboteurs” (p. 192) would become common as the war progressed. Confederate invaders would be no gentler in the periods during which they occupied the region.

The Emancipation Proclamation solidified the positions, both pro and con, of many “middle border” citizens. Phillips notes that two regiments from southern Illinois, the 109th and 128th, “virtually disappeared as a result of mutiny and mass desertion” . . . “and both regiments were soon disbanded” after the proclamation took effect on January 1, 1863 (pp. 231–32). As political opposition to emancipation and the Lincoln administration fueled the Copperhead movement in the “middle border,” other Union troops from the region regarded the opposition as treason. One Kentucky soldier wrote, “I am afraid I am getting to be an abolitionist. All right! Better that than a secessionist!” (p. 232). Phillips also observes that with the presence of African American troops, “many more longtime Unionists suddenly became overt disloyalists” (p. 262). These schisms extended into the postwar era, when, amid Reconstruction violence, governments in Missouri and Kentucky ended up in the control of white supremacists. Those states embraced a perceived unity with the Confederacy that



had not existed before or during the Civil War, and other middle border states professed a unity with the Union that Phillips convincingly argues did not exist.

Despite the complex topic, *The Rivers Ran Backward* is a readable, well-written and exhaustively researched work (with a 47-page bibliography to prove it) and is certainly one of the most important Civil War books in recent memory. Phillips’s use of primary source materials gives voice to the men and women who populated this complex and conflicted region, which was “the West” before that appellation became attached to the Plains and beyond as the United States expanded after the war. This reviewer particularly enjoyed the short chapters that preceded each section of the book, providing a glimpse of what would follow through the experiences of individuals. “House of Cards” (pp. 114–19), for instance, through the lens of the travails of the Underwood family of Kentucky, shows the hard fates of slaveowning Unionists, while “A River between Them” (pp. 285–90) and the horrific crimes of erstwhile bushwhacker George Mangrum prepare readers for Phillips’s analysis of the postwar period.

While Kansas receives less attention than any of the other states of the “middle border,” *The Rivers Ran Backward: The Civil War and the Remaking of the American Middle Border* deserves a place on the bookshelves of Kansans or any others with an interest in the Civil War era who are willing to challenge some of the common assumptions of that crucial period in U.S. history.

Reviewed by Mark Christ, community outreach director, Arkansas Historic Preservation Program, Little Rock.

Insurgent Democracy: The Nonpartisan League in North American Politics

by Michael J. Lansing

xii + 353 pages, illustrations, notes, index.

Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2015, cloth \$45.00.



Michael Lansing asks whether a populist political movement could arise today and points to a fascinating mobilization of farmers in North Dakota that spread to several western states and two Canadian provinces. The Nonpartisan League (NPL) claimed allegiance to principles rather than to party. These principles centered on issues salient to North Dakota wheat farmers impacted by monopoly prices in transportation, grain, and credit. Their solution was state-owned enterprises that enhanced a small producer farm economy: grain elevators, banks, and even retail cooperatives.

The first of six chapters covers origins. Albert Bowen and Arthur Townley identified farmers' concerns and organized a democratic movement. Townley used Model-T Fords for door-to-door sales pitches that convinced farmers to purchase memberships. The movement led to a shocking upset in the 1916 primaries and the takeover of the state Republican party by NPL candidates, including the new governor, Lynn Frazier. The second chapter covers expansion. Townley surveyed midwestern states and sent recruiters to solicit membership subscriptions in promising areas. Two Canadian provinces also organized, a notable development, as they operated in a parliamentary system. Chapter 3 explores opposition. Attempts to label the NPL as socialist initially had limited impact; this situation changed with the onset of World War I. A national initiative established state-based Commissions on Public Safety; several proceeded to accuse state NPL branches of being antiwar. After meeting Townley, President Woodrow Wilson saw the NPL as a potential way to Republican support, but he never embraced it. Theodore Roosevelt, by contrast, delivered a series of speeches attacking NPL leadership. In the wake of similar attacks, NPL organizers were subjected to violence.

