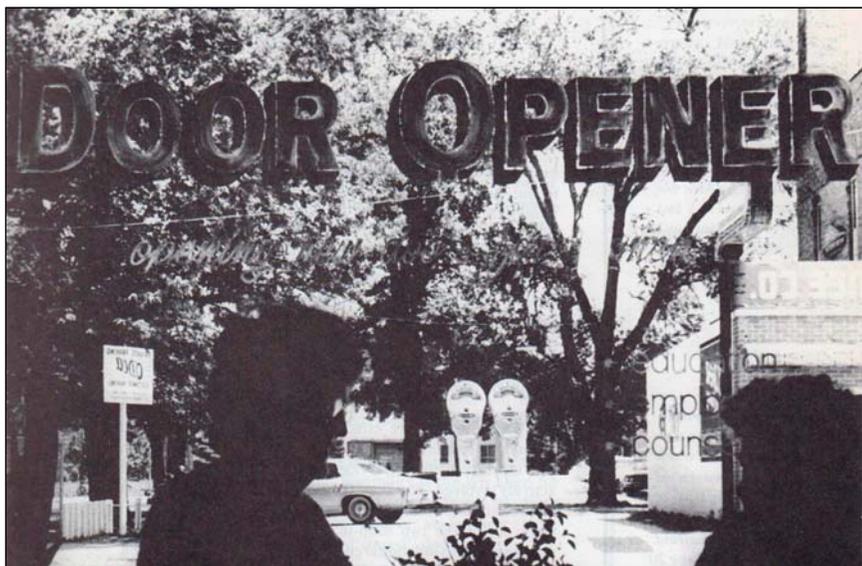


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In This Issue

KATE HOEY and JOY SMITH analyze the context and consequences of an important legal case decided by the Iowa Supreme Court in 1956, *Acuff v. Schmit*. The case established a wife's right to claim loss of consortium. The authors show, however, that although the decision did extend married women's legal rights, it rested on a traditional cultural commitment to marriage and did not represent a fundamental change in the courts' view of the hierarchical relationship between husbands and wives.

ANNA L. BOSTWICK FLAMING describes the programs of The Door Opener, a center for displaced homemakers in Mason City. She shows, in particular, that, in a place and time marked by skepticism of both feminism and state-run antipoverty programs, The Door Opener's success depended on a strategic use of government funds and feminist critiques to better the lives of former homemakers in Iowa.

MARVIN BERGMAN reviews two new books about the Midwest by Robert Wuthnow, one about the fate of midwestern communities since the 1950s, the other about religion and politics in the region.

Front Cover

Two women, perhaps Shirley Sandage and Margaret Garrity, co-founders of The Door Opener, meet inside the center's front window. For more on The Door Opener and its role in providing resources for displaced homemakers in Mason City and surrounding communities, see Anna L. Bostwick Flaming's article in this issue. Photo from Shirley M. Sandage Papers, Iowa Women's Archives, University of Iowa Libraries, Iowa City. (Image reversed to show lettering in word order.)

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Marriage and Dependence in Iowa and U.S. Law: *Acuff v. Schmit*, 1956

KATE HOEY AND JOY SMITH

ON THE AFTERNOON of July 15, 1953, Glen Acuff, a 32-year-old construction worker, was permanently incapacitated when his Ford sedan was sideswiped by another car at the intersection of two gravel roads south of Waterloo, Iowa. The driver of the other car, Raymond Schmit, a bank teller from Gilbertville, Iowa, sustained a bump over his right eye. Glen's neck was broken, which resulted in complete paralysis of his lower torso and legs, partial paralysis of his arms and hands, loss of bowel and bladder function, and loss of sexual function.¹ He could no longer support his family. His wife, Maude, 31, was a full-time housewife and mother, caring for their four children, ages 4, 5, 7, and 12. Without Glen's income, the Acuffs initially got by with help from Glen's father, state welfare payments, and the Salvation

The authors gratefully acknowledge the encouragement and guidance of University of Iowa professors Linda K. Kerber and Ann Estlin. Research that Kate Hoey performed for Professor Peggie Smith, currently at Washington University in St. Louis, on the claim of loss of consortium led the authors to some of the sources and insights here. The authors thank all three professors.

1. There are some contradictions in accounts of the accident. Fred Acuff, Glen's youngest son, recalls that his father remembered that as he was making a left turn, Schmit attempted to pass him on the right and lost control of his vehicle, sideswiping Glen's vehicle and pushing it into a telephone pole. Maude Acuff and Fred Acuff, interview by authors, Boone, Iowa, 3/28/2009. Attorney Frederick White's brief describes the two vehicles traveling in different directions and colliding at the intersection. Appellant's Petition at Law, *Acuff v. Schmit*, 248 Iowa 272 (Iowa 1956) (No. 10-48939), 3-6.

Army, where they were active members. Glen and Maude hired a young Waterloo attorney, Frederick G. White, to represent Glen in a personal injury suit. In November 1954, on the day Glen's civil suit was to be heard before district court, Schmit's insurance company settled out of court. The Acuffs used the settlement to pay Glen's medical bills.²

White did not forget the Acuffs. Early one morning the following spring, he was reading a legal periodical as he rocked his infant daughter. An article about *Hitaffer v. Argonne Co., Inc.*, a 1950 District of Columbia U.S. Court of Appeals decision, caught his attention.³ Lucia Hitaffer had successfully brought a loss of consortium claim against her husband's employer to recover damages after her husband suffered a job-related injury due to company negligence.⁴ Loss of consortium is a legal claim brought by a spouse when the other spouse, due to an injury, is unable to provide the full benefits of a marital relationship, including aid, affection, companionship, and sexual relations.⁵ *Hitaffer* was significant because the court granted a claim to wives that previously had been granted only to husbands. As White read the synopsis of *Hitaffer*, he wondered if he could make the same claim in Iowa for Maude Acuff. If he won the case, Maude would receive acknowledgment of her loss and, perhaps, compensation.⁶

2. Acuffs interview. White sued for \$57,000 and claimed that Glen's injuries were the result of Schmit's negligence (failure to yield, traveling at excessive speed, and failure to have his vehicle under control), and that Glen was free of contributory negligence. The liability limits of Schmit's insurance and Schmit's lack of personal assets resulted in a lower settlement. White recalls that the policy limit was about \$10,000. Frederick G. White, telephone interview by authors, 4/7/2009; *Waterloo Daily Courier*, 9/18/1956.

