

modernizing processes and recognizing them as agents of the very transformations that the regionalists opposed. Regionalist politics never solved the problem of how to encourage the solidarity of the rural, native stock without making the populace fodder for nativist and fascist demagogues. Nor were regionalists ultimately successful in integrating diverse regional practices into a single nation. How the rural, racially based hierarchy so beloved by the Agrarians could coexist with the socialism advocated in the West remained a mystery. Naive about power, uncertain about how to regard the New Deal, which ironically paved the way for rationalized procedures in fields and forests, and blind to the appeals of mass culture for the folk, regionalist politics always returned to the aesthetic. It was, Dorman concludes, a utopian movement.

Dorman reinforces that judgment through an overly precious prose that makes the regionalists seem more dreamy than they were. Lacking the power to effect change is not, as Dorman sometimes implies, proof of inadequate analysis. Had he explored more fully the influence of regionalism on the Popular Front and the WPA Federal Artists and Writers Programs, the movement might have appeared stronger. Still, he is right to be attuned to its shortcomings and even more correct when he demonstrates how radical ecology groups such as Earth First! have abandoned the regionalist commitment to unique human communities.

*Lou Henry Hoover: Essays on a Busy Life*, edited by Dale C. Mayer. Worland, WY: High Plains Publishing, 1994. xv, 156 pp. Illustrations, notes, index. \$23.50 cloth.

REVIEWED BY SUSAN ESTABROOK KENNEDY, VIRGINIA COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY

Fifty years after her death, there is surprisingly little published scholarship about Lou Henry Hoover. Until this year, only one biography, the work of a family friend, done without access to Mrs. Hoover's papers, had been written. Manuscripts were not available until 1985. Now Dale Mayer, archivist at the Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, has edited an enticing volume that begins to correct the deficiency, provides readers with an initial set of portraits of a complex and fascinating woman, and whets appetites for additional scholarly and popular investigation.

Born in Waterloo, Iowa, in 1874, Lou Henry migrated with her family to California a decade later because of her mother's health. She completed normal school before earning a degree in geology at Stanford University, where she met fellow Iowan Herbert Hoover,

whom she married in 1899. Over the next fourteen years, they circled the globe several times, frequently accompanied by their two young sons, Herbert Jr. and Allan. They survived the Boxer Rebellion, translated a sixteenth-century mining book from the original Latin, and kept house in London when not traveling to Italy, Egypt, India, Australia, New Zealand, Burma, Japan, China, and Russia.

With the outbreak of war in 1914, Lou Henry Hoover supported her husband's efforts to feed the Belgians and other Europeans. When his career took them to Washington, D.C., she became a leader in the Girl Scout movement and helped found the National Amateur Athletic Federation. As First Lady from 1929 to 1933, she compiled a pioneering inventory of the history, traditions, and furnishings of the White House. After the presidency, she embraced private life but continued to support her husband's political and relief efforts in addition to her own Girl Scout and outdoors activities. She assisted the Salvation Army and fostered musical and artistic groups at Stanford and in San Francisco until her death in New York City in 1944.

In this slim but rich volume of essays, a variety of authors try to convey some of the fascinating dimensions of Lou Henry Hoover's life. Rosemary Carroll reviews the chronology of Lou's first thirty-two years, concentrating on Lou's leadership of the Society of American Women in London during World War I. Rebecca Christian shows the influence of an Iowa youth and California adolescence, and of a father who encouraged a love of the outdoors, on Lou's career in Girl Scouting. Jan Beran examines her influence in women's athletics, particularly the Women's Division of the National Amateur Athletic Federation in the 1920s and 1930s. Lewis Gould counters the label "a neglected first lady" by exploring her public appearances, radio addresses, and support of her husband's emphases on volunteerism and individual initiative to combat the Great Depression. While Gould shows her outreach activities, William Seale takes readers on a tour of the Hoover White House, and Elise Kirk discusses Lou's support of the arts, especially music. Richard Norton Smith, chronicler of Herbert Hoover's postpresidential years and former director of the Herbert Hoover Presidential Museum and Library, examines her last decade, with glimpses of the personal side that do not appear in many of the other essays.

The introductory and concluding pieces by Dale Mayer anchor the volume and invite further investigation. More than anyone else, Mayer knows the sources and shares them generously. Like a skilled chef, he offers exquisite hors d'oeuvres that suggest hearty fare to follow. In writing for and editing this book, he invites scholars and general readers to continue to enjoy the feast.

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