

women-at-arms challenged the conventional gender roles of the male protector and female protectee.

But Jensen's anti-violence framework presents a serious quandary. To what extent did female physicians, military nurses, and women-at-arms tacitly (or explicitly) facilitate the role of government institutions in reproducing *new* forms of violence against women. Women in military medicine and nursing — particularly those seeking occupational respect, rank, and recognition — were not innocent bystanders in the reproduction of *new* forms of violence against women. More to the point, women's moves to professionalize (and gain fuller expressions of citizenship) were largely contingent upon the exploitation and oppression of non-dominant groups.

Particularly in the context of overlapping rubrics of professionalism and citizenship, more substantive attention to race and class would have balanced Jensen's arguments. There is truth in the notion that white, middle-class, native-born, Protestant women sought to transform the early twentieth-century military into an institution to protect women, but as aspiring medical professionals, they sought to protect a certain type of woman and a particular strain of white, native-born, middle-class, Protestant American womanhood. To what extent did aspiring professional medical women and nurses actually sustain and support normative race, class, and gender ideologies based on white male power? Perhaps more attention to the existing literature on maternalism and the role of these particular women in the creation of the welfare state would have enriched the analysis. Deeper consideration of the internecine conflicts within and among women in the expanding female medical hierarchy would have also been useful.

Precisely because this analysis raises more questions than it answers, *Mobilizing Minerva* will intrigue those interested in turn-of-the-century U.S. women's history. Given the rich history of women's activism in and around Fort Des Moines and Camp Dodge during World War I, Jensen's book will also appeal to Iowans seeking a broader foundation for understanding the political, economic, and cultural context of women's wartime activism in Progressive Era America. To be sure, women's anti-violence activism at home and abroad during World War I provides, as Jensen writes, "important lessons for continuing responses to the issues they confronted and those we confront today" (175).

Eight Women, Two Model Ts, and the American West, by Joanne Wilke. Women in the West Series. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2007. 169 pp. Illustrations. \$18.95 paper.

Reviewer Susan Sessions Rugh is associate professor of history at Brigham Young University. She is the author of *Are We There Yet? The Golden Age of American Family Vacations* (2008).

In June 1924, eight single women from rural Iowa packed up two Model Ts and set out to see the West. Typical of the era's vagabonds, they camped all the way to California and back, and covered more than 9,000 miles of mostly dirt roads in nine weeks. Two of the women were sisters, the grandmother and great aunt of the author.

Years later, when Joanne Wilke discovered her grandmother's letters, her interest was piqued, but the old women could only remember "little bits of stories." The discovery of letters, diaries, and photographs from the other travelers provided her with enough material to write a book about their trip. She decided to weave in her own story because, "although separated by time, age, and geography, I found our stories blended so naturally that it should have been obvious" (5). The blending of the stories complicates the task of appealing to an audience. As a history of women travelers in the American West, this slim volume succeeds vividly. It is less successful as a nostalgic essay on Iowa farm women.

The story of the women travelers is captivating. They did just fine without men — ably changing tires, navigating flooded roads, cleaning spark plugs, and getting out to push the car up steep mountain passes. They were "thrilled" at the sight of the Rocky Mountains and fascinated by the "queerest rock formations" in the Garden of the Gods. It wasn't always easy; on a windy dusty day, "we had our sweaters buttoned up tite" [*sic*] and handkerchiefs "tied over our faces" (69). The women enjoyed stopping in the cities of the West to recover from desert drives. They put on dresses to tour San Francisco, where they explored Chinatown, went to the theater, and had their fortunes told. They camped in the West's national parks, swam in Yosemite Valley, hiked to Crater Lake, and were pestered by bears in Yellowstone. Their letters are refreshing in their obvious pride in their pluck, making the history of road travel in the 1920s come alive for readers. The snapshots, taken with a venerable Brownie camera, are charming.

The author interleaves the story of the travelers with a family story, focusing on Grandma Marie, who married her sister's husband after he was widowed. Wilke's words evocatively sketch the Iowa farm landscape with its high bluffs, old farmhouse, odd relatives, and rural neighborhood. The story ends with the author's reflections after her grandmother's death and her musings about her own life in Montana.

For a reader interested in the story of the women travelers, the family story interludes can be disruptive. Nonetheless, the book is an

entertaining read, clearly written, and a fine illustration of the history of travel in the period. The book is suitable for classroom use in courses in women's studies, the twentieth-century West, or travel, although students may be tempted to disentangle the narratives to follow the story that most interests them.

When Tillage Begins, Other Arts Follow: Grant Wood and Christian Petersen Murals, by Lea Rosson DeLong. Ames: University Museums, Iowa State University, 2006. xlii, 398 pp. Illustrations (some color), notes, appendixes, chronology, exhibition checklist, index. \$55.00 cloth.

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When Tillage Begins, Other Arts Follow was published to coincide with the exhibition by that name organized by the Brunner Art Museum at Iowa State University in the fall of 2006. DeLong is the leading authority on Depression-era art in 1930s Iowa, including the work of both Iowa native Grant Wood and Iowa State artist-in-residence Christian Petersen. The work under review here is an in-depth examination of the Grant Wood and Christian Petersen murals at Iowa State as well as the first historical study of the short-lived Public Works of Art Project (PWAP) in Iowa.

DeLong's first chapter is devoted to the PWAP, less well-known than other New Deal art programs that produced post office and courthouse murals in Iowa and elsewhere. Already well known nationally thanks to his famous painting *American Gothic* (1930), Grant Wood was selected as PWAP director in Iowa. Although Wood was not known heretofore for murals, Iowa State's president, Raymond M. Hughes, had already commissioned him to paint murals for the college. Wood "saw mural painting as not only a public form of art, but one that could disseminate a philosophy, in his case, Regionalism" (9).

In selecting artists for the project, he was at pains to include, along with "modern" artists who had been part of the Stone City art colony, members of the "conservative" faction, especially students of Charles Atherton Cumming of Des Moines and later the University of Iowa. The artists worked in a studio converted from a swimming pool in the Old Armory, or Library Annex, on the university campus in Iowa City. Wood believed that a "harmonious tone . . . had existed in the swimming pool studio" (35) and was shocked to learn that a petition bearing the signatures of 21 artists had been sent to Washington, D.C., objecting to his leadership of any future federal arts projects in Iowa (41).