3. White interview.

4. *Hitaffer v. Argonne Co., Inc.*, 183 F.2d 811 (D.C. Cir. 1950). For a full citation and discussion of the *Hitaffer* case, see Marilyn Minzer et al., eds., *Damages in Tort Actions*, 10 vols. (Newark, NJ, 1982), 2:11.02[2][b], which notes that *Hitaffer* was overruled on other grounds by *Smither & Co., Inc. v. Coles*, 242 F.2d 220 (D.C. Cir. 1957).

5. Evans Holbrook, "The Change in the Meaning of Consortium," *Michigan Law Review* 22 (1923), 2; Directors of The Columbia Law Review Association, "Judicial Treatment of Negligent Invasion of Consortium," *Columbia Law Review* 61 (1961), 1341; Kevin Lindsey, "A More Equitable Approach to Loss of Spousal Consortium," *Iowa Law Review* 75 (1990), 714.

6. White interview.

White, in his third year as a practicing attorney, had almost no trial experience when he read about *Hitaffer*. He knew it was a brash step for a young and inexperienced attorney to file a previously unrecognized claim. A colleague tried to discourage him, noting that at Drake University Law School he was taught that in Iowa wives could not claim loss of consortium based on negligence. But, as White thought about *Hitaffer* and researched Iowa law, he could find nothing to prevent him from bringing the claim. He consulted with Wendell Holmes, an experienced attorney he worked with in the county attorney's office. Holmes agreed to sign on to the case as the senior attorney.⁷

The 1956 decision in *Acuff v. Schmit*, the case filed by White, established a wife's right to claim loss of consortium. Yet the decision rested on a traditional cultural commitment to marriage. Granting the loss of consortium claim to wives did extend married women's legal rights, but it did not represent a fundamental change in the courts' view of the hierarchical relationship between husbands and wives. Case law suggests that judges continued to believe that husbands should support wives and continued to view wives as dependents responsible for the care of children and other family members. The historical evolution of loss of consortium claims exemplifies the significance of marriage in structuring dependence in American society and illustrates the convoluted and sometimes halting process by which the courts aligned the law with changing cultural conceptions of marriage. The survival of the loss of consortium claim in the United States is closely tied to the story of the cultural significance of marriage in mid-twentieth-century America.

THE CLAIM for loss of consortium grew out of coverture, an English common law concept that the American colonies adopted. Under coverture, a woman lost her separate legal identity upon marriage.⁸ The husband and wife were one legal entity under coverture, and the husband represented that legal

7. *Ibid.*

8. Sir William Blackstone, *Blackstone's Commentaries on the Law: From the Abridged Edition of Wm. Hardcastle Browne*, ed. Bernard C. Gavit (Washington, DC, 1941), 189-90; Hendrik Hartog, *Man and Wife in America: A History* (Cambridge, MA, 2000), 115, 298-99.

entity. The wife was dependent on her husband for economic survival, and the husband was entitled to the wife's services, such as childcare and cooking.⁹ Coverture was fundamental to the legal definition of marriage in the United States.

Marriage was the institution through which the state controlled sexuality, managed labor, and responded to the dependency needs of its citizens.¹⁰ Because marriage was viewed as a form of governance, husband over wife, cultural conceptions of marriage often reflected the dominant philosophy of political authority. Coverture, which reduced wives to the status of chattel, was similar to the patriarchal paternalism that characterized the English monarch's dominion over the colonies. With the establishment of the republic, people began to view marriage as a contract in which husband and wife freely united for their economic benefit, security, and common interest. However, the hierarchical relationship implicit in the gendered roles of husband and wife did not shift. The legal construct of coverture remained intact.¹¹

The claim for loss of consortium emerged in nineteenth-century U.S. case law as courts sought to compensate a husband for loss of a wife's services following a negligent injury to his wife.¹² Until *Hittaffer* in 1950, courts consistently refused to grant wives a similar claim.¹³ Wives had no legal identity under coverture; their husbands represented them in all legal matters.¹⁴

9. Kathleen Sullivan, *Constitutional Context: Women and Rights Discourse in Nineteenth-Century America* (Baltimore, 2007), 13–14, 67; Hartog, *Man and Wife*, 115.

10. Nancy F. Cott, *Public Vows: A History of Marriage and the Nation* (Cambridge, MA, 2000), 3–8.

11. *Ibid.*, 13–21; Linda K. Kerber, *No Constitutional Right to Be Ladies: Women and the Obligations of Citizenship* (New York, 1999), 11–15; Joan Williams, *Unbending Gender: Why Family and Work Conflict and What to Do About It* (New York, 2001), 20–22.

12. Hartog, *Man and Wife*, 298–99.

13. In 1921, in *Hipp v. E. I. Dupont de Nemours & Co.*, the North Carolina Supreme Court found that a wife could recover damages following the negligent injury of her husband. Four years later, however, the court reversed itself in *Hinnant v. Tide Water Power Company*. See discussion of these cases below.

14. Courts generally did not consider wives separate from their husbands, but this rule was not absolute. For example, “if [a wife] committed crimes on her own against others, even if ‘by the bare command of her husband,’ she was theoretically punishable as if single because her duty to obey the law was ‘of a higher nature’ than her duty to obey her husband.” Hartog, *Man and Wife*, 108.

