

Unfortunately, Littlewood fails to integrate the episodes or examples he describes into a greater understanding of the ideals and values the Legion stood for. Although the class background and connections to big business of several prominent Illinois Legion leaders—particularly Milton Forman and Robert McCormick—explain their personal conservatism, Littlewood too often lets personal biography speak for the organization and misses opportunities to use local history to explain the ideological trajectory of the national organization. Greater attention to how the local informed the national, and vice versa, within the Legion in its patriotic and political endeavors would have made Littlewood's more narrow focus all the more valuable.

The Greatest Generation Grows Up: American Childhood in the 1930s, by Kriste Lindenmeyer. Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, Publisher, 2005. xiii, 304 pp. Illustrations, notes, note on sources, index. \$27.50 cloth.

Reviewer Pamela Riney-Kehrberg is professor of history and director of the Agricultural History and Rural Studies program at Iowa State University. She is the author of *Childhood on the Farm: Work, Play, and Coming of Age in the Midwest* (2005).

In *The Greatest Generation Grows Up: American Childhood in the 1930s*, Kriste Lindenmeyer covers the experience of childhood during hard times. She views the decade from a variety of racial, ethnic, and socio-economic viewpoints, attempting to tell the story from the perspective of the relatively well-to-do as well as the desperately poor. She begins with a discussion of the vast differences in childhoods experienced by the young of the 1930s, then moves systematically through a discussion of the many facets of child life in that decade. Chapters focus on the topics of work, transiency, education, play and popular culture, and government intervention into the lives of the young. As much as possible, she tells her story from the point of view of the children themselves.

It is a fascinating book, offering readers a wealth of information they may not previously have known, or even pondered. Particularly useful is her comprehensive treatment of government programs for children under the New Deal. “She-she-she” programs for young women and Emergency Day Nurseries for impoverished preschoolers receive little treatment in other discussions of the New Deal and Great Depression. Lindenmeyer's discussion of how these programs were made palatable to Congress and the larger public is also useful. Her overriding conclusion is that the 1930s transformed child life in the United States, ushering in a “modern” conception of childhood, valuing education over work, and instituting governmental protection for

a “right to childhood,” although she recognizes that such modernity did not necessarily come to all.

On the whole, this is an enjoyable and useful book, and my criticisms are few. In her first paragraph, Lindenmeyer addresses my concerns about her title, making it unnecessary for me to expend argumentative energy on her use of the overused and probably inaccurate term, “the greatest generation.” I have a couple of quibbles with her analysis of children’s literature for girls in the 1930s, particularly the *Little House* books and *Caddie Woodlawn*. No matter their final conclusions, the books are not really about conformity and compliance but about heroic girls who defied gender stereotypes common for girls of their era (and, incidentally, *Caddie Woodlawn* is *not* a late nineteenth-century story, but a Civil War era story). This, however, was the only truly jarring note in the book.

I would have liked to see more attention to the concerns of rural children, particularly those who worked on their parents’ farms rather than as hired laborers. Their experiences had an impact on a number of issues in young farm children’s lives. In Iowa, for example, high school attendance did not become common until the decade after World War II, somewhat at odds with the author’s analysis of the impact of the Great Depression on education throughout the rest of the country.

Lindenmeyer has written a highly readable, entertaining, and very useful volume that will be appreciated by family and social historians and those interested in the larger history of the Great Depression. The book synthesizes a vast array of primary and secondary materials, providing a wealth of information useful for teachers at the secondary and collegiate levels. By treating seriously the impact of the Great Depression on the lives of the nation’s youngest citizens, she sheds new light and offers new perspectives on the critical importance of that decade to modern American life.

No One Ever Asked Me: The World War II Memories of an Omaha Indian Soldier, by Hollis D. Stabler, edited by Victoria Smith. American Indian Lives Series. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2005. xvii, 183 pp. Illustrations, maps, appendix, notes, bibliography, index. \$24.95 cloth.

Reviewer Thomas A. Britten is assistant professor of history at the University of Texas at Brownsville. He is the author of *American Indians in World War I: At War and at Home* (1997) and coauthor of “The Sergeant Rice Incident and the Paradox of Indian Civil Rights” (*Annals of Iowa*, 2004).

For people interested in American combat operations in the European theater during World War II, Hollis D. Stabler’s edited memoirs tell an