

the paternal "centerpiece," gave voice to the developing girl in Laura's story, reinforced their professional identities as writers, and provided the economic success that sustained the family that had been an economic failure on the midwestern frontier.

Romines's research is significant. Primary resources held at the Herbert Hoover Presidential Library are the basis for the analysis of the Wilder-Lane relationship; additional family and western history materials come from Wilder collections in South Dakota and Missouri and from the Western Historical Collection of the University of Missouri. Secondary materials include the major scholars and critical theories for all levels of her analysis: Anzueldua on multicultural theory; Armitage, Jameson, Riley, and Schlissel on the western experience; Baym, Coultrap-McQuinn, Kelley, and Radway on women's literary history; Bakhtin, Derrida, du Pleiss, Friedman, and Thompkins on literary and narrative theory, and more. Romines also presents her own autobiographical responses to the text.

Clearly the Little House series offers more complex, dynamic cultural texts than one might assume. Ann Romines's *Constructing the Little House* is an exceptional exploration of an "enduring cultural construct"—the house—which is "elastic enough to accommodate multiple, competing discourses" (253).

Iowa Stereographs: Three-Dimensional Visions of the Past, by Mary Bennett and Paul C. Juhl. A Bur Oak Original. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1997. xviii, 371 pp. Illustrations, map, bibliography, index. \$34.95 cloth.

REVIEWED BY DEBORAH L. MILLER, MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Iowa Stereographs provides many three-dimensional views of nineteenth-century Iowa. The little plastic viewer provided in a pocket on the inside back cover is the key to the third dimension. By using it to look at the book's stereographs, readers can see what many places in Iowa looked like. In addition, readers will find biographical details about the stereograph photographers and how they chose the views. We learn about the audience for the pictures and how they were used by those who bought them. Layout and format are particularly important in a book of photographs, and for the most part those elements work well here.

The visual core of the book is chapter four's "Iowa Views," 264 pages of reproduced stereo images subdivided into aptly named categories that show the types of pictures stereo photographers made:

landscapes, houses, families, "enterprising spirits," the Grinnell tornado, travel souvenirs, and corn palaces. My favorites included the deliberate juxtaposition of men and machines in an 1870s factory in Waterloo, facing an image of some leading businessmen in front of Des Moines's Citizens National Bank, also in the 1870s, with a caption comment about the existence of distinct social classes in the state (114-15). The contrasting images of the Luther College dining room in 1876 link the stereo of neatly set tables and the aproned women seated behind them to the shoulder-to-shoulder consumers of coffee, bread, and hard-boiled eggs in the following picture (196-97). Earlier chapters also contain many pictures, including nonstereo photos of people using stereo viewers in their parlors and stereo views of different types of photographers' studios, including boats, wagons, and train cars as well as solid brick business blocks.

The rest of the book is something of a smorgasbord. It includes helpful descriptions and analysis in the beginning chapters and the last chapter, which contain much of what the authors know about the people, places, and process that combined to produce stereo views of Iowa. It also provides a directory of Iowa stereo photographers. The authors have assembled photographers' letters about their work, advertisements from newspapers, and excerpts from biographical entries on photographers in county and local histories and from how-to books on photography and stereography. One letter that caught my eye was written to I. A. Wetherby in Iowa City by J. G. Evans of Muscatine in 1866, trying to stir up interest in organizing a professional photographers' association. "At present in most Localities," wrote Evans, "the People instead of the Photographers run the Business establishing such prices as they choose upon our Labor. I see that Dentists are much benefitted by their uniform prices & unity of action" (42). We hear no more about the organizing idea, however.

Stereographs are different from other nineteenth-century photographs, in part because of what we in the 1990s would call the interactive aspects of this kind of photography. The authors discuss the third dimension attained by the viewer willing to make the effort to arrive there. The first chapter provides a good introduction to stereo photography. The second discusses the role of photographers in an era of westward expansion. Many photographers combined a keen artistic eye with a sense of what would sell. A third chapter continues the explanation of what photographers were up to in both the often more lucrative portrait business and in adding landscape views in stereo format to their stock of items for sale. Although the extracts from photographer Wetherby's account book during the 1870s give a vivid

snapshot of the business end of his studio, in general readers do not get a clear sense of the economics of these artist-businesspeople. Statements about photographers owning a business block or the first car in town clash with the supposition that many probably practiced a second trade to make a decent living. The ups and downs of the local and national economies during the Gilded Age, combined with a profession in which one was producing not necessities but luxuries, may be able to encompass the apparent contradictions.

The people who put this book together have a wonderful sense of the importance of photography for history. As the first line of the introduction says, "The historical imagination needs to be nurtured, and photography remains a powerful force for doing so." Bennett and Juhl go a step further by asserting that "we can vicariously share the dreams of these midwesterners by absorbing the surviving imagery." To the considerable extent that those dreams are reflected in these deliberate recordings of the modifications in American life that occurred in the second half of the nineteenth century, they may be right. This book gives historians and others a black-and-white opportunity to view the nineteenth-century Midwest.

The Rise of the National Guard: The Evolution of the American Militia, 1865-1920, by Jerry Cooper. Studies in War, Society, and the Military, Volume 1. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997. xviii, 246 pp. Tables, notes, bibliography, index. \$45.00 cloth.

REVIEWED BY PATRICK J. JUNG, MARQUETTE UNIVERSITY, MILWAUKEE

Jerry Cooper makes an important contribution to our understanding of the National Guard's role as the principal reserve combat component of the U.S. Army. The Guard's status as a reserve combat force was not clearly defined until after the Spanish-American War, and the assumption of this responsibility led to increased federal regulation by the War Department. Previous studies of the National Guard have focused on the issue of states' rights to explain this phenomenon, but Cooper argues persuasively that "Money, or the lack of it, and not states' rights, determined the National Guard's military value as a reserve force and its willingness to accept federal regulation" (xv).

State militias of the early nineteenth century functioned primarily as systems designed to mobilize men during war. The only real military forces that most states possessed were uniformed companies of volunteers that were generally self-governing. Uniformed companies came into being through the efforts of private citizens and were more

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