The lack of a legal identity meant that a married woman could not bring her own suit; her husband had to join that suit, and he would receive compensation for any damages assessed. In addition, a husband had a right to his wife's services, but case law did not establish a wife's right to her husband's services. For these reasons, a wife could not make a claim for loss of consortium.¹⁵

Beginning in the 1830s and continuing through the 1870s, state legislatures passed married women's property acts, which established a wife's separate ownership of the property she brought to the marriage and some of her earnings. These acts also established a wife's right to sue without her husband joining the suit.¹⁶ Legislatures were primarily interested in shielding a wife's premarital assets from her husband's creditors.¹⁷ Married women's property acts legally released wives from the patriarchal legal authority of their husbands, provided some economic autonomy, and changed wives' relationship with the state. Nonetheless, judges tended to limit the scope of the statutes; scholars generally agree that the married women's property acts did not result in radical changes for women.¹⁸

During the first half of the twentieth century, the dominant cultural conception of marriage changed from a patriarchal institution that prioritized economic security and reproduction to a democratic union grounded in romantic love, mutual sexual desire, and emotional fulfillment. Scholars attribute this change in the perception of marriage to several cultural developments. The Victorian idea that middle-class and upper-class white women were passionless gave way to acceptance that sexual desire was natural "among so-called respectable women." The birth control movement offered many married women access to more reliable contraception. The Nineteenth Amendment, passed in 1920, granted women the right to vote, thus acknowledging wives' separate identity and citizenship. These changes

15. *Ibid.*, 115–16, 299; Holbrook, "Change in the Meaning of Consortium," 2.

16. Holbrook, "Change in the Meaning of Consortium," 4.

17. Cott, *Public Vows*, 52–55; Sullivan, *Constitutional Context*, 9, 14; Richard Chused, "Married Women's Property Law, 1800–1850," *Georgetown Law Journal* 71 (1982–1983), 1398–1403.

18. Carole Shammas, "Re-Assessing the Married Women's Property Acts," *Journal of Women's History* 6 (1994), 9–16.

meant that wives had the opportunity to express themselves more fully, but they still experienced inequality.¹⁹

At the same time, the number of women working outside the home increased dramatically as a result of the economic distress of the Great Depression and the labor shortages of World War II. With the exception of the decade between 1910 and 1920, the number of women in Iowa's labor force increased in every decade from 1900 to 1950. The greatest increase was between 1940 and 1944, when the number of working women increased by 56 percent. In the Acuffs' hometown of Waterloo, the 17 factories that produced war materials employed 14,000 workers, 4,000 of whom were women.²⁰

Even as women were increasingly represented in the work force, the paradigm of husband as provider and wife as dependent was entrenched in New Deal public policy. This standard influenced how private and public sector employers viewed and compensated their female employees.²¹ The assumption that a wife's primary responsibilities within a marriage were domestic labor and childcare did not change.²²

The end of the war renewed the emphasis on a wife's domestic responsibilities. Returning soldiers were anxious to establish themselves as wage earners and heads of households. Many wives who had been employed returned to full-time housewifery either voluntarily or under duress. Following decades of economic and wartime disruption, men and women looked forward to establishing homes that served as comfortable and safe family retreats.²³ Historian Elaine Tyler May ar-

19. Rebecca L. Davis, "'Not Marriage at All, but Simple Harlotry': The Companionate Marriage Controversy," *Journal of American History* 94 (2008), 1137-41; Cott, *Public Vows*, 157-60; Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era* (New York, 1988), 40-52.

20. May, *Homeward Bound*, 40-52; Dorothy Schwieder, *Iowa: The Middle Land* (Ames, 1996), 281-84.

21. Cott, *Public Vows*, 157-58, 176-78. Blanche Crozier identified this shift in "Constitutionality of Discrimination Based on Sex," *Boston University Legal Review* 15 (1935), 748-49.

22. May, *Homeward Bound*, 59-60.

23. *Ibid.*, 39-90. The shift in attitudes about women's employment is reflected in the meeting programs of the Iowa League of Women Voters. From 1936 through 1940 the league's annual list of priorities included statements about

gues that for people who had grown up during the Great Depression, the comfort of traditional gender roles was an antidote to the disruption that had characterized their childhood and early adult years.²⁴

Employer practices also discouraged wives from working. Employers defined the ideal worker as one who worked full-time and overtime without time off for childbearing or child-rearing. Wives and mothers who needed or chose to work outside the home could not meet such expectations and often found only marginal employment.²⁵

Consistent with society's changing view of marriage, judges in the twentieth century generally preferred to view marriage as a bond freely entered into and based on love rather than as a contract formed in order to exchange economic support for services. When judges began avoiding the "direct language of service," consortium became a "protean term that suggested the complex yet irreducible qualities of a loving marriage."²⁶ Under this theory, loss of consortium included loss of "love, affection, companionship, [and] sexual relations."²⁷ As the definition of loss of consortium changed, the claim's scope, legal significance, and continued existence became uncertain.

Attorney Frederick White recognized an opportunity to expand the claim. He understood the need to develop a distinctive argument that would appeal to the judges who would decide the case; wives had brought loss of consortium claims in many states and lost. White knew that judges were situated in a cul-

expanding employment opportunities: "opposition to all discrimination in public employment based on sex or marital status" (1936, 1937, 1939) or "removing remaining legal and administrative discrimination which prevents women from having an effective equality with men" (1938). But throughout the late 1940s and 1950s, employment equality disappeared from the league's list of priorities. "Program Record, League of Women Voters 1922-1957," folder: League Publications, 1968-72, box 87, Iowa League of Women Voters Collection, Iowa Women's Archives (IWA), University of Iowa Libraries, Iowa City; Patty Johnson, Women's Editor, "Annual Edition, Waterloo, City of the Future," *Waterloo Courier*, 12/26/1952, folder 2: Waterloo, 1941-65, box 29, Iowa League of Women Voters Collection, IWA.

