

Book Reviews and Notices

The Sower and the Seer: Perspectives on the Intellectual History of the American Midwest, edited by Joseph Hogan, Jon K. Lauck, Paul Murphy, Andrew Seal, and Gleaves Whitney. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 2021. xxii, 386 pp. Notes, index. \$24.96 paperback.

Reviewer Raymond Haberski, Jr. is Professor of History and Director of American Studies at Indiana University-Purdue University, Indianapolis. He has authored and edited numerous books, including *American Labyrinth: Intellectual History for Complicated Times* (2018), which he co-edited with Andrew Hartman.

Over the past fifteen years or so, there has been a revival of United States intellectual history by scholars and publishers. Among the key reasons for the reemergence of this subfield has been its capacity to celebrate the interplay between other subfields—political history and gender history; social history and education history; military history and media history. The volume under review here, entitled *The Sower and the Seer*, is a great example of the kind of “big tent” that intellectual history provides for showcasing diverse themes, subjects, and arguments that might once have fit awkwardly under a more traditional understanding of regional history. The editors and contributors to this volume make it clear that the Midwest is a region but that the histories of it and stories and ideas that enliven it are not defined by state borders.

The volume uses 22 chapters to hop across a huge time span, from conflicts between Native American intellectuals and settlers to the modern politics of George McGovern. And while some periods receive more attention than others—especially the post-Civil War era through the Progressive Era—the volume usefully discusses a remarkable array of people, places, and themes. Indeed, most of the chapters are fairly concise, even though they also reveal deep research and a commitment to celebrating the diversity of the region.

The editors both collected a complex statement on midwestern intellectual life and also presented a challenge to other scholars to look to sources based in the Midwest in order to rethink interpretations of familiar subjects. For example, there are chapters on Charles G. Finney, written by William Kostlevy; Frederick Jackson Turner, written by Marcia Noe; and Horace Meyer Kellen, written by Michael Steiner that should alert readers and scholars alike to the fundamental influence the Midwest had on all three major American thinkers. Likewise, chapters

on Native American intellectuals, by Edward Watts; racial liberalism in Cleveland, by Andrew Seal; and the novelist James Jones's concept of masculinity and place, written by Aaron George offer sophisticated readings of contemporary issues in contexts that justifiably move attention away from the East Coast. And there is some really excellent writing in this book, especially chapters by Jenny Barker Devine on the Sororsis Literary Society in Jacksonville, Illinois; Brian Ingrassia on Charles Mumford Robinson's urban planning work during the Progressive Era; and David Pichaske and Emily Williamson's fascinating look at the recent demise of a rural studies program at Southwest Minnesota State University.

Not surprisingly there are some very good chapters on conservative thought in its many variations, including a chapter by Kerry Alcorn on debates over rural school consolidation; an excellent discussion of John C. Rawe's midwestern brand of agrarianism by Allan Carlson; William Pratt's look at how Mari Sandoz struggled with her midwestern identity; and two chapters on conservative icons of different eras, one by William Russell Coil on Robert Taft, and a second, highly enjoyable chapter from Gleaves Whitney on Stephen Tonsor. There are three chapters that take up profound moments in midwestern cultural history, including Kenneth Wheeler's discussion of changes wrought by an exploding consumer culture in the 1920s and early 1930s; a vigorous account by Ray E. Boomhower of the infamous "Vast Wasteland" Speech, written by John Bartlow Martin and revised and delivered by Newton Minow, FCC chairman in the Kennedy Administration; and the culmination of an intellectual "dance" in 1897–98 between evangelical firebrand Dwight Moody and the "Great Agnostic" Robert Ingersoll in a chapter by Justin Clark that discusses how a hightide of midwestern evangelical faith met fierce opposition.

This volume also invites a reader to look to the land. In a chapter about Cedar Falls, Iowa, Cherie Dargan writes evocatively about the remarkable number of high-profile writers who emerged from what was once a small outpost along the Cedar River. Iowans should take considerable pride in the literary societies and culture that organically defined this small city. In a beautifully wrought meditation on the changing Michigan frontier, John Linstrom and Daniel Rinn effectively demonstrate that the future of U.S. intellectual history must include genuine engagement with environmental studies. And Robert Dorman's enjoyable chapter on Leslie Peltier's amateur astronomy reminds us to consider the social history of those who have popularity beyond any academic measurement.

Finally, Sara Kosiba's chapter on a midwestern literary canon and the great historian John Miller's thoughts on the enduring legacy of

George McGovern, punctuate the influence that the ideals and ideas of the Midwest have had on a general American culture. In the end, generations of scholars have viewed their subjects through filters created in the Midwest.

Julien Dubuque: Portrait of a Pioneer, by Robert F. Klein. Dubuque: Loras College Press Center for Dubuque History, 2021. vi, 191 pp. Illustrations, bibliography, appendices, index. \$24.95 hardcover.

Reviewer Joshua Wachuta is a freelance historian based in southwest Wisconsin. He holds a Ph.D. in U.S. and Public History from Loyola University Chicago. His research focuses on early midwestern capitalism, specifically nineteenth-century Ho-Chunk and Dakota communities who resisted forced removal from Wisconsin and Minnesota.

Julien Dubuque is a famed but enigmatic figure in Iowa history. His eighteenth-century lead mines, the “Mines of Spain,” are touted as one of the earliest European settlements in Iowa, but they were first discovered and worked by Meskwaki people. Few primary sources shed light on Dubuque’s personal character or relationships. The handful of business and legal documents that survive are the basis of this new biography. Local author Robert F. Klein discusses Dubuque’s life and work in eight thematic chapters, including sections on family life, fur trading, farming, mining, and real estate. The result is a portrait of Dubuque that illustrates the range of his activities as a settler entrepreneur, but which unfortunately makes little use of contemporary scholarship to contextualize and interpret well-worn primary accounts.

In a chapter on family life, Klein summarizes an array of speculative theories about Dubuque’s possible marriages. Dubuque left behind no formal marriage record, but evidence suggests that he had marriage ties to the Meskwaki community who invited him to their lead mines. Klein endorses prior research by James Hanson and Lucy Murphy indicating that Dubuque probably entered a common law marriage with Josette Antaya, a Prairie du Chien woman of mixed French and Meskwaki ancestry. Although this section unearths no new documentation, it synthesizes evidence from previous publications in an accessible form.

The book is less successful when evaluating Dubuque’s role in negotiating between colonial and Indigenous cultures. In burnishing an image of Dubuque as a pioneer, Klein refers repeatedly to life in “the wilderness.” This description neglects the extensive cultivation and mining already conducted by Meskwaki people (whom Klein refers to using the exonym “Fox”). Meskwaki women discovered and worked the so-called “Mines of Spain,” but Klein makes little effort to represent Meskwaki