

and overlook women's, the authors researched women from all fields who have worked to grow, educate, and improve Warren County towns and cities. Information on the women included came from newspapers, local histories, and journal articles, as well as family histories, scrapbooks, letters, photographs, and personal remembrances. The volume begins with an introduction that includes background on the women's suffrage movement and an overview of Warren County women's accomplishments over the years. Biographical sketches, listed alphabetically by last name, follow the summary of Warren County women's achievements.

The biographical sketches offer fascinating glimpses into lives begun or lived in the county since its organization in 1849. The authors have collected stories and snippets of individual and family histories that document the experiences of women from all walks of life. Educators, musicians and entertainers, artists, librarians, authors, businesswomen, agriculturists, athletes and coaches, members of the armed forces, health professionals, faith leaders, attorneys, public officials, homemakers, community activists, peace officers, and adventurers who have called Warren County home are all represented here. By focusing on women's lived experiences, this volume takes some positive steps toward filling in the gender gaps left by previous county histories. *Warren County Women "Her Story"* will appeal to local historians and others who wish to gain a better understanding of the many and varied contributions that Iowa women have made to their local communities and the state.

*Iowa State Parks: A Century of Stewardship, 1920–2020*, by Rebecca Conard. Photo editors Angela Corio and Jim Scheffler. Iowa Parks Foundation. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2020. xviii, 267 pp. Photographs, index of photos. \$30.00 paperback.

Reviewer Laura Jackson is Professor of Biology and Director of the Tallgrass Prairie Center at the University of Northern Iowa.

*Iowa State Parks: A Century of Stewardship, 1920–2020* documents the accomplishments, against considerable odds, of the public servants and volunteer citizens of Iowa who advocated for the century-old system of parks, forests, wildlife areas and preserves that we cherish today. Rebecca Conard, a professor of history emeritus at Middle Tennessee State University, has used the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Iowa's park system as an occasion to bring together a team of knowledgeable essayists, photographers, and photo editors to help readers explore Iowa's parks, recreation areas, preserves, and forests. This richly illustrated, coffee-table-worthy volume complements Conard's 1997 history, *Places of Quiet Beauty: Parks,*

*Preserves and Environmentalism*, and those wishing for more depth should read it too.

A handful of essays introduce the history, geology, natural communities, biodiversity, archaeology and landscape architecture of the parks. The brief text associated with each park packs information about how and when it was created, its initial size, changes over the years, and its major features, both natural and human. Photo essays include broad, majestic landscape views, closeups of animals and plants, historic structures of architectural interest, and archaeological ruins. Three maps show the locations of each park, recreation area, and state forest, and state-owned (45 of the 97) biological, geological, historic and archaeological preserves.

At first glance, the photos and factual descriptions of amenities serve primarily as an invitation to and promotion for the Iowa park system. Those looking for a weekend adventure can confidently choose their destination using this book, and read up on some interesting facts about each park's genesis and major features. The book serves this purpose remarkably well, and is the only book in which information about Iowa's parks, recreation areas, state-owned preserves and state forests are brought together in a single illustrated volume.

Readers of this journal will appreciate the summary of each park's creation, and taken together, several clear themes emerge: the start-and-stop nature of parks acquisition and improvement, sometimes lasting decades; fluctuating funding and support; the popular demand, especially for male-oriented hunting and fishing opportunities; the convergence of national and world events (the Civilian Conservation Corps; World War II) with local leadership, volunteerism and private fundraising; incremental land acquisition, often in increments of 10 acres here and there; and struggles with the surrounding agricultural ecosystem such as sedimentation of marshes and artificial reservoirs. These themes are rigorously discussed in *Places of Quiet Beauty*, but it is wonderful to see them appear in a book meant for a general audience of potential park visitors.

The need for such a book has never been greater. That Iowa has any public parks system at all is a miracle of community and individual passion, given that 85% of the state is high quality farmland, and essentially all of it is tillable. Iowa ranks 49<sup>th</sup>, ahead of Kansas, in the amount of public land owned by federal, state and local governments. Furthermore, about 60% of that public land is along roadsides. The many stories of local communities advocating ceaselessly for local parks, testifies to the human need for nature—something we have been reminded of due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Places of quiet beauty continue to sustain us.

Iowa's parks have been compared to "jewels," and they are, but they are more vulnerable than gemstones, their boundaries more porous. The integrity of our parks, forests and preserves is inseparable from how we decide to treat the rest of the landscape. Discussion of threats to the Parks system, though, are restricted to one of the introductory essays.

The publication of this book by the Iowa Parks Foundation showcases the fruits of a highly contested history of nature conservation, but ultimately it is left to the reader who can read between the lines to understand how much more advocacy is needed to protect them for the future.

*Madam C.J. Walker's Gospel of Giving: Black Women's Philanthropy during Jim Crow*, by Tyrone McKinley Freeman. The New Black Studies Series. Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2020. xvi, 278 pp. Photographs, notes, bibliography, index. \$24.95 paperback.

Reviewer Ashley Garrin, Ph.D., is the Assistant Director of the McNair Program at Iowa State University, and has researched historical and social aspects of black women and hair.

Madam C. J. Walker is widely known as the first woman self-made millionaire due to her entrepreneurship in beauty culture in the early 1900s. Much of Walker's story has focused on her company and wealth, paying little attention to her philanthropic commitment to the African American race during the tumultuous Jim Crow era. Tyrone McKinley Freeman's biography of Walker illustrates her "gospel of giving" as a moral obligation and central part of her identity as a black woman, beyond monetary donations. This book offers the foundation to begin theorizing black women's philanthropy and the role that their intersectional and marginalized identities play in their diverse forms of giving.

Walker, the first freeborn child in her family, was orphaned when she was young. Because of her life circumstances and strong racial tensions of the time, she, like many other black people, left the South to migrate north, leaving Louisiana for St. Louis. In St. Louis, Walker found work, a religious foundation, and education for herself and her daughter. Freeman describes the form of assistance and care Walker received from black women as a reimagined definition of philanthropy. The philanthropy exposed and informed Walker's gospel of giving throughout her life, from her time as a washerwoman to becoming a millionaire. Freeman provides details of Walker's contributions to organizations, educational institutions, and to individuals that carried out services for the black community. Other midwestern cities experienced an influx of black migrants seeking a better life post-emancipation, where similar race-based services laid the foundation for institutions that exist in communities today.