24. May, *Homeward Bound*, 52-53.

25. Williams, *Unbending Gender*, 1-6.

26. Hartog, *Man and Wife*, 299.

27. *Hitaffer v. Argonne Co., Inc.*, 183 F.2d 811, 814 (D.C. Cir. 1950).

ture that understood marriage as a lifelong bond that defined distinct roles for husbands and wives. Many judges focused on the wife's role as a dependent. White decided to argue that a wife's dependence was a reason to allow the claim rather than a reason to deny it. He hoped that the judges would view the case as an opportunity to celebrate and affirm marriage as a partnership. In the 1950s, marriage was the central relationship in most people's lives. People valued marriage for companionship, love, and family. The Acuffs shared these values. White hoped to exploit contemporary cultural values surrounding marriage to support his argument that both husbands and wives should be entitled to make the same legal claims; the law should treat both parties in a marriage similarly.

WHEN Maude McKee and Glen Acuff married on June 28, 1940, they did not question the traditional gendered roles of husband and wife. In 1954 Glen's injury forced them to alter their marital roles. They viewed these changes in their family as an unfortunate exception to the traditional roles of husband and wife. When they agreed that Maude would become a plaintiff in *Acuff v. Schmit*, their hope was that the courts would recognize the irreparable damage to their marriage. They did not think of their claim as an effort to advance gender equality.²⁸

As children, Maude and Glen had experienced Depression-era deprivation. Born February 25, 1922, in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, Maude was the oldest of seven children of William and Rose McKee.²⁹ When Maude was a child, the McKees purchased an acreage on the edge of Waterloo. In 1931 Rose contracted tuberculosis and was confined for several months to the Oakdale Sanatorium.³⁰ During her absence, William juggled caring for his children with working the third shift at John Deere Manufacturing. On the day Rose returned home, her exhausted husband was hospitalized with pneumonia. He died two days later.

28. Acuffs interview.

29. "Obituaries—Maude L. Acuff 1922–2010," *WCF Courier.com*, 8/22/2010, http://wfcourier.com/lifestyles/announcements/obituaries/maude-l-acuff/article_5fb558ae-ac9c-11df-b9cf-001cc4c002e0.html.

30. Kate Caughron (Maude Acuff's sister), interview by Joy Smith, Waterloo, 10/24/2011.

Maude was ten years old. Unable to make mortgage payments, the family lost their home and moved to a series of rental homes in northeast Waterloo. When Maude was 15, she quit high school and began cleaning houses in order to supplement the family's income.³¹

One year before her father's death, Maude was attending a Salvation Army worship service with her friend when two unfamiliar boys walked into the church. She remembered joking to her friend, "Oh my gosh, there's some new guys coming in. I'll tell you what. I'll marry the taller one and you marry the other one." The "taller one" was Glen Robert Acuff. Two years older than Maude, Glen had been born September 14, 1920, on a farm near Sumner, Iowa, to Lloyd William and Drucie Bower Acuff. At some point, Lloyd left his family. Drucie raised Glen and his two brothers on the farm, eventually remarrying.³²

On June 28, 1940, Maude did marry Glen. Their oldest son was born the following year. Not long after, Glen enlisted in the U.S. Navy. Following the war, the Acuffs had three children in quick succession and moved to an acreage southwest of Waterloo. Glen worked for a time at John Deere Tractor Works and at Chamberlain Manufacturing before taking the construction job he held at the time of the accident.³³

For young men like Glen who returned from the war anxious to put down roots and start a family, Waterloo offered numerous opportunities for employment at a decent wage. Located in northeast Iowa and the county seat of Black Hawk County, Waterloo in 1950 was a vibrant community of 65,000 with an economy based in heavy industry. The city experienced a 26 percent population increase between 1940 and 1950. In 1954 there were 134 manufacturing concerns in the city. The two largest, Rath Packing and John Deere Tractor Works, each employed more than 7,000 workers.³⁴

31. Caughron interview; Acuffs interview.

32. Acuffs interview; *Waterloo-Cedar Falls Courier*, 4/29/1996; Caughron interview.

33. Acuffs interview.

34. *1950 Census of Population: Volume 2, Characteristics of Population: Part 15, Iowa* (Washington DC, 1952), 15-18; *Waterloo Iowa Centennial 1854-1954: Prairidrama, Souvenir Program*, 33; Glenda Riley, *Cities on the Cedar: A Portrait of Cedar Falls, Waterloo, and Black Hawk County* (Parkersburg, IA, 1988), 59-73.

Like many women of her era, Maude took on and probably looked forward to the roles of housewife and mother. Glen was the breadwinner and head of the household. Maude was responsible for the work of the family: housekeeping, caring for their children, and creating a welcoming, stable home environment.³⁵

The Salvation Army was the center of Maude and Glen's social and religious life. When Maude was a little girl, shortly after the family moved to Waterloo, neighbors invited her parents to join "The Army." When William died, the church offered spiritual and financial sustenance to Rose. Glen's first experience in the church came at the invitation of a boyhood friend. As a young married couple, Glen and Maude assumed leadership responsibilities in the church: Glen was a favorite Sunday school teacher of older teens and adults; and Maude led the Girl Guards, served as the Sunday school secretary, sang in the Songster Brigade, and sold copies of *War Cry*, the church magazine. Before the accident, Glen and Maude had planned to train as officers, the church's form of ministry.³⁶ Many Americans think of the Salvation Army as a Christian social service agency, but historian Lillian Taiz notes that urban working-class families were drawn to the locally controlled nondenominational missions because they offered opportunities for usefulness and leadership and a sense of community.³⁷

On the day of his accident, Glen was on his way home from work to clean up before returning to Waterloo to attend a dinner at the church with his family. News of the accident spread quickly through the church community. Members immediately came to the Acuffs' aid, providing Maude with childcare, trans-

35. Acuffs interview.

36. Maude and Glen's youngest daughter and her husband later became officers, and many members of the extended family remain active with the Salvation Army. Information about Acuff family involvement with the Salvation Army is from Fred Acuff, e-mail to author, 3/30/2009.

