

desegregation of all branches of the YWCA. Throughout this period, both the black and white women of the YWCA invoked the concept of "Christian sisterhood" to justify their social activism, although over the course of the first half of the twentieth century, the rhetoric of both groups in support of racial equality shifted from primarily religious in nature to increasingly democratic, without ever abandoning the members' commitment to acting as "Christian citizens" (174).

Among the wealth of historical sources Robertson draws on as she traces the struggle among the black and white women of the YWCA to adopt increasingly progressive policies on race relations are the records of the YWCA's national conferences, including those held in the mid-western cities of Cleveland (1920), Milwaukee (1926), Detroit (1930), Minneapolis (1932), and Columbus, Ohio (1938). Her focus on the evolution of race relations in the YWCA leads her to give particular attention to the YWCA in the South, but Robertson also notes that as a result of the organization's wartime activities during the First World War, "some white women had begun to see race relations as a problem in both the South and the North" (70). Of particular interest to readers of the *Annals of Iowa* is Robertson's brief reference to a 1919 incident at a YWCA student convention held in Des Moines, when the organization "violated a commitment to equal accommodations for black women" (68).

Christian Sisterhood will be of most interest to readers concerned with the history of American race relations, the civil rights movement, the transition from the woman suffrage movement to the modern women's movement, and the history of modern American Protestantism. Robertson has provided a nuanced and balanced account of the YWCA's struggles over racial justice that neither glosses over the recurring instances of racism within the YWCA nor ignores the roles that women of both races played in the effort to move the organization toward embracing the goal of racial equality.

Fighting for Hope: African American Troops of the 93rd Infantry Division in World War II and Postwar America, by Robert F. Jefferson. War/Society/Culture Series. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008. xvii, 321 pp. Illustrations, maps, notes, essay on sources, index. \$55.00 cloth.

Reviewer Andrew E. Kersten is professor of history at the University of Wisconsin–Green Bay. His books include *Labor's Home Front: The American Federation of Labor and World War II* (2006) and *Race, Jobs, and the War: The FEPC in the Midwest, 1941–1946* (2000).

In *Fighting for Hope*, Robert F. Jefferson provides a complex and nuanced — yet highly readable — account of the African American soldiers who served in the all-black and segregated U.S. Army's 93rd Infantry Division. He explores the fights on the war's battle fronts and the home front to make sense of not only these soldiers' contributions in defeating the Axis powers but also their significant influences on the civil rights movement during and after the war. His basic argument is that "with the wartime emergency and subsequent military service, black soldiers and their families adopted a political stance that allowed them to embrace the Double Victory strategies enunciated by prominent black organizations and figures while keeping their distance when elements of these strategies clashed with their own interests" (243). Although the efforts of 93rd Infantry Division's soldiers did hasten the end of the Second World War, that other "war within the war" raged on for several more decades (2). But there, too, their heroism positively affected the outcome.

Jefferson's narrative begins during the Great Depression, when New Deal agencies, such as the quasi-militaristic Civil Conservation Corps, and the military, through such programs as the Citizen's Military Training Camps and the Army Reserve Officers' Training Corps, provided some African American men with a means to survive the economic disaster. Those experiences also primed them for service in the army during World War II, not only in terms of military training but also in terms of the struggle for dignity, equality, and opportunity. Jefferson nicely demonstrates that the soldiers *and* their families engaged in this battle for civil rights. In so doing, "the efforts made by black family dependents on behalf of their soldiers . . . inaugurated a new strategy that collapsed the public and private spaces that the larger society used to describe protest politics during the war" (120).

As Jefferson carefully explains, there were three basic attitudes toward the African American experience during the war: "acceptance of the limited nature of their participation in the armed forces and defense industries; rejection of the Allied war effort altogether on the basis that they should be accorded the same opportunities as all other American citizens; and a combination of some aspects of both attitudes with the goal of transforming the nation's struggle against fascism into one of the total freedom and equality for all people" (121). As such, some black soldiers fought bitterly against the army's policies of segregation and of using black troops for generally anything but frontline combat. Others did not, even sometimes resenting the push by civilian organizations such as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), which frequently tied patriotism and

civil rights to ducking shells and bullets and to shooting people who were considered second-class citizens in the United States. "So, for many 93rd Division GIs and their families," Jefferson concludes, "neither patriotism nor the desire to fight for the four freedoms enunciated by Franklin Roosevelt guided their wartime struggles" (151).

Nonetheless, the war dramatically shaped their lives and political sensibilities. Having endured the horrors of training and battle as well as the army's racist policies and practices, which included a draconian legal system that severely punished any African American who appeared to break the unwritten rules about gender, sexuality, and race, World War II black veterans returned home to carry on a struggle for dignity that was an influential part of the postwar civil rights movement. As one 93rd Infantry Division veteran put it, "I got through fighting in the P.T.O. (Pacific Theater of Operations) and now I've got to fight in the S.T.O., U.S.A. (Southern Theater of Operations in the United States)" (244).

Fighting for Hope is a marvelous book. It is based on a mountain of primary sources, most of which Jefferson dug up himself. Particularly impressive are the oral history interviews and his correspondence with the veterans. Jefferson has done yeoman work for the profession. That said, I do wish that he had done a little more prosopographical analysis and provided an expanded historiographical section. Additionally, the home front side of his narrative is a tad weak as he lets the NAACP do most of the talking. More information on groups such as the National Urban League and individuals such as A. Philip Randolph would have likely strengthened his argument. And a bit more background information about African Americans and the military before World War II might have been beneficial. Regardless, this is a fine addition to the literature about African Americans in the age of Franklin D. Roosevelt.

Industrializing the Corn Belt: Agriculture, Technology, and Environment, 1945–1972, by J. L. Anderson. DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2009. x, 238 pp. Illustrations, notes, index. \$32.95 cloth.

Reviewer Thomas A. Woods is president of Making Sense of Place, Inc., a history consulting firm. He has experience researching and writing about agricultural history as well as administering living history farming experiences.

A graduate of Iowa State University and a veteran of Living History Farms in Urbandale, Iowa, J. L. Anderson guides readers through the industrialization of rural Iowa from 1945 until 1972. During that period, farms in Iowa and throughout the upper Midwest changed dra-