Chapter 4 chronicles the NPL at its zenith of power in North Dakota. Its program included state-owned flour mills and grain elevators, a state bank, state-sponsored insurance, state-sponsored housing, and farmer tax preferences. These measures were justified as providing a level playing field for small capitalist farmers. Their success was uneven: existing banks refused to deal with the new North Dakota bank, and businesses resisted NPL cooperatives. Other programs were rife with favoritism and corruption. Chapter 5 charts the demise of the NPL. Townley's strong central control led to defections. The failure of NPL enterprises harmed the organization's reputation. Midwestern states had enacted reforms such as the open primary that the NPL had used to its advantage, but now, they eliminated them. In 1920 the NPL did poorly in elections, and Townley soon lost control. North Dakota under the NPL had added recall elections to its constitution, but in 1921 three NPL officials, including Governor Frazier, became the first in U.S. history to be recalled. Chapter 6 examines legacies. The broad inclusion of women activists and officials in the NPL is one; several women were

elected to state political offices. Another is the election of seven U.S. senators with NPL views; they established an informal coalition to pursue agricultural policies rooted in NPL ideology. NPL influences also contributed to Hubert Humphrey's rise to prominence.

Insurgent Democracy raises thought-provoking questions. Given its fairly consistent scope of demands, we can question whether the NPL was really nonpartisan. It was unquestionably political and sought innovative ways to put pressure on the political system. In addition, it sought to capture and control governments. Though nonpartisan in that it would align with any party, it had political opponents and raised fear in political parties. Despite its claim of nonpartisanship, in attempting (and in North Dakota succeeding) to gain control of government via elected officials, it contained strong elements of partisanship.

Lansing suggests that the NPL history can be instructive for imagining a grassroots movement today, yet the NPL was truly successful only in North Dakota. The unique initial conditions in North Dakota included a red wheat monoculture and established farmer organizations. Other states had greater crop diversity, industry, and urban population concentrations. Projecting these conditions to complex modern economies is challenging.

It is tempting to suggest that the unique structure of the American two-party system provided some impetus for the NPL organization. However, the importation of NPL ideas to Canadian provinces provides leverage for comparative analysis. The extant concerns of Canadian farmers mirrored the issues in North Dakota; while Canada did have public grain elevators, farmers were nonetheless burdened with mortgage and credit concerns similar to those in the American Midwest.

Lansing's narrative depicts small producer farmers advocating small producer capitalism. Their interests included stable prices, mortgage protection, and defense against the monopoly power. However, labor can thrive in stable monopolies. The many microepisodes spread throughout *Insurgent Democracy* provide fodder for a scholar seeking to examine the challenges of fusing farmers and labor.

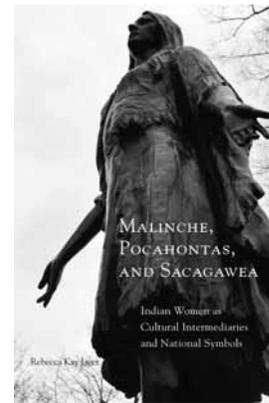
Observers wishing to focus on Kansas will find specific episodes dispersed among the chapter narratives. The political-economic structure of Kansas was not as conducive as that of North Dakota to the NPL. Kansas farmers raised diversified crops in a more diverse economy, but the contrast can help us understand why some paths were not taken in Kansas. The book is a fascinating read.

Reviewed by Jonathan Chausovsky, associate professor, Department of Politics and International Affairs, The State University of New York at Fredonia.

Malinche, Pocahontas, and Sacagawea: Indian Women as Cultural Intermediaries and National Symbols

by Rebecca K. Jager

viii + 356 pages, illustrations, notes, index, bibliography.
Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2015, cloth
\$24.95



Rebecca K. Jager examines three Indigenous women famous for their interactions with colonizing men: Malinche, Pocahontas, and Sacagawea. In Part I the author surveys each woman's life, role as cultural intermediary, and giving birth to "mixed-race" children (p. 120). In the stronger Part II, Jager explores these women's roles as symbols of national identity and how they have been "employed to justify or condemn European colonization, to explain Indian defeat or celebrate indigenous prehistory, and to serve as a forum for recurring discussions of race and gender" (p. 9).

During Spain's Mexican conquest, Malinche was "given" to Cortés and served as his "interpreter and cultural adviser" (pp. 5 and 53). At the time, Native sources depicted Malinche as a central and respected figure, while the Spanish deemed her "a minor character" (p. 160). In subsequent centuries, interpretations of Malinche have vacillated between viewing her as the "Mexican Eve . . . a feminine traitor who assisted the Spanish colonizers" to the nurturing mother of "a new race that blended the best of indigenous and Spanish heritage" (p. 161). Malinche's "bipolar legacy" mirrors the paradox of Mexican identity: "a persistent struggle to merge the Spanish and indigenous past" (p. 174).