37. While dominated by the working class, the Salvation Army always attracted some educated middle-class members. Beginning in the 1930s, these members began to push for a centralized hierarchical church structure, modulation of religious expression, and a social work paradigm. Although the middle-class agenda ultimately prevailed, Salvation Army members continued to reject consumerism and materialism. Lillian Taiz, *Hallelujah Lads and Lasses: Remaking the Salvation Army in America, 1880-1930* (Chapel Hill, NC, 2001), 1-10, 167.



sportation, and lodging near the Iowa City Veterans Hospital, where Glen was hospitalized. In the difficult months and years that followed, the family received material assistance and gained spiritual strength from the Salvation Army.³⁸

Paralyzed as a result of his spinal cord injury, Glen was discharged from the hospital after five months. Maude and her sons assumed responsibility for all of Glen's personal care and mobility needs. They learned to transfer Glen from bed to chair to car. Glen painfully "pounded" and exercised his arms and hands daily to recover some function of his upper extremities. Slowly, he learned to live with his disabilities, but he could no longer support his family financially. For the first year or two, the family survived on the meager public assistance allowance, supplemented by help from family and church.³⁹

38. Acuffs interview; Caughron interview.

39. Acuffs interview. Fred Acuff remembers that the family received government food commodities but that there were times when there was no food in the house. He recalls that the family received \$165 per month in assistance. Acuffs interview. This amount is consistent with aid payments at the time. In 1943 the Iowa legislature passed the Aid to Dependent Children Act, which

Maude realized that something had to change. In the early winter of 1955 she suggested to Glen that she get a job. She wanted to answer a newspaper ad for seasonal help wrapping specialty gifts for Santa Claus Industries. At first Glen resisted, insisting that it was his place to support the family. Maude gently persisted, convincing Glen that with her earnings from this temporary job they would be able to “give the kids a Christmas.” The company liked Maude’s work, and the temporary job became permanent.⁴⁰

In the summer of 1955, a few months before Maude was hired at Santa Claus Industries, Frederick White approached the Acuffs regarding the possibility of filing the loss of consortium claim on Maude’s behalf. The couple needed any financial award a suit might bring. They also sought recognition of the damage their family had suffered. They trusted White and decided to bring the suit.⁴¹

BORN IN 1928, White was the first in his family to study law. His father was the general foreman of shipping at Rath Packing Company in Waterloo. The senior Mr. White had taken a job as a laborer at Rath after his father had lost the family farm in the recession of 1919–1920. White’s mother eventually worked as a saleswoman, but when White was young she worked as a housewife and cared for White and his two brothers. Like many young men of his generation, White joined the military upon high school graduation; in December 1944 he enlisted in the Army Air Corps, where he trained as a cryptographer. Following the

was designed to provide assistance to needy children under the age of 18 who were regularly attending school, living with a family member, and who were deprived of parental support and care due to the death, continued absence from home, or physical or mental incapacity of either parent. The 56th General Assembly (1955–56) passed an amendment that limited assistance to any family to \$175 per month. The constitutionality of this amendment was successfully challenged in 1957. In a decision written by Chief Justice Norman Hays, who also wrote the decision in *Acuff*, the court ruled that the amendment unfairly discriminated among dependent children because the original law granted assistance to individual children, and the amendment varied the amount of assistance received by each child based on the number of children in their family. *Collins v. State Bd. of Soc. Welfare*, 81 N.W.2d 4, 6–9 (Iowa 1957).

40. Acuffs interview.

41. *Ibid.*

war, he returned to his hometown and a job at Rath skinning calves and boning lamb and veal. He soon took advantage of the GI Bill to enroll at Iowa State Teachers College in neighboring Cedar Falls. A year-and-a-half into his studies, encouraged by one of his professors, White transferred to the University of Chicago and enrolled in a four-year program that offered a combined law and liberal arts degree. He earned a J.D. degree in 1951.⁴²

The curriculum at the University of Chicago Law School was unusual. When the Law School was founded in 1902, University President William Rainey Harper advocated for the “wholeness of the institution,” emphasizing the importance of closely connecting the law school with the liberal arts departments, including history, sociology, and political science. Harper’s insistence on an integrative approach led to lively debate among faculty, some arguing that reducing the time for studying pure law, even for third-year students, was unthinkable.⁴³ Although the combined degree was discontinued during White’s years in the program, aspects of the cross-disciplinary curriculum survived. White recalls that professors from history, economics, and other social sciences regularly delivered lectures in his law classes.⁴⁴

White’s Chicago training prepared him for the trial and appellate work that dominated his career during the 50 years he practiced general law in northeast Iowa. The integrated coursework taught him to reason historically about the law. His ex-

42. White interview.

43. Frank Ellsworth, *Law on the Midway: The Founding of the University of Chicago Law School* (Chicago, 1977), 50–69. Law school curricula typically followed a model of professional education established in the late nineteenth century by Professor C. C. Langdell at Harvard University. Langdell advanced the idea of an academic meritocracy requiring a bachelor’s degree for admission, establishing a sequential three-year curriculum, and using the case method of pedagogy. “The Harvard position was the traditional one taken by the few law schools which had considered the issue. Subjects related to the liberal arts did not belong in legal education, and those deemed slightly questionable were assigned to seminars.” Ellsworth, *Law on the Midway*, 69. For an extensive discussion of Langdell’s influence on professional pedagogy, see Bruce A. Kimball, *The Inception of Modern Professional Education: C. C. Langdell* (Chapel Hill, NC, 2009).

