ness for alcohol, and love of a lavish lifestyle kept him out of contention for literary longevity. The book could have been more carefully fact-checked: Hemingway's third wife was Martha Gelhorn, not "Mary," as Shroder states; and Sidney Poitier is not an "African American actor"—he was born to Bahamian parents and spent his early years in the Caribbean. But these are minor flaws. Anyone making a study of MacKinlay Kantor, Iowa authors, Civil War writers, or Pulitzer Prize–winning novelists should find Shroder's book useful. Anyone wishing to learn how to write a compelling memoir would also be wise to take a look at it.

All the Wild that Remains: Edward Abbey, Wallace Stegner, and the American West, by David Gessner. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2015. 354 pp. Illustrations, notes on sources, index. $16.95 paperback.

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This wonderful book is not only an enlightening literary tour through two well-known authors' works but also a thoughtful exploration of the western landscapes they portrayed. Wallace Stegner and Edward Abbey, argues Gessner, "far from being regional or outdated, have never been more relevant" (3).

Using extensive interviews, the author transports readers far beyond the "mummified" reputations of "Saint Wallace the Good and Randy Ed, Wild Man" (279). Stegner's reputation remains more traditionalist, especially contrasted with the free-wheeling Abbey. Yet Stegner broke boundaries, questioning the status quo of the West, striving to "strip away myth" from the ethos of rugged individualism and to "see things as they were" (37). And Abbey, despite trending toward the cantankerous on the written page, was "actually quiet and reserved in person" (7). Abbey accepted himself, embracing his id, while Stegner continually wanted better, embracing culture. Gessner capably engages with biography, following Stegner in understanding our world through people's lives.

Abbey and Stegner (who attended the first Iowa Writers' Workshop) shared a "relish for hard work" with focused creative time, and both taught writing at a university (145). They were informed by Bernard DeVoto's *The Western Paradox* and his view of "too many places where the citizenry was suckered in by the dream of riches, only to be left empty in the end" (120). Gessner engagingly illuminates the literary landscape, describing a continuous heritage from John Wesley Powell,

DeVoto, Stegner, and Abbey to Terry Tempest Williams, Stephen Trimble, and others. Writers look to each other (as we might look to the authors) with "a hunger for models. For possibilities. For how to be in the world" (150).

Like Abbey, Gessner finds western landscapes transformative. He describes "an almost religious conversion" for those heading west to find home (34). For Stegner, the West represented "the geography of hope" (60). Stegner and Abbey drew on their own experience to write about natural resources, people, and western environments. Stegner's father shaped his depiction of the "boomer," ever looking for quick prosperity and the Big Rock Candy Mountain, while his mother reflected those who yearned to stay in place, a "sticker." The oil and gas industry exemplified the spirit of the boomers, in Abbey's view furthering the "plundering of the West in full force" (121). Water, the West's greatest resource, and drought as a distinguishing feature figure prominently in the landscapes of Stegner and Abbey. Stegner's motivating question became, "How could human beings best inhabit" the arid geography of the West (36)? Significantly, he defended Dinosaur National Monument against a proposed dam and influenced language in the Wilderness Act.

Today's West, suggests Gessner, is "a kind of fulfillment of their darker prophecies" (13). The oil industry has adopted fracking techniques "in a region where potable water is more precious than gold" (124). The wildfires of 2012 confirmed that dry places will feel global warming more intensely. It is tempting to feel gloomy about our environmental future. Like Stegner and Abbey, however, we should "remember to see the beauty, and to still take joy in that beauty but not shy away from the hard and often ugly reality" (13). Readers will realize how literature helps us understand our world and put events in perspective. Gessner suggests that "in this overheated and overcrowded world, their books can serve as guides, as surely as any gazetteer, and as maps, as surely as any atlas" (3). As Wendell Berry informed the author, people "need the way lighted" (282).

Iowans will connect with this book on several levels, even if they have not read these authors or traveled in the West. The consequences of land development and burgeoning human populations create fundamental issues common to both regions. Gessner's account finds a midwestern companion in Cornelia Mutel's *A Sugar Creek Chronicle: Observing Climate Change from a Midwestern Woodland* (2016). Reflecting on inhabiting landscapes that might seem unremarkable is every bit as compelling as considering monumental places. Midwestern readers will readily appreciate Steger's potent phrase from *Wolf Willow*: "I may not know

who I am, but I know where I am from" (56). Landscapes both western and midwestern evoke affection and a sense of belonging.

All the Wild that Remains deserves wide attention. It is a pleasure to read, a grand excursion into landscapes and literature. Gessner's analysis is fresh and uniquely insightful, and readers may join him in finding that they "can't think of a better antidote to our virtual age than a strong dose of Edward Abbey" (285).