In the winter of 1607–08, John Smith was adopted into the Powhatan confederacy via a kinship ceremony involving Pocahontas as his "cultural sponsor" (p. 213). Years later, in an effort to market the Virginia Company as a successful colonial enterprise, Smith launched the myth that, inspired by love, this Indian "princess" had saved him from death. From 1776 on, this legend, plus Pocahontas's eventual marriage to colonist John Rolfe, provided convenient romantic tales of hardworking Englishmen and noble Indian women creating a "new American family" and thus a distinct American identity (p. 222). Pocahontas symbolized the quintessential noble savage who accepted newcomers, and they her, assuaging American guilt over the toll of manifest destiny. After World War II, in a nation of conformity and idealized gender roles, the romance of Pocahontas and John Smith enjoyed a resurgence. This myth was deployed again in a 1995 Disney movie to promote contemporary values of "appreciation for nature, the significance of spiritualism, and the coexistence of diverse races" (p. 240).

For nearly a century, Sacagawea was also characterized as playing the small part of "feminine noble savage who understood and appreciated the superiority of the coming order" in Lewis and Clark's 1804–06 expedition across the American West (p. 248). As the centennial approached, though, white suffragists

in search of historic heroines co-opted Sacagawea and elevated her to "a strong, competent woman who actively participated in America's future" (p. 254). As with Pocahontas, American novelists and filmmakers crafted a forbidden—and fictional—romantic love story between Sacagawea and William Clark. For decades, many people attempted to definitively determine Sacagawea's role in the journey and her life thereafter (which remains uncertain). These efforts did little to weaken the myths about her. In 1999, the U.S. Mint's release of a new dollar coin bearing Sacagawea's image was heralded as "acknowledg[ing] and appreciat[ing] Indian women, Indian people, Indian policy, and working mothers"—a sentiment that, again, said more about American culture at the end of the century than about Sacagawea's life (p. 289).

Jager argues that all of these myths follow a similar trajectory. Initially, the women were one-dimensional background figures used to "illustrate Indian acceptance and to justify European expansion" (p. 290). Eventually, though, "creation myths in both [the U.S. and Mexico] portray the birth of their nations through heterosexual love that gave Europeans paternity rights in the Americas. This love trope demonstrates how loving Indian princesses welcomed European men and adopted their alien civilizations" (p. 296). Interestingly, the author notes that Spaniards and Englishmen could flip from hero to villain, but "Lewis and Clark did not suffer the same level of skepticism because the United States was never forced to abandon its claim in America" (p. 296).

This book will certainly appeal to a general audience, especially to those unaware that these familiar myths are not based on historical facts. Likely all readers will leave the book wanting more: more examples from other nations, more popular culture manifestations, more footnotes (especially in the conclusion). Perhaps such sentiments are the hallmarks of an engaging topic. In this era of interrogating whom we memorialize and why, such examinations of mythic figures—especially of a colonized and marginalized group such as Indigenous women—are welcome and necessary.

Reviewed by Tai S. Edwards, associate professor of history and director of the Institute of Kansas Studies, Johnson County Community College, Overland Park, Kansas.

The Ozarks: An American Survival of Primitive Society

by Vance Randolph and edited by Robert Cochran

xxii + 272 pages, illustrations.

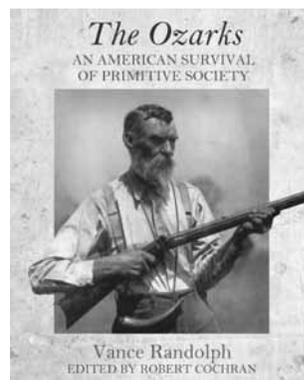
Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, Chronicles of the Ozarks, 2018, paper \$29.95.

Born in Pittsburg, Kansas, Vance Randolph moved into the Ozarks after graduating from Clark University. By the 1930s he had established himself as a pioneering folklorist in the region. With his second wife, Mary Celestia Parler, Randolph stands as one of the Ozarks' preeminent folklorists. Brooks Blevins and Robert Cochran are part of the new generation to carry on Randolph's legacy of scholarship, and this newly edited edition of the original 1931 publication is an important contribution to the Chronicles of the Ozark series.

