
R E V I E W S

Praising Girls: The Rhetoric of Young Women, 1895–1930

by Henrietta Rix Wood

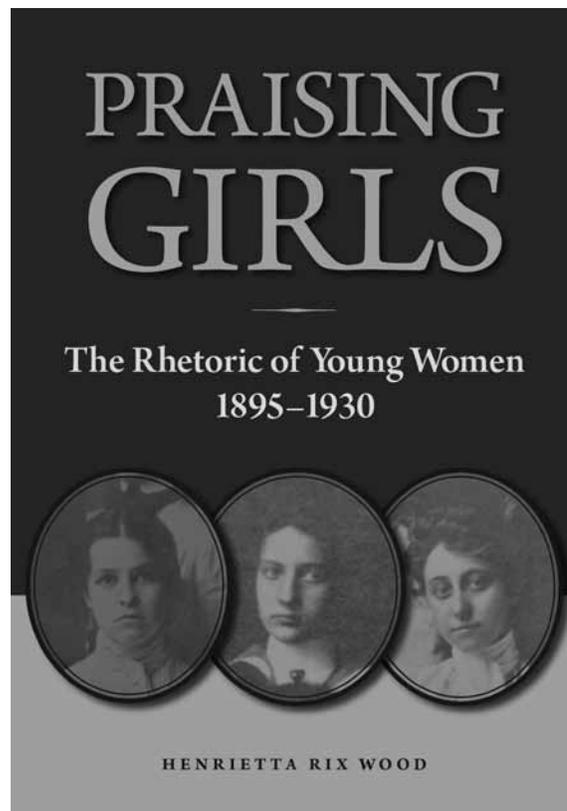
xxiv + 192 pages, illustrations, notes, index.

Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2016, \$40.00.

In *Praising Girls: The Rhetoric of Young Women, 1895–1930*, rhetorical historian Henrietta Rix Wood delivers a unique and important adjunct to feminist rhetorical history, articulating and reinvesting in the voices—and, in particular, the epideictic rhetoric—of high school girls around the turn of the twentieth century. Focusing on the published materials generated in young women’s secondary schools in and around Kansas City, Missouri, Wood seeks to “amplify the voices of young women rarely heard in narratives of either rhetorical or social history” (p. xvi). Wood’s work does more than fill a historical lacuna, as it offers a picture of a particular variety of epideictic rhetoric, focusing on the rhetorical process of collective identity formation and the negotiation of social and cultural pressures rather than simply occasions of praise and blame. As Wood reminds us, the “Greek word ‘epideictic’ means ‘fit for display’” (p. 145), and Wood’s work is valuable in its perspicuous rendering of the ways that these young women “demonstrated” their progressive identities in their particular educational contexts.

Wood’s approach to rhetorical history follows, among others, George Kennedy’s desire to extend our understanding of epideictic rhetoric beyond Aristotle’s narrow categorization of it as praise or blame emanating from an individual speaker on a particular occasion. Wood pushes us toward a social-process epideictic rhetoric that closely attends to young women’s methods of amplification in their school newspapers, yearbooks, and literary magazines as they aim to forge a collective identity, to carve out a place for themselves to become together, to push back against normalizing forces—whether gender expectations for upper-class white girls or regulatory cultural expectations of young Native American women—and to construct new systems of value and belief about their roles as young women of the time. Wood’s strict and thorough archival research not only revivifies these often overlooked public genres but also helps to articulate the specific and powerful ways that young women created social spaces in which to thrive.

In addition to its rhetorical sophistication, Wood’s analysis of four different schools—with four very different populations of girls—negotiates the important question of how “gender, race, class, and age influence the production and presentation of . . . persuasive discourse” (p. 5). Her first case study recovers the upper-and-middle-class white, progressive “new girls” in Miss Barstow’s school who define themselves by invoking the other to create a sense of collective progressive identity. Wood also investigates the rhetoric of Native American girls



attending Haskell Institute in Lawrence, Kansas—the nation’s second-largest federal boarding school for Native American children—and their struggle to employ epideictic rhetoric to “construct community that transcends tribal differences” (p. 87) and negotiate the normalizing power of their white overseers’ cultural expectations. After her exploration of the rhetorical conditions at work at the Haskell Institute, Wood uncovers the young African American women at Lincoln High in Kansas City and their employment of epideictic rhetoric to create common bonds and to fight against racist normalization, portraying themselves as “distinct from and not inferior to white society” (p. 91). Finally, *Praising Girls* recovers the working-class students of Central High who worked to overcome the school’s fractured social systems and pursue “equanimity” (p. 117). The epideictic rhetoric employed by these differing groups of young women, these processes of self-definition, also helped define, according to Wood, “the twentieth century” itself, as these young women went on to become “teachers, nurses, artists, community activists, and mothers” (p. 147). *Praising Girls* is an exemplary instance of the importance of archival work for the expansion of our historical and rhetorical landscape.