44. White interview.



Attorney Frederick White circa 1960. Photo courtesy Frederick White.

perience on the school's nationally competitive debate and moot court teams trained him to shape a persuasive argument. Certainly his intellect was honed by interaction with capable and motivated classmates, several of whom would develop national reputations in politics and law: his classmates included Ramsey Clark, who would serve as U.S. attorney general during the Johnson administration; future members of Congress Abner Mikva and Patsy Mink; and failed U.S. Supreme Court nominee and Yale law professor Robert Bork.⁴⁵

Although White thrived in the challenging academic arena at the University of Chicago, he did not lose touch with his working-class roots. Unable to locate a job as a lawyer following graduation, he returned to the factory floor at Rath for a brief

45. *Ibid.*

time. He then sold insurance for a few months before deciding that if he was ever going to practice law he should start. In March 1952 he rented office space in his hometown, borrowed his mother's old dining room chairs, acquired a portable typewriter, and opened his law practice. In the summer of 1953 he married; by the spring of 1955, when he read *Hitaffer* and began considering filing a loss of consortium case on behalf of Maude Acuff, he was a young parent, probably sensitive to how the loss of a male breadwinner could seriously jeopardize a family's security.⁴⁶

White filed *Acuff v. Schmit* in Black Hawk County District Court on July 9, 1955, before Judge George Heath. Based on decades of precedent that had denied a wife the right to claim loss of consortium, defense attorneys Glenn Beers and R. Bruce Hughes argued for dismissal.⁴⁷ Judge Heath, according to White, could not understand his argument. White remembers Heath as a good judge and a conservative man whose thinking about a wife's right to the loss of consortium claim was entrenched in the reasoning that had prevailed in earlier decisions.⁴⁸ Judge Heath dismissed the case.⁴⁹ White was not deterred. He believed in his argument and felt that there was nothing to lose on appeal. On October 20, 1955, he filed a note of appeal to the Iowa Supreme Court. He began the arduous task of researching the convoluted history of coverture and loss of consortium in case law and carefully drafting his brief.⁵⁰

COURTS defined the claim for loss of consortium in various ways after its emergence in nineteenth-century case law. White spent several months tracing those developments. The married

46. *Ibid.*

47. Petition at Law, Motion to Dismiss, *Acuff v. Schmit*, 248 Iowa 272 (Iowa 1956) (No. 10-48939), 7-8. Glenn Beers, the senior defense attorney, is deceased. R. Bruce Hughes, who prepared the appellee's brief, later moved to San Francisco. White interview.

48. White interview; Frederick G. White, telephone interview with Hoey, 11/11/2011.

49. Petition at Law, Ruling on Motion, *Acuff v. Schmit*, 248 Iowa 272 (Iowa 1956) (No. 10-48939), 9.

50. Petition at Law, Notice of Appeal, *Acuff v. Schmit*, 248 Iowa 272 (Iowa 1956) (No. 10-48939), 9. At the time, White was also employed as an assistant county attorney. White interview.

women's property acts enacted in the mid-nineteenth century granted wives the right to bring independent legal claims, but judges had a variety of concerns that caused them to limit the scope of those acts. Judges concluded that wives could bring loss of consortium suits when a defendant intentionally interfered with the marital relationship, as in alienation of affection cases, but they consistently refused to find that the married women's property acts entitled a wife to a claim for loss of consortium following a negligent injury to her husband.⁵¹

The possibility of double recovery in loss of consortium cases based on negligence concerned many judges.⁵² They believed that differences between the roles of husbands and wives required different treatment. They reasoned that double recovery could occur in one scenario but not in a second. In the first scenario, a husband is injured and both husband and wife sue. The wife receives compensation for her loss of consortium. The husband receives compensation for his injuries and for the loss of his ability to support his wife. In the second scenario, a wife is injured and both husband and wife sue. The husband receives compensation for his loss of consortium. The wife receives compensation for her injuries. However, the wife does not receive compensation for any lost ability to support her husband because she has no obligation to support him. Double recovery occurs in the first scenario because the wife recovers for the same loss twice; she receives a loss of consortium award, and she also benefits from her husband's award for the lost ability to support her. Double recovery does not occur in the second scenario. Double recovery also could not occur in cases where the loss of consortium claim was based on intentional interference with the marriage because in those cases the husband "was a joint wrongdoer with the defendant" and therefore could have no cause of action against the defendant. Based on these concerns, which were still grounded in the legal status of the wife as a dependent under coverture, judges rejected loss of

51. White interview; Hartog, *Man and Wife*, 298-99; Cott, *Private Vows*, 52-55, 168-69; Holbrook, "Change in the Meaning of Consortium," 4-6; Sullivan, *Constitutional Context*, 69; *Hitaffer*, 183 F.2d at 816 n.30 (listing cases).

52. Leon Green et al., *Cases on Injuries to Relations* (St. Paul, 1968), 245.

consortium claims brought by wives whose husbands had been negligently injured.⁵³

Courts rejected a wife's loss of consortium claim based on negligence for other reasons as well. For example, some courts said the claim of loss of consortium was based in loss of services, and because the wife had no claim to her husband's services she could not recover.⁵⁴ Other courts denied wives the claim, finding that wives did not have property rights.⁵⁵ Courts also argued that the wife's injury was too indirect or remote to measure and expressed concern that children and other people might be able to recover for loss of consortium if the claim was extended to wives.⁵⁶ Because wives and children were both dependents under the law, some judges likely believed that such an expansion of the claim was a strong possibility.⁵⁷

Believing that they could not create what they considered a new cause of action without relying on a statute or other authority, courts indicated that legislatures could create a cause of action for wives if they considered it necessary.⁵⁸ Even though courts stated that they recognized the unfairness of allowing a husband a cause of action while denying a wife the same cause of action, they claimed that they were not in a role to resolve problems of gender inequality and other social issues.⁵⁹ In at-

53. *Hitaffer*, 183 F.2d at 814; Evans Holbrook, "Change in the Meaning of Consortium," 6.

54. *Hitaffer*, 183 F.2d at 813 (citing cases, including *Stout v. Kansas City Terminal Ry. Co.*, 157 S.W. 1019, 1022 [Mo. App. 1913]). In 1963 the Missouri Supreme Court decided that *Stout* should not be followed. See *Novak v. Kansas City Transit, Inc.*, 365 S.W.2d 539, 544-45 (Mo. 1963).