When Randolph wrote the original volume, survivalism was integral to predominant ideas about the tales, beliefs, music, customs, and other traditions that constitute the subject matter of folklore. The idea of traditional culture as a survival from the past encompassed more than the observation that older forms of culture maintained continuity over time. Rather, early scholars saw folklore as retaining earlier traces of a primitive psychology that reflected antiquated stages of cultural evolution. The folk were seen as those who lived in cultural backwaters, and their traditions embodied earlier forms of culture that retained elements of the savage mind in modern society. Fieldworkers collected stories and lore to preserve these survivals from the flow of time in the face of their perceived demise with the coming of modernity. Collectors traveled to remote areas, such as the Appalachians and the Ozarks, where they believed they could find such remnants of the past. Randolph's prose reflects this early paradigm.

It would be easy to critique his portrayal of Ozarkers as primitives living on the margins of society. Indeed, both Blevins and Cochran have rightly objected to the assumption that Ozarkers lived cut off from the modern world. They also recognize the value of early folklore research. These editors provide important reasons for appreciating Randolph's work by showing how it contributed to Ozark studies. Randolph was an excellent fieldworker, a vibrant writer, and a major scholar of the region. He also offered his own advances to research. Instead of taking only an "items and inventory" approach to folklore, Randolph understood the importance of contextual approaches, and chapters of *The Ozarks* are fine examples of what is now termed "folklife studies." His writings on hunting and fishing traditions remain important resources for scholars interested in the region's social history.

The book is organized into twelve chapters. Randolph draws from his fieldwork to describe a wide range of the region's traditional culture, and his descriptions of customs and folk beliefs that remained vital in the region are excellent. His writing on ballads, folksongs, instrumental music, and especially the play-party is especially engaging. The book concludes with "The Coming of the 'Furriners,'" in which he anticipates the demise and even extinction



of much of what he observed in his 1920s and 1930s field research. As outsiders entered the region, they changed the culture, and much of what persisted almost a century ago has died out. However, it is remarkable that much of the culture has remained. There are Ozarkers who still sing the ballads; practice hunting and fishing traditions similar to those Randolph described; and retain elements of a characteristic ethos that Randolph understood, tolerated, often respected, and occasionally critiqued.

Randolph was a wordsmith who crafted excellent descriptions of an impressive body of folklore. His writing on outdoor activities— notably on subjects such as "goosing bass" and gigging for suckers— is especially strong. He had a fine sense of his readers' interests, and his style blended his own literary prowess with a feeling for Ozarkers' vernacular language. He was clearly a consummate fieldworker. Readers will notice that his writing comes from a depth of experience in documenting the people's culture. Sections of the book in which he specifically discusses how he completed his collections are particularly valuable because they provide highly useful resources for contemporary fieldwork as well as valuable texts for ethnographers and social historians.

Perhaps an enduring legacy from Randolph's era is also evident in the persistence of ideas that are implicated in his survivalist assumptions. Although Randolph was influenced by his own romanticized assumptions when he cast Ozarkers as primitives, he righteously critiqued those who overly exoticized them, especially when outsiders exploited Ozark traditions and even sought to put the natives on display. Today, the region remains ambiguous about its hillbilly heritage as an interest in the lives of people who live in hills and hollows continues to support the region's tourist economy. Outsiders and even many insiders continue to hold ideas about primitivism and the Ozarks that cast the region as a cultural backwater in relation to the movement of time. Consequently, we can read Randolph's volume retrospectively to discover how the region has been portrayed in relation to ideas about the grand master narrative of progress. Implicit in this worldview are the same kinds of survivalist notions about history and culture that obscured earlier views of life in Arkansas, Missouri, and other regions surrounding the Ozarks.

Reviewed by Gregory Hansen, professor of folklore and English, Arkansas State University, Jonesboro.

Frontier Kansas Jails

by Gerald J. Bayens

172 pages, illustrations, notes, index.
Charleston, SC: History Press, 2017, paper \$21.99.