Reviewed by Jason Barrett-Fox, director of composition, Weber State University, Ogden, Utah.

Down on Mahans Creek: A History of an Ozarks Neighborhood

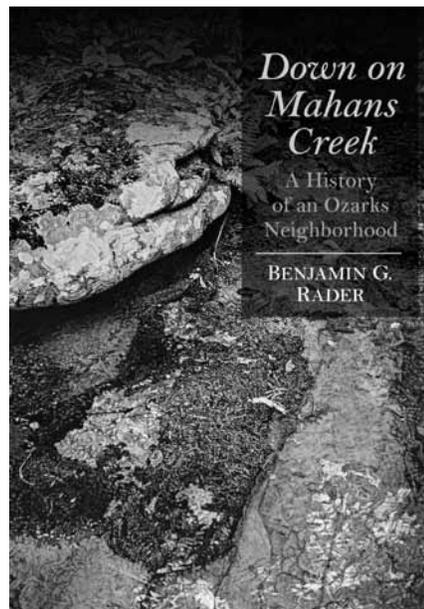
by Benjamin G. Rader

xxvii + 373 pages, illustrations, notes, index.

Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, Chronicles of the Ozarks, 2017, cloth \$44.95.

Local and family history coalesce in Benjamin Rader's book set in the south-central Missouri Ozarks. One focus of his work is the communities that developed along waterways in Shannon County: towns such as Eminence and Delaware as well as more loosely organized neighborhoods that took their names, if they had them, from the people who had settled the area or from some geographical feature. Meanwhile, the author considers his family heritages—the paternal line of the Raders and the maternal Pummill ancestors. Both concerns might seem too parochial to interest readers who are not connected to the particular place or the particular set of people, but Rader's thorough research using a range of sources, his adroit combination of narrative documentary history and anecdote (often drawn from regional or family oral tradition), and his engaging literary style make this an exemplary study. Others who examine specific places or families will find his book, which inaugurates the Chronicles of the Ozarks series, edited by Brooks Blevins for the University of Arkansas Press, a useful model for their endeavors.

The neighborhood described in *Down on Mahans Creek* is the heart of the Ozarks, where the terrain consists largely of deep hollers cut by many waterways. The topography has produced only small expanses of arable land, yet early settlers made an adequate living from farming row crops, especially corn. A boom in timber production, beginning in the late nineteenth century, brought in railroads, attracted wood-oriented industry, increased the population, and contributed to growing the economy. However, the slackening of timber-related prosperity returned many families to subsistence farming, which encouraged younger people to seek livelihoods elsewhere. Becoming a professional educator represented one approach to making one's way in the world, and some young folk attended nearby normal schools to become teachers and administrators throughout southern Missouri. Yet the lure of the outdoor life, which offered plenty of hunting and fishing opportunities, as well as the continuing presence of family members living on or near property with generations-old associations, brought many of those who had left the area back home even before they retired. Meanwhile, the region—though somewhat isolated from the mainstream of American life—responded to national and international trends and events, including the Civil War and the Great Depression (which had begun as the Long Depression in Shannon County in the early 1920s and did not end until after World War II). Rader presents plenty of support for his regional history narrative through conventional historical sources,



such as census data, while enlivening his story with anecdotes focusing especially on local personalities.

Many of those personalities were the author's ancestors. Both family lines came into southern Missouri during the late nineteenth century. These sets of forebears had migrated to North America in the late eighteenth century, and Rader traces their movement across the continent over the next hundred years, concentrating especially on western Kentucky, where many of them had lived for half a century before some of their members set out for Missouri. The family saga has its folk heroes—strong women such as Nancy Childress Rader, the author's great-grandmother, and father figures such as her son Sam Rader. Less prominent figures, even occasional scapegraces, also populate the family lore. Rader's research, again based on conventional documentation as well as oral tradition, benefited from a sense of community that had clearly emerged by the 1930s, when a monthly family newsletter circulated among extended kin. One theme that develops from his depiction of his relatives is a sense of family as safety net, economically and emotionally, for those who had ventured out into the great world to enhance their prospects and for those who remained in the neighborhood.