55. *Ibid.*, 815 (citing cases, including *Stout*, 157 S.W. at 1021).

56. "Judicial Treatment of Negligent Invasion of Consortium," *Columbia Law Review* 61 (1961), 1350, 1355; *Hitaffer*, 183 F.2d at 815.

57. Hartog, *Man and Wife*, 193.

58. *Hitaffer*, 183 F.2d at 814 (citing cases, including *Stout*, 147 S.W. at 1021, where the court noted that "the entire damage in cases of negligent injury to a husband or father has always been considered as centering in him . . . and a settlement with him has always been recognized as closing the incident"); "Judicial Treatment of Negligent Invasion of Consortium," 1350, 1352.

59. See *Ripley v. Ewell*, 61 So.2d 420, 423 (Fla. 1952): "We have given careful consideration to the able arguments advanced in the *Hitaffer* case, many of which are founded on sound reasoning and which logically support the conclusion reached if considered as an argument of what the law should be. They

tempting to avoid the issues, they allowed unjust principles to remain embedded in the law.

Courts sometimes found arguments about equal treatment persuasive and decided that neither the husband nor the wife could recover for loss of consortium.⁶⁰ Nearly 30 years before *Hitaffer*, the North Carolina Supreme Court issued a series of rulings on loss of consortium that highlighted equal-treatment arguments. In 1921 the North Carolina Supreme Court rejected arguments regarding concerns over expanding liability and found that a wife could recover for loss of consortium.⁶¹ That decision was the first to allow a wife to recover for loss of consortium based on negligence.⁶² The court overruled that decision in 1925, finding that the wife's "mental anguish" alone could not entitle her to compensation.⁶³ In 1945 the court decided that neither the wife nor the husband could recover for loss of consortium, reasoning that this result treated the parties equally.⁶⁴

Concern about compensation for emotional harm likely influenced some judges considering loss of consortium cases. The husband's action for loss of consortium grew out of his entitlement to his wife's services. Because a wife could not point to

might well appeal to the Legislature. But we find them wholly unconvincing when viewed from the only angle from which our jurisdiction permits us to consider them, namely, a determination of what the law of Florida is." The Florida Supreme Court changed course in 1971, finding that a wife had a derivative right to loss of consortium and stating that the "the recent changes in the legal and societal status of women in our society forces us to recognize a change in the doctrine with which this opinion is concerned." See *Gates v. Foley*, 247 So.2d 40, 44-45 (Fla. 1971).

60. *Hitaffer*, 183 F.2d at 813 n.11 (citing cases, including *Marri v. Stamford St. R. Co.*, 78 A. 582, 587 [Conn. 1911], where the court said it was "of the opinion that the reason for the former rule no longer exists, and that it should cease to have recognition." The Connecticut Supreme Court overruled *Marri* in 1979. See *Hopson v. St. Mary's Hospital*, 408 A.2d 260 (Conn. 1979).

61. *Hitaffer*, 183 F.2d at 813; *Hipp v. E. I. Dupont de Nemours & Co.*, 108 S.E. 318, 323 (N.C. 1921), overruled by *Hinnant v. Tide Water Power Co.*, 126 S.E. 307, 312 (N.C. 1925).

62. *Hitaffer*, 183 F.2d at 813.

63. *Ibid.*; *Hinnant v. Tide Water Power Co.*, 126 S.E. 307, 312 (N.C. 1925), overruled by *Helmstetter v. Duke Power Co.*, 32 S.E.2d 611, 612-14 (N.C. 1945).

64. *Helmstetter v. Duke Power Co.*, 32 S.E.2d 611, 612-14 (N.C. 1945), overruled by *Nicholson v. Hugh Chatham Memorial Hospital*, 266 S.E.2d 818 (N.C. 1980); *Hitaffer*, 183 F.2d at 813 n.7.

any similar entitlement, her claim could be framed as one for purely emotional distress, as it was by the North Carolina Supreme Court in 1925. Some court decisions likely reflected discomfort with compensating emotional harm. In fact, debate over whether and how to compensate for emotional harm continues today. In the 1950s disruptions in marital relationships likely affected wives more than husbands; wives were often separated from their extended families and lacked the social connections husbands built through work.⁶⁵

With the exception of the briefly held 1921 decision of the North Carolina Supreme Court, no court found a wife entitled to loss of consortium based on negligence until 1950, when the District of Columbia Circuit Court decided *Hitaffer v. Argonne Co. Inc.*, the case that captured White's attention as he comforted his infant daughter on the spring morning in 1955.⁶⁶ The *Hitaffer* court noted that an action for loss of consortium was not based primarily in loss of services but in loss of a relationship. The court stated that many reasons for denying recovery were illogical because they applied equally in suits where the husband sued. According to the court, "simple mathematics" could solve any potential problem with double recovery. A court could subtract from the wife's award the amount the husband had recovered for his obligation to support his wife. The *Hitaffer* court believed that judges who denied recovery relied on "medieval concepts of the marriage relation."⁶⁷

The *Hitaffer* court saw itself as describing a new understanding of marriage.

It can hardly be said that a wife has less of an interest in the marriage relation than does the husband or in these modern times that a husband renders services of such a different character to the family and household that they must be measured by a standard

65. Martha Chamallas and Jennifer Wriggins, in *The Measure of Injury* (New York, 2010), 2-3, identify "the recent trend toward eliminating or curtailing noneconomic damages." They argue that "the marginalizing of emotional harm and noneconomic injury has worked to the systematic disadvantage of women and minority plaintiffs, who may find that the most serious recurring injuries in their lives are not compensable in tort." See below for a discussion of wives and their extended family ties.

66. Minzer et al., eds., *Damages in Tort Actions*, 2:11.02[2][b].

67. *Hitaffer*, 183 F.2d at 814-15, 819.

of such uncertainty that the law cannot estimate any loss thereof. The husband owes the same degree of love, affection, felicity, etc., to the wife as she to him. He also owes the material service of support, but above and beyond that he renders other services as his mate's helper in her duties, as advisor and counselor, etc.