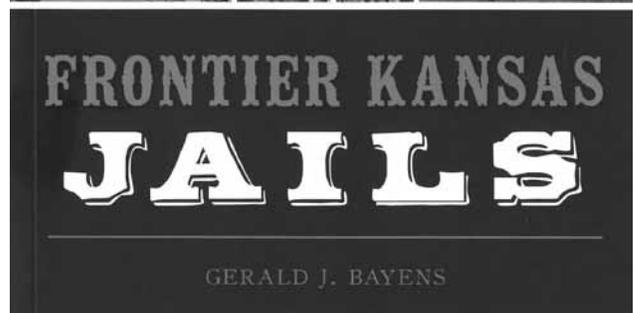
Frontier Kansas Jails includes five parts: "The Early History of Jails," "The Nation Expands into Territorial Kansas," "An Invitation to Violence," "Expanding Jails across the Kansas Frontier," and "Jail Inspection and Reform." The author, Gerald J. Bayens, now an associate dean of the School of Applied Studies and professor of criminal justice at Washburn University, spent twenty-two years in law enforcement and corrections and later worked as a professor and mentor of students. His past employment includes fifteen years at a county jail as a jailer, supervisor, manager, and administrator; thus, he is well acquainted with the world of Kansas incarceration.

Frontier Kansas Jails includes discussions of the city and county jail environments in Kansas from the territorial period through the 1890s. Americans' model for local corrections came from their knowledge of the British penal system. British treatment of prisoners was savage and uncivilized if measured by twenty-first-century norms. Jail and prison reform in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries gradually improved these conditions, but, according to Bayens, early Kansas jails were still "deplorable places" (p. 38). As Bayens demonstrates, they were also central to the development of the state.

After Congress passed the Kansas-Nebraska Act in 1854 and opened Kansas Territory to white settlement, the population of the territory increased rapidly. According to Bayens, "Many of these residents were anything but law abiding: and the Kansas Territory quickly earned a reputation for lawlessness" (p. 41). Crimes ranged from murder and rape to horse stealing, larceny, and public intoxication. Kansas Territory was also embroiled in a fight over the extension of slavery that led to the outbreak of violence. Bayens writes: "The building of jails became a priority to deal with both proslavery and antislavery supporters, rabble and criminals alike" (p. 62).

Jail construction in the territorial period until 1890 moved from wood to limestone to concrete and brick. Seventy-four photos and drawings show the different styles of these Kansas jails from both the outside and inside. Escapes frequently occurred in the communities that had only one jailer. Bayens also describes incidents in which residents of eight different Kansas communities broke into these early frontier jails and dragged prisoners out for a taste of "frontier justice"—hanging them from nearby trees without a trial or jury conviction.

The Kansas population continued to grow rapidly, from 103,166 in 1860 to 1.5 million by 1890, thanks to cheap land available to settlers and jobs laying track on the Union Pacific and Santa Fe Railroads. Violent behavior during this period of rapid growth caused many arrests. Although fines were imposed for minor violations of the law, many offenders were



incarcerated. Kansas also briefly experimented with chain gangs, an incarceration tactic utilized in the southern states, but wisely decided to discontinue the practice. Bayens describes some of the unsanitary conditions and cruel and unusual punishments experienced by prisoners in these frontier jails. One punishment included the "alkazan," in which the prisoner was placed facedown in a coffin, hands and feet tied so that movement was impossible, and left in the dark for hours (p. 47).

The author concludes with a chapter on jail inspection and reform. Kansas once operated a system of jail inspection described by the author. Unfortunately, it was eliminated by the Kansas government a century later to save money. Currently, there are no formal state standards or provisions for jail inspection.

Frontier Kansas Jails is good reading and is especially relevant for college and university students who specialize in criminal justice and social science. It is also valuable reading for citizens who ought to have more knowledge of their state's correctional history.

Reviewed by Ken Kerle, retired managing editor, American Jail magazine.

