

system as a whole. Although, as he suggests, the factors at work in his three adjacent border states were probably present elsewhere as well, his selection is hardly a representative sample. Readers of this journal, for example, will undoubtedly wonder how the Iowa experience compares. Nevertheless, Sinisi has produced a valuable contribution to the history of American government and of the Civil War.

In the Work of Their Hands Is Their Prayer: Cultural Narrative and Redemption on the American Frontiers, 1830–1930, by Joel Daehnke. Athens: Ohio University Press, 2003. xi, 299 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$59.95 cloth, \$26.95 paper.

Reviewer Lewis Saum is professor emeritus of American intellectual history at the University of Washington. His publications include *The Popular Mood of Pre-Civil War America* (1980) and *The Popular Mood of America, 1860–1890* (1990).

Joel Daehnke has written an interesting and venturesome book. In large part an exercise in architectonics, it examines the cultural and literary depictions of five disparate elements or episodes, bringing them together, in varying ways, under one theme, that from *Ecclesiasticus*: "In the work of their hands is their prayer."

After an introductory chapter, extensive treatment goes to Caroline Kirkland's *A New Home, Who'll Follow?* Frustration if not futility marks this 1830s and 1840s depiction of pioneer efforts in the woodlands of Michigan. The scene then shifts forward and westward to the creation and development of Yellowstone National Park. That change of scene was not entirely joyous, as the splendor and awesomeness had intimations of the infernal as well as the sacred. Fully as exciting, but for different reasons, the Comstock Lode, with its fortunes and misfortunes, then has the reader's attention. Mark Twain's *Roughing It* provides, from the perspective of a "No Account," a full depiction of "Bonanzas and Borascas."

"The work of their hands" in these locales had left something to be desired, perhaps as always. Some relief if not redemption could be found in two thematic arenas, one unlikely, the other not. The less likely one gets more than fifty pages of treatment in a chapter on fishing, and fishing of the best kind: dry fly fishing. A wealth of intricacies confronts the reader in this chapter, but the upshot is clear. In the luxury of leisure the American man betook himself to the "soliloquizing pools of his withdrawal from a potent national narrative obsessed with making a killing in the world of concrete and mortar" (212). Uneasiness remained, but some relief comes in the last full chapter, subtitled "Redemption and Domestic Economy in Willa Cather's *Death*

Comes for the Archbishop." A brief afterword, "Having Done with Calendared Time," brings completion.

All told, this fascinating and challenging book gets my strong recommendation. A couple of quibbles deserve mention, with little or no intention of undoing the praise. Hypostasized terms confront readers a bit too often. "American Manhood" wore out its welcome for this reader. More important, "Manifest Destiny" enters at page 2 and 3: "The American citizen had for some time lived and breathed the 'spirit' of Manifest Destiny." Two dozen index entries would seem to bear that out. Some forty years ago eminent historian Daniel Boorstin remarked (in *The Americans: The National Experience*) that no subject in American history was "more plagued by clichés than 'Manifest Destiny.'" Still, that Manifest Destiny beat goes on. Joel Daehnke's book remains impressive, however.

Twenty Thousand Roads: Women, Movement, and the West, by Virginia Scharff. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003. xi, 239 pp. Illustrations, notes, index. \$49.95 cloth, \$19.95 paper.

Reviewer Anne M. Butler is Trustee Professor of History Emeritus at Utah State University. A longtime former coeditor of the *Western Historical Quarterly*, she is also the author of several books, including *Uncommon Common Women: Ordinary Lives of the West* (1996).

Twenty Thousand Roads embraces a topic that on its surface appears to teeter toward the obvious. After all, everyone knows that the narrative of the American West springs from the forces of migration, growth, and change across diverse terrains, through disparate cultural environments, and over many historical eras. How can a book about getting from one place to another add to the literature of western history? Virginia Scharff, author of *Twenty Thousand Roads*, wraps the mantle of gender around western mobility. In doing so, she achieves an admirable goal for any historian: using new ideas to rearrange the contours of a well-known subject.

Many Americans devour information about the West; here they will find it described in moving, often lyric prose. There is, regrettably, no precise definition of either the location of the West or who is a westerner. Scharff says that the West is situated in "fluid landscapes between the Mississippi and the Pacific," but exactly what that encompasses, when it applies, and how that produces the concept of "a westerner's belief in entitlement to mobility" are not explained (5). Once again, a western historian, despite new models and revised perspectives, ap-

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