This book deserves several audiences: descendants of those family members who come alive in Rader's narrative, enthusiasts for the history of southern Missouri, specialists in Ozark studies, and anyone with a professional or avocational interest in local or family history. One should not assume that what Rader presents is "typical" on any level, but readers, who will find the book entertaining and informative, can assume that Rader's approach to his topic represents what they should do if they pursue similar projects.

Reviewed by William M. Clements, professor of English, Arkansas State University, Jonesboro.

The Road to Madness: How the 1973–1974 Season Transformed College Basketball

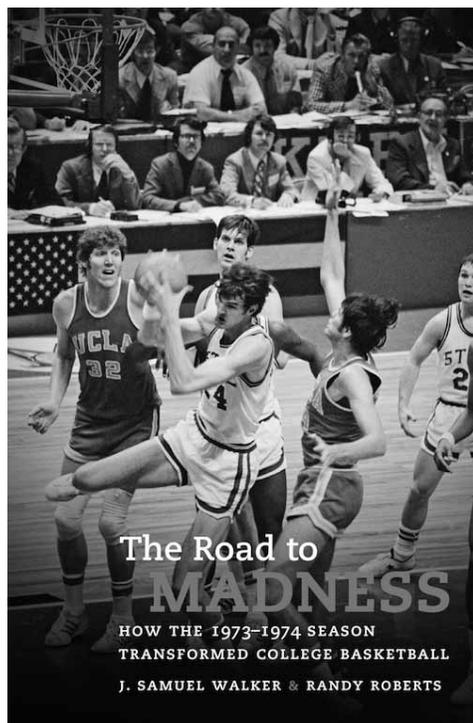
by J. Samuel Walker and Randy Roberts

x + 172 pages, illustrations, notes, index.
Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2016,
cloth \$25.00.

The 1974 National Collegiate Athletic Association basketball tournament capped a momentous season—and it was the last NCAA tournament contested only by conference champions and independent teams. In the final four (not yet capitalized), the Wolfpack of North Carolina State University, coached by Norm Sloan, defeated the Bruins of the University of California, Los Angeles, led by legendary coach John Wooden. After that dramatic, double-overtime game, NC State then went on to defeat Marquette for the national championship.

In *The Road to Madness*, J. Samuel Walker and Randy Roberts unpack the stories and significance of 1973–1974, showing how the NCAA soon implemented structural changes that helped transform the tournament into the cultural and commercial juggernaut now known as “March Madness.” Each author brings unique experience to bear: Walker has written extensively on the history of the Atlantic Coast Conference (ACC), while Roberts has published many noteworthy books on sport history and biography. The coauthors explore the colorful personalities of the era, including coaches such as Notre Dame’s Digger Phelps, Marquette’s Al McGuire, and Kansas’s Ted Owens as well as players such as UCLA’s Bill Walton. The book recounts in detail exciting games such as the legendary ACC championship match between Maryland and NC State as well as the Wolfpack’s stunning victory over UCLA in the semifinals. It covers some territory that will be familiar to many readers, especially the story of Wooden’s historic run to ten NCAA titles between 1964 and 1975.

In chapters four and eight, Walker and Roberts show how NCAA officials at first rejected the idea of inviting more than one team per conference but then relented after seeing strong teams such as Maryland barred from the tournament. After 1974, conference runners-up could participate in a field that numbered 32. From there, the tournament only got bigger: the field expanded to 48 teams in 1980 and then 64 (and more) after 1985. Teams were first seeded in 1978. Revenues, especially from television contracts, soared. This is an important story, yet the authors do not discuss other changes occurring at that time, such as the NCAA’s shift to one-year scholarships or its creation of divisions in 1973. As historian Michael Oriard has argued in *Bowled Over: Big-Time College Football from the Sixties to the BCS Era* (2009), in 1973, the NCAA essentially went “pro.” Readers familiar with the larger history of intercollegiate



sports are left to wonder whether such changes may also have affected the tournament or its profitability.