Kansas Baseball, 1858–1941

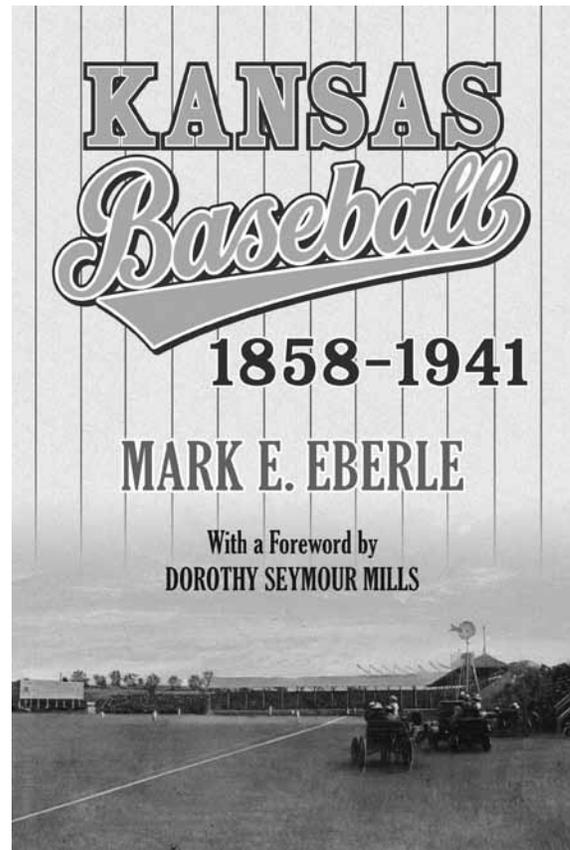
by Mark E. Eberle

xxiii + 400 pages, illustrations, notes, index.
Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2017, paper
\$27.50.

In *Kansas Baseball, 1858–1941*, Mark E. Eberle presents an unusually effective history that will reward professional historians, amateurs of the craft, and fans of the sport. Yet one need not be a baseball fan to appreciate this work. Well researched (using numerous archives in Kansas as well as many archival web sites) and written in a clear and lively manner, the book effectively summarizes the evolution of baseball in the United States, places Kansans' diverse experiences with the sport into a larger context, and explores special-interest groups and how they approached the game. A comprehensive essay on the first century of baseball in the state shows unexpected richness and range—Eberle touches on the professional, semiprofessional, and amateur game among a variety of players, including those aiming to live on their pay as athletes, traveling teams, townspeople, youth groups, and others. In some books about the emergence of a sport, the sport itself becomes the all-consuming focus. But central to this work are the interactions of Kansans with the sport of baseball and the impact the game had on Kansas communities.

Eberle begins with a quest to explore all the “historic” ballparks in the state “that exhibited permanence” (p. xv), which easily includes facilities built of concrete and stone during the New Deal under the Works Progress Administration. Especially before that time, some parks were “more permanent than others,” as were the teams that played there. Eberle charts not only the building and use of facilities but also the key institutions—clubs and leagues, for example—that developed a distinctively Kansan turn to the sport in the state. His keen decisions about how to organize the book convey a sense of texture and variety in the state’s experience with baseball so that the work does not degenerate into a mere compendium of isolated episodes. In addition to a summary of baseball’s emergence in the nation as a whole and an essay on its appearance and growth across Kansas, Part I of the book offers studies of crucial groups that participated in the game. Town teams, for example, provided not only an outlet for players but also a chance to put a settlement on the map in a special way. Different interest groups clashed, nonetheless; for example, promoters of baseball often found Sundays the best opportunity for staging a game, whereas ministers insisted that games not be played on the sabbath. Sometimes compromise was possible, and in other cases, technology provided new options, such as artificial lighting of fields (sometimes with lights mounted on trucks) that allowed games after work on weekday nights.

Kansas Baseball also offers a fascinating treatment of women at play (including “barnstorming bloomer girls” [p. 59] as well



as locals); African Americans in largely (but not only) segregated competition; Native Americans engaged in baseball at the Haskell Institute and elsewhere (with stereotyped promotional references to players nicknamed “Chief”); Mexican Americans (especially from the states north of Mexico City), minor leagues (entailing travel as far west as Leadville, Colorado), and major-league teams playing exhibition games in Kansas. A fine example of the unexpected events that local ambition made possible was an exhibition game between the New York Giants and the Chicago White Sox in the town of Blue Rapids, Kansas, in 1913. The townspeople put up \$1,000 to cover the expenses of both teams, special railroad service was arranged from Manhattan to the south and Atchison to the east, and Army Chief of Staff General Leonard Wood committed soldiers from Fort Riley to maintain order. The event made a profit.

Part II chronicles the nine most important ballparks in the state, noting how their missions changed over time and how various communities repurposed the facilities. Here and throughout the book, Eberle provides wonderfully instructive photographs found in various archival collections. *Kansas Baseball* benefits from a commitment to top-notch research and writing as well as to the game it examines.

Reviewed by Donald J. Mrozek, professor of history, Kansas State University, Manhattan.

*No Place Like Home: Lessons in Activism from
LGBT Kansas*

by C. J. Janovy

ix + 297 pages, illustrations, notes, index.
Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2018, paper
\$29.95.

