

Several selections focus on efforts to preserve and restore the prairie, the victim of more than two centuries of agricultural practices, introduced species, and human blunders. Lisa Knopp relates with admirable restraint the depredations inflicted by salt baron J. Sterling Morton, who failed to appreciate the virtues of Nebraska's treeless prairie and brought in hundreds of trees in his quest to make Nebraska "America's best timbered state" (287). Stephen I. Apfelbaum writes of confounding his neighbors, who can't understand why he won't let them plant corn or hunt in his apparently idle fields that are actually sown with prairie plants in an attempt to resurrect the landscape that Catlin, Fuller, and Parkman experienced. Cindy Crosby finds unexpected spiritual sustenance and community while working to restore the Schulenberg Prairie.

Throughout these accounts runs the tension between two opposing views of the prairie: should it be treated as a commodity to exploit for our own use or as a habitat to preserve and restore? Many of the prairie's earliest chroniclers emphasize its practical value as a rich resource; more recent writers, adherents of Leopold's land ethic, take the latter line. Mark Twain, waxing nostalgic about hunting excursions on his uncle's farmlands, notes that pigeons were so numerous that the hunters needed no guns; they simply clubbed them to death with sticks. By contrast, the editor of this volume, John T. Price, reflects that the plethora of wild birds lured to the prairie by the summer floodwaters of 1993 suggests "the possibility of restoration, renewal, and, at last, hope" (317).

The Tallgrass Prairie Reader makes for delightful recreational reading but would also be an ideal text for courses in environmental studies, midwestern and western history, and midwestern and western literature.

We Called Him Rabbi Abraham: Lincoln and American Jewry, A Documentary History, by Gary Phillip Zola. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2014. xiv, 529 pp. Illustrations, notes, index. \$49.50 hardcover.

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The relationship between American presidents and the Jews has been a scholarly growth area in the past decade, with studies examining the cases of George Washington, Ulysses S. Grant, and Franklin D. Roosevelt. Into this field comes Gary P. Zola's documentary history on Abraham Lincoln, gaining steam from the Civil War sesquicentennial and a growing literature on historical memory. Zola, the director of the American Jewish Archives, enthusiastically gathers and, in brief introductions

to each section, analyzes materials illuminating the role of Jews in Lincoln's life, politics, and postmortem celebration.

As a young lawyer in Illinois, Lincoln interacted with some among the growing number of local Jews, and after the launch of his political career, he found himself in the company of Jewish campaign supporters as well as intimates like Isachar Zacharie, his presidential chiroprapist and sometime emissary. Although some Jews opposed his policies, several times during his presidency Lincoln removed impediments to Jewish rights, and following his death Jews full-throatedly mourned the president, even exaggerating his admirable qualities into evidence of Jewish values. Into the twentieth century, new immigrants from Eastern Europe also participated in scholarship, commemoration, and collecting Lincoln memorabilia, honored him in Jewish settings, and produced artistic interpretations of his legacy, all the while continuing to imagine that Lincoln might have been a Jew.

Zola admirably presents a wide range of sources, introducing a cast of colorful characters and shedding light on the dynamics of religion and politics in antebellum America, the vibrancy of nineteenth-century American Jewish life, and the robust twentieth-century Lincoln industry. Readers of this journal will be particularly interested in the vivid early chapters on Lincoln's Jewish acquaintances in the Midwest.

Zola provides sturdy overviews of his material, but his analysis is limited by his tendency to find sympathy and harmony instead of complexity or uncertainty. For instance, given the diverse political and economic alliances that "friendship" connoted in nineteenth-century America, a bit too much is read into Lincoln's description of various Jews as "friends." Likewise, many of the reprinted sermons on Lincoln were written for the anniversary of his birthday, showing that Jewish leaders adapted to the American calendar, but not that Lincoln sermons were more common or important than sermons on other topics, figures, or even presidents. Lincoln, Zola argues, "served as a metaphoric nexus that linked Americanism and Judaism" (235), but he avoids exploring the larger conceptual limits, pitfalls, or exclusions of that linkage. For instance, there is more to be written on the racial component of Jews' engagement with Lincoln, whose allegedly Hebraic features were crucial to arguments for his Jewish identity. Luckily, this is a documentary history, helpfully aggregating sources for students and scholars to further question, analyze, and contextualize.

To identify with the president—especially for anxious minority groups—is to stake a claim to particular understandings of the nation. As time passes, different executives have more or less staying power. As Zola has made plain, Lincoln has proved especially generative for Jews.