Moreover, readers in Kansas and the Plains may be disappointed to see relatively few pages devoted to midwestern teams such as the University of Kansas Jayhawks, who reached the final four that year. The authors quote Curry Kirkpatrick of *Sports Illustrated*, who claimed in March 1974 that “whichever team came out of the Midwest regionals was so unlikely to capture the national title that it should ‘mail its scores to Greensboro,’” the site of the 1974 finals (p. 108). Intentionally or not, the authors have essentially replicated early-1970s sportswriters’ focus on UCLA and its eastern challengers. One tantalizing subplot that future researchers may explore is the rise of newcomer Oral Roberts University (founded in 1965), which advanced to the Midwest Regional Finals before losing to the Jayhawks on its home court in Tulsa.

This book is based on strong research. Primary sources include interviews of over a dozen coaches and players, the archival papers of Walter Byers (NCAA executive director, 1951–1988), articles from numerous major-city dailies, and film footage from the University of Maryland archives.

The Road to Madness successfully recounts the dramatic 1973–1974 college basketball season and shows how it inspired monumental changes in the NCAA tournament. This volume is recommended for general readers as well as scholars.

Reviewed by Brian M. Ingrassia, assistant professor of history, West Texas A&M University, Canyon.

*Railroads and American Political Development:
Infrastructure, Federalism, and State Building*

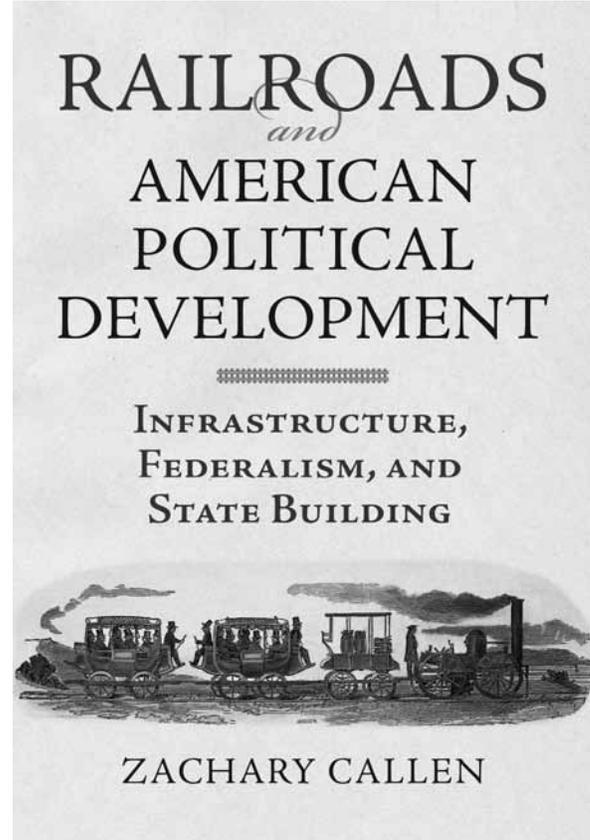
by Zachary Callen

x + 257 pages, illustrations, notes, index, bibliography.
Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2016, cloth \$39.95.

Railroads remain a central concern of U.S. political history for good reasons. As political scientist Zachary Callen documents, a “positive correlation” existed during the nineteenth century “between rail growth and the growth in federal power” (p. 193). While Callen discusses direct ways that railroads augmented the nation-state’s presence and authority, he dwells most upon how the politics of railroad development built up the federal government relative to state and local governments. As states reached the limits of their ability to promote railroads on their own or in cooperation with one another, they pressured congressional delegations to arrange federal intervention. This in turn “led to a rail system that funneled more and more economic and political might to Washington, D.C.” (pp. 13–14). Railroads thus serve as an archetype of a common dynamic within the U.S. federal system by which local issues and powers shift upward toward the national level.