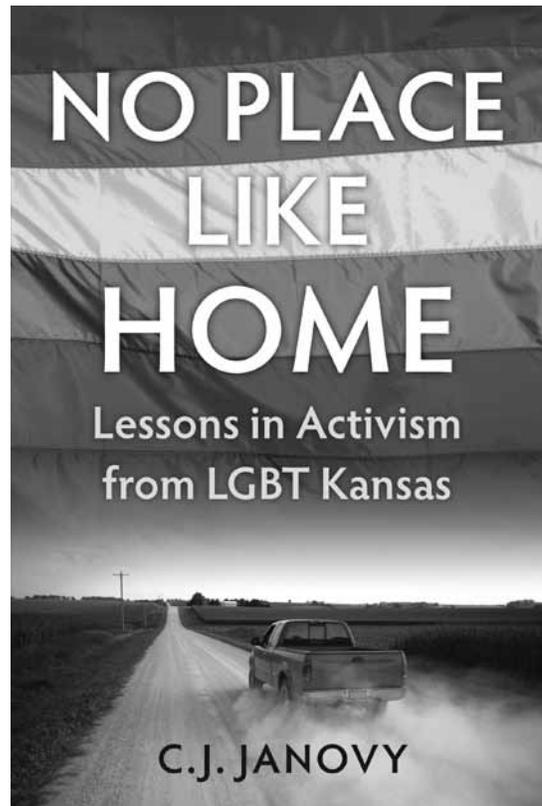
As the struggle for the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer people gained national attention in the 1990s and 2000s, those same conflicts were playing out in microcosm in Kansas, largely without meaningful attention or support from national queer rights organizations. In *No Place Like Home*, C. J. Janovy documents the struggle for equality in Kansas from a string of defeats from 2002 to 2005 through the continuing debates about transgender people's rights and "bathroom bills."

Janovy is a journalist, and the book takes a journalistic approach. She excels at telling the story of activism by LGBTQ Kansans from the point of view of those on the front lines, often working with little or no support and sometimes as the only out queer person for many miles. *No Place Like Home* takes inspiration from oral histories and effectively employs contemporary reportage to supplement and contextualize the words of its subjects.

Because Janovy's approach is journalistic, those expecting an academic treatment of activism will be disappointed. But those seeking firsthand accounts of what happened and how, from the desperate and doomed struggle against a same-sex marriage ban to the county-by-county effort to prevail upon Kansas to issue marriage licenses in the wake of *Obergefell v. Hodges*, will find a compelling, complex narrative of the interlocking lives and efforts of a small group of activists working for the seemingly impossible goal of a queer-friendly Kansas.

What are the lessons in activism that the title promises us? They are, on the one hand, so straightforward as to be almost self-evident: be visible, make sure your friends and neighbors know that discriminatory policies harm people whom they care about, organize, and do not give up even in the face of defeat. These lessons are, as Janovy acknowledges, well-trodden ground. However, they are perhaps not the book's real purpose, nor its real strength. Its most rewarding aspects will be for LGBTQ people and their allies in providing a detailed account of what activism actually looks like and, as is desperately needed, documenting the lives, strategies, and sacrifices of those who sowed the seed from which we hope a more inclusive society will be reaped.

While the book is thoughtful and nuanced throughout, readers may find some stylistic decisions troubling. Particularly problematic are occasional references to "transgender" and "LGBTs" rather than the now-standard "transgender people" and "LGBT people." (This comment is not intended to critique the separate and wise choice to quote directly, even when it



means employing problematic or offensive language.) Janovy also sometimes struggles with transgender terminology, as when she refers to a trans woman as having been "born a boy" rather than having been "assigned male at birth," which is the preferred expression. These issues do not undercut the power of the narrative, but they can be troubling, and readers should be prepared.

This reviewer, a queer Kansan, must now insert herself into this review. It is strange to write these words in the wake of Justice Anthony Kennedy's retirement, an event that will almost certainly result in the U.S. Supreme Court becoming more hostile to LGBTQ rights and rolling back many hard-won gains. It seems impossible to be objective in the face of the deep and far-reaching impact of these events. In that context, perhaps, the power of the text fully emerges in its reminder that the proper response to further attacks on equality is to organize, agitate for positive change, and build community.

The future of LGBTQ rights is highly uncertain, and one suspects that *No Place Like Home* may well mean something very different to readers in two or ten years than it means today. But as public battles about "bathroom bills" and religious exemptions continue, Janovy's deeply realized account of those who have shown us the way provides queer people and their allies with guidance on how to proceed.

Reviewed by Izzy Wasserstein, lecturer in English, Washburn University, Topeka, Kansas.