

use other sources of farm labor, including female family members, Mexican workers, Japanese internees, prisoners of war, and newly arrived immigrants. As women proved their worth, much of the early opposition to the WLA broke down. By the end of the war, more than three million women had been recruited to serve in the WLA. Many female family members, who were unpaid, also did field work that had been restricted to men before the war. By 1945, women were uniformly praised for their contribution to the war effort; some farmers even stated that they preferred women workers to men.

Stephanie Carpenter argues that the war changed not only male but female attitudes about the ability of women to work in agriculture. Women who participated in the WLA program, according to Carpenter, were positive about their experiences, gained confidence, and felt pride in the patriotic contribution they made to the war effort. Siding with historians who believe that World War II was a watershed in the history of the women's movement, Carpenter concludes that the WLA experience served as a catalyst to change women's role not only in agriculture but in society as a whole in the following decades.

To document her analysis, Carpenter used archive and manuscript materials at the National Archives, the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library, the Howe Library at the University of Vermont, the USDA in Washington, the Walter Library at the University of Minnesota, and the Minnesota Historical Society. The bibliography is comprehensive and will be exceedingly helpful to future researchers. Her writing style is clear, her organization is superb, and her interpretations are sound. Although the focus of the book is narrow, it will be of great interest to students of agricultural history, women's history, and the history of World War II.

Leaning into the Wind: A Memoir of Midwest Weather, by Susan Allen Toth. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003. xi, 124 pp. \$22.95 cloth.

Reviewer Thomas K. Dean is special assistant to the president of the University of Iowa. He heads up a program called the Iowa Project on Place Studies.

Susan Allen Toth returns to her middle land roots in this memoir, with a thematic focus on how the vagaries and extremes of midwestern weather parallel and influence her life. In ten short essays, she explores the storms and fair weather of personal relationships, childhood, aging, work, and humanity's relationship with the natural environment.

Toth's talent for honest, direct expression is on full display. Although not every reader may relate to her life as an academic or the

privilege she enjoys owning a vacation home, Toth's modesty about her relationships, aging body, and amateur gardening will allow many to enter her world. Although this book is not "nature writing," as such, its central material is weather and the natural world. Thus, Toth's occasional lack of interest in filling gaps in scientific knowledge is disappointing. For example, Toth claims ignorance of the summer bugs that torment her, yet willfully admits she could "learn about them. . . . But I don't want to know them any better" (87). Perhaps this attitude makes the author more human, but I would rather see a more curious writer about the natural world at work. Toth sometimes falls back on clichés or questionable premises as well. Comparing stormy relationships to thunderstorms is not very original, for example. And claiming that midwesterners are unique in their penchant for talking about the weather is not defensible. Although *Leaning into the Wind* is not Toth's strongest work, it provides for enjoyable and sometimes thoughtful reading about midwestern experience.

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