The bulk of Callen’s book consists of detailed quantitative analysis of claims that historians have made over the years concerning the political economy of early railroads. States at times discussed coordinating with one another, but they rarely did so or even paid much attention to plans contrived by neighboring states. For the most part, states promoted railroads to bolster their own cities and to open as much of their territory as possible to settlement and commerce. Densely populated eastern states had quicker success in attracting capital and expanding their systems. The politics of railroads grew more complicated as attention shifted toward interior states, such as Missouri or Illinois, with “large territor[ies and] few resources to support infrastructure projects” (p. 143). The Illinois Central project, to cite a key episode, “ballooned” under statewide pressure into a “massive, dense railroad network that touched all major locales” and nearly bankrupted Illinois (p. 137). This context lay behind Illinois senator Stephen Douglas’s cobbling together of the coalition that enacted the Land Grant Act of 1850, which brought the federal government decisively into railroad promotion. The East’s financial and organizational advantages meant that the 1850 act reinforced the trend toward an east-west system, centered on Chicago, that “served national interests—especially Atlantic manufacturing concerns”—and that treated interior states mainly as commodity producers (p. 146).

Callen’s book provides much to ponder, though the large proportion given to methodological discussion leaves it accessible mainly to specialists. The book veers toward a behaviorist mode of argumentation, in which perceptions and motives are inferred from statistical patterns. Internal improvement was, of course, a volatile, rapidly evolving



issue that generated massive discussion, leaving little need to infer what different levels of government intended and why. Callen, for example, builds a chapter comparing French, British, and U.S. railroad policy around travel times to Paris, London, and Washington, thereby assuming that access to Washington was at least an implied priority. This approach overlooks decades of intense argument in Congress over the matter. A chapter on presidential pronouncements concerning internal improvements oddly downplays the evolving partisan, factional, and ideological dimensions of the issue.

The author repeatedly labels the states’ inability to set in motion “a truly national, bottom-to-top infrastructure system” as a “policy failure.” But in what did they fail? Modern theory posits “a coordinated national network” as the main aim of transportation policy. By Callen’s own account, localities and states in the pre-Civil War United States “possessed different preferences” (p. 212). In the end, this book counts among several recent studies that show nineteenth-century Americans to have envisioned transportation networks that supported a less centralized society, in which regions could be diverse and self-sustaining while still linked to national and international commerce.

Reviewed by Alan Lessoff, professor of history, Illinois State University, Normal.

The Great Medicine Road, Part 3: Narratives of the Oregon, California and Mormon Trails, 1850–1855

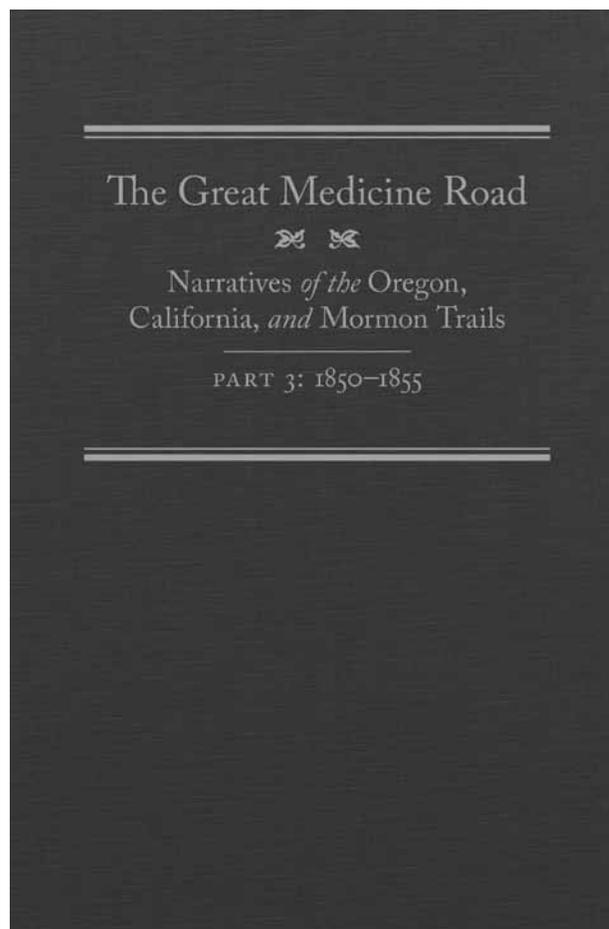
edited by Michael L. Tate

308 pages, illustrations, index.

Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2017, cloth
\$45.00.

Michael L. Tate provides yet another valuable contribution to the scholarship of the overland trails. *The Great Medicine Road, Part 3*, holds significant value in that it presents the experiences of nine overlanders in their own words in the form of letters, diaries, reports, and reminiscences. But it is Tate's skill as an editor and annotator that makes this work an even greater joy to read. He has followed up his two previous volumes with this look at trail experiences during what he considers the primary gold rush years. Focusing on the migration after 1849, Tate notes the changes in westward migration, including direct government assistance, a hospital at the Carson River station, and the disenchantment of emigrants who had "seen the elephant." His focus on the range of years and various routes promotes the often neglected idea that there was no singular trail experience.

All of this comes through in the nine memoirs (five from men and four from women) and four maps that Tate includes. His introduction to each diarist gives biographical information, details the type of document written, identifies the intended audience, and describes the value of the source. For example, John H. B. Neill's three 1850 letters to his wife, Nancy, are filled with details of his daily travels but also show the emotional challenges of travel as he continually inquires about his family, particularly his son, and ends each letter by professing his love and affection for his wife. John Lawrence Johnson's 1851 diary recounts his experience as one of ten Johnson "children" who headed from Iowa to Oregon with their parents (Johnson was born in 1830, making him twenty-one at the time). Tate notes that Johnson's diary is not filled with the usual overland observations but rather details Johnson's infatuation with a fifteen-year-old emigrant from whom his family attempted to separate him. Mary Jane Long headed west in 1853, when cholera was an epidemic on the trails. Her reminiscence notes the graves, dead stock, and interaction between emigrants and Natives. Helen Marnie Stewart also traveled in 1853. Her diary entries reveal her inner conflict with traveling and working on the sabbath. Tate provides her diary without emendation, and readers are allowed to enjoy the author's original capitalization and spelling. Captain Rufus Ingalls traveled as part of the U.S. Army's efforts to expand and improve transportation in the West in 1844. His documents read differently from the bulk of overland material because they are specific reports on his progress and his command experiences. These are just a sampling of the narratives Tate includes, though it should be noted that some have been previously transcribed and published.



Documentary editors will particularly appreciate Tate's meticulous adherence to his editorial procedure. Tate notes that he specifically chose documents from men and women with a variety of backgrounds and reasons for heading west. With his criteria that his selections "had to be rich in details and diverse in the experiences of their individual authors" (p. 15), Tate provides transcriptions rich with vivid imagery that pull the readers into the overland experiences. He includes explanatory footnotes and sources for further research but allows the overlanders to tell their stories in their own words. Tate's general introduction provides the reader with information on the southern routes and sea routes, but he does not include any documents from those journeys (which is understandable, given the title of the book). Tate includes illustrations of the overlanders and of trail scenes, giving the reader a sense of what the emigrants saw. He also includes several maps and an extensive bibliography. For readers of this journal, *The Great Medicine Road, Part 3*, does not particularly focus on Kansas, but parts of the trails crossed what would become the state of Kansas; thus, this work has value in addressing Kansas history.

Reviewed by Melody Miyamoto Walters, professor of history, Collin College, McKinney, Texas.

The Foundation of the CIA: Harry Truman, the Missouri Gang, and the Origins of the Cold War

by Richard E. Schroeder

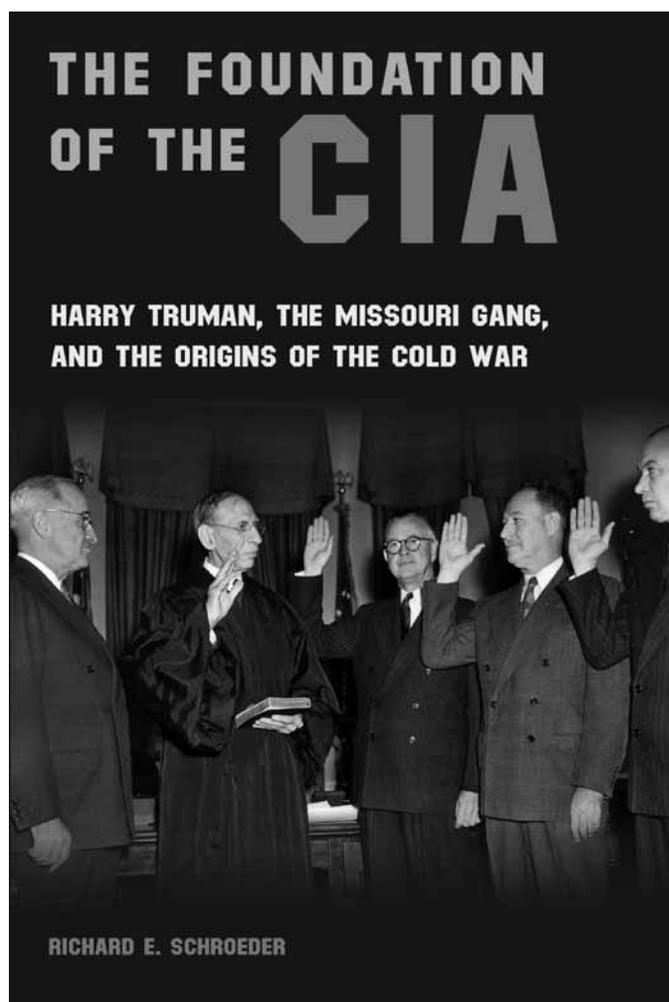
x + 175 pages, illustrations, notes, index.

Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2017, cloth \$24.95.

As the commander-in-chief who presided over the creation of the Central Intelligence Agency as part of his reorganization of the federal government's national security oversight role, President Harry S. Truman utilized the expertise of numerous experts in and outside the government, including several fellow Missourians. As a retired CIA officer, Richard E. Schroeder brings an insightful eye to a topic previously left unexplored. The author mined the archives of the federal government to identify key official documents and conducted secondary research to produce a readable account of his investigation. Details are numerous, but a table of key individuals would have been a helpful appendix to the book.

In describing the "Missouri Gang," Schroeder not only identifies Clark Clifford, a young lawyer who went to Washington just as Truman was meeting world leaders Winston Churchill and Joseph Stalin, but also points to two lesser-known individuals from the Show Me State—Sidney Souers and Roscoe Hillenkoetter. Already a wealthy businessman, Souers worked alongside Clifford and William Leahy in planning the reorganization of the Department of Defense and in outlining a new government agency focused on gathering intelligence to address the heightened tensions of the post-World War II world. Eventually serving as the nation's first director of central intelligence, Souers prepared a daily foreign affairs brief that Truman expected to read immediately upon his arrival at the White House each morning. Less than two years later, the president called Rear Admiral Hillenkoetter, a St. Louis native who possessed extensive intelligence experience from his military work around the world, into service as the nation's first statutory director of the CIA; according to Schroeder, Hillenkoetter became the president's closest national security adviser.

Schroeder thanks the staff of the Truman Presidential Library but does not cite relevant primary source materials available there, including a 483-page oral history interview with Clifford. Blunt in public statements, Truman was even more forthcoming in his daily writings to his wife and numerous government officials, but Schroeder does not cite any letters or memoranda available in the Truman Library's extensive holdings. Based on the book's notes and bibliography, sources critical to this topic were not fully explored or even referenced. This is true even of correspondence between Hillenkoetter and Truman, which is available online. Missing secondary references most notably include Melvyn P. Leffler's 1992 *A Preponderance of Power*:



National Security, the Truman Administration, and the Cold War and Alonzo Hamby's 1998 Truman biography, *Man of the People*.

Furthermore, condensing the first three chapters of the book that focus on the development of intelligence services would have allowed for a much deeper analysis of the role played by these fellow Missourians in the extensive national security complex revived by a president who initially doubted its postwar usefulness. Faced with increasingly complex global threats to U.S. security, Truman was at first suspicious of the clandestine intelligence apparatus displayed by other nations that had survived a world war on their home turf. But, as Schroeder effectively argues, Truman ultimately understood the key role of such agencies in the emerging Cold War. Deeper primary research and investigation into what Schroeder accurately assesses as previously overlooked individuals could have greatly enhanced this important story.

Reviewed by Kelly Woestman, professor of history, Pittsburg State University, Pittsburg, Kansas.

*From Warm Center to Ragged Edge: The Erosion of
Midwestern Literary and Historical Regionalism,
1920–1965*

by Jon K. Lauck

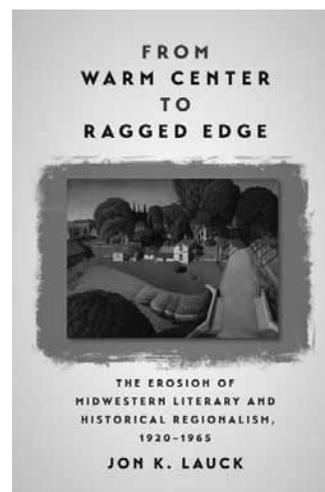
xiv + 254 pages, notes, index.

Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2017.

For some years now, Jon Lauck has championed the Midwest as a region and as a place worthy of more serious study than it has received in recent decades. His efforts led in 2014 to the founding of the Midwestern History Association (MHA), which “is dedicated to rebuilding the field of Midwestern history” (MHA web page, midwesternhistory.com), and to the publication of a new journal, *Middle West Review*. Other endeavors include the 2013 publication of *The Lost Region: Toward a Revival of Midwestern History*. Lauck continues the crusade in his most recent book project, *From Warm Center to Ragged Edge*, which sets out “to analyze the forces that wilted midwestern identity by mid-century . . . [to study] what went wrong . . . [and to examine] how the Midwest as a region faded from our collective imagination, fell off the map, and became an object of derision” (p. 3).

Significantly, I think, much of what Lauck relates about the declining stature of the Midwest in the 1920s and beyond will sound familiar to many Kansans. For the bulk of the twentieth century, scholars before and after Robert Smith Bader (*Hayseeds, Moralizers, and Methodists: The Twentieth-Century Image of Kansas*, 1988) wondered what had happened to Kansas and lamented its descent into “flyover country.” “It would have occurred to no one to call Kansas complacent or commonplace in the years from 1860 to about 1915,” observed Milton Eisenhower in 1949. “On the contrary, Kansas was known as among the most progressive of all States, high-minded, quick to react to needs, a leader in a dozen forms of social legislation,” and thus, I think Eisenhower would agree, a place with a history worthy of serious study. But during those interwar decades, “a complacency strange to Kansas tended to smother honest criticism and discourage creative genius. Kansas lost its distinction,” according to Eisenhower, and “became simply one of the midland States” (“The Strength of Kansas,” an address by Milton Eisenhower, president, Kansas State College, January 28, 1949). The journalist and historian Kenneth S. Davis, a native Kansan and Kansas State graduate, agreed in at least two important *New York Times Magazine* essays in 1949 and 1954: “That Strange State of Mind Called Kansas,” June 26, 1949, and “What’s the Matter with Kansas?” June 27, 1954.

Whereas Eisenhower and Davis, as well as Bader some years later, traced the descent of Kansas to the decline of progressive thought in the 1920s, Lauck traces the origin of the Midwest’s historiographical diminution to the academy’s rejection of Frederick Jackson Turner and his early-twentieth-century devotees. In essence, Lauck argues that we should pay more



heed to conservative historians in the tradition of Turner and James C. Malin, Kansas historian and University of Kansas professor, and less to New Dealers, progressives such as Richard Hofstadter and Henry Nash Smith, who are identified with the “consensus” approach that came to dominate the post–World War II era.

From Warm Center to Ragged Edge, an award-winning monograph, is a rich and interesting historiographical study that contains more pages of notes than text. Honestly, however, I do not find the same dearth of regional scholarship that Lauck laments. Instead, I prefer to celebrate the solid history found in the pages of state history journals from Kansas and Iowa to South Dakota, Minnesota, and Ohio. State publications have struggled and are struggling in this ongoing age of budget cuts and privatization, and the scholarship published in them is too often overlooked, but it is there. Be that as it may, Lauck’s work is always thought-provoking.

Curiously, while reading *From Warm Center to Ragged Edge*, I came across an example that might bode ill for efforts to “revive” midwestern regionalism. In a February 1, 2018, article for *Fast Company Magazine*, “Super Bowl LII is Minnesota’s Chance to Secede from the Midwest,” Reid Forgrave claimed that Minnesotans were tired of playing defense against an onslaught of mischaracterizations and had launched “a full-on campaign to embrace [Minnesota’s] wintry reputation as something to celebrate, rather than something to bemoan.” Minnesota is now “the North,” rather than the Midwest.

Perhaps this is the point. We should all embrace our place’s characteristics rather than apologize for them and remember what Malin once wrote: “History is rooted in locality,” and the historian who would produce sound works on “bigger” subjects *must* begin with “the individual in local space” (Malin, “On the Nature of Local History,” *Wisconsin Magazine of History* 40 [Summer 1957]: p. 229; see also, Lauck, *From Warm Center to Ragged Edge*, p. 86).

Reviewed by Virgil W. Dean, *consulting editor*, *Kansas History: A Journal of the Central Plains*.