Marriage was a partnership, according to the court, in which each partner contributed equally valuable services. The husband's contribution to the relationship was not purely financial but also involved emotional support and friendship.⁶⁸

The *Hitaffer* decision reflected the understanding of marriage in the 1950s and the celebration of marriage as the primary emotional relationship in people's lives. So many people married in the 1940s and 1950s that "forging an independent life outside marriage carried enormous risks of emotional and economic hardship, along with social ostracism."⁶⁹ In addition, as Nancy Cott notes, in the 1940s marriage was "seen as more companionate, more flexibly defined, [and] less hierarchically structured than in the past."⁷⁰ Because the *Hitaffer* court saw marriage as a partnership based on love, denying wives the loss of consortium claim was denying its vision of marriage as partnership.

Despite its focus on marriage as a partnership, the *Hitaffer* court did not directly challenge the inequalities present in the prevailing structure of marriage. Instead, it emphasized each partner's valuable contributions to the relationship. Each partner had distinct roles, but the roles for each were significant and worthy of public support and recognition. The *Hitaffer* court did not question these separate roles. In its view, allowing a wife to bring a loss of consortium claim publicly recognized the love and affection present in marriage and strengthened the emotional commitment between husband and wife. It affirmed, rather than challenged, traditional marital roles. When Frederick White appealed Judge Heath's decision to the Iowa Supreme Court, he was able to look to *Hitaffer* as a model for structuring his arguments in a way that would appeal to the cultural values of the Iowa Supreme Court justices.

68. *Ibid.*, 819.

69. May, *Homeward Bound*, 3-5, 38.

70. Cott, *Public Vows*, 181.

THE NINE Iowa Supreme Court justices who decided *Acuff* in 1956 reflected the majority of the citizenry that elected them.⁷¹ All men, the justices ranged in age from 50 to 86, all but one born in the nineteenth century. All were Republicans; all were married with children; six of the nine identified as Protestant. All but one graduated from an Iowa law school. The exception, Norman R. Hays, who wrote for the majority in *Acuff v. Schmit*, graduated from Harvard Law School. The judges' average length of service on the court at the time they decided *Acuff v. Schmit* was 9.6 years.⁷²

Although active political party involvement was a prerequisite for election to the bench, evidence suggests that most judges

71. Except for a period between 1913 and 1918 when judges were elected on a nonpartisan basis, Iowa judges were elected in partisan general elections. That changed in 1962, when Iowa voters ratified a constitutional amendment that established gubernatorial appointment of district and supreme court justices from a list of nominees advanced by a nominating commission composed of lay persons and lawyers. In the first year following their appointment and then every eighth year, supreme court justices stand for retention during the general election. This process, still in place in Iowa, was intended to ensure the professional competence of justices and raise the selection process above partisan politics. *The Judicial Department, Iowa's Third Branch* (Des Moines, 1984), 2-3. The effectiveness of the reform in keeping partisan politics out of judicial selection was tested in the 2010 and 2012 general elections. Grant Schulte, "Iowans Dismiss Three Justices," *Des Moines Register*, 11/3/2010; A. G. Sulzberger, "Ouster of Iowa Judges Sends Signal to Bench," *New York Times*, 11/3/2010; Jeff Eckhoff, "Voters Retain Justice Wiggins," *Des Moines Register*, 11/12/2012.

72. Judges on the *Acuff* Court were Norman R. Hays, William L. Bliss, Theodore G. Garfield, Robert L. Larson, and W. A. Smith for the majority; Oliver W. Lawrence, Henry Kaare Peterson, G. K. Thompson, and Charles F. Wennestrum dissenting. Iowa Judicial Branch, "Public Information>Iowa Court's History>Past Iowa Supreme Court Justices," http://www.iowacourts.gov/Public_Information/Iowa_Courts_History/Past_Iowa_Supreme_Court_Justices/ (last accessed 11/13/2011); Edward N. Dodge, ed., *Business Men of Iowa: A Biographical Cross Section of Commercial Financial, Industrial, Professional, and Agricultural and Public Life within the State 1953* (Des Moines, 1953), 61, 240, 301, 326, 421, 554, 580, 683, 726, 773 (this publication identifies six of the justices as Protestant but does not indicate a religious preference for the other three justices); Justice Robert L. Larson to President Millard G. Roberts, Parsons College, 12/23/1955, file: Correspondence 1950-62, box 2: Speeches 1953-1971, Correspondence Personal 1950-60, Robert L. Larson Collection, State Historical Society of Iowa, Iowa City (hereafter cited as Larson Collection); Lawrence Kestenbaum, "William L. Bliss," *Political Graveyard.com Index to Politicians*, <http://politicalgraveyard.com/bio/blight-block.html#555.20.98> (last accessed 11/6/2011).

were motivated by a sense of public service and a commitment to the rule of law rather than by political power. Chief Justice Norman R. Hays came from a family of lawyers and was a county attorney and a district judge before his appointment to the Iowa Supreme Court in 1946. A grandson who was raised by Judge Hays remembers him as passionate about politics and a “news junkie,” a sociable but reserved man who was respectful of others and never raised his voice at his wife.⁷³ Before his appointment to the state’s highest court, Justice Robert L. Larson had served as attorney for Iowa City and Johnson County and as state attorney general. He spoke widely to civic groups on a range of topics related to citizenship and the rule of law. In a letter to the president of Parsons College, his undergraduate alma mater, he summed up his public service. “My main interest is the welfare of my fellowmen, and [I] have concentrated my efforts to get everyone to respect and obey the laws of our state and nation, as well as God’s superior laws; to respect one another’s rights as individuals as well as fellow-citizens and to help others help themselves.”⁷⁴

Salaries were modest, and the justices received minimal compensation for expenses. Attorney White recalled that some justices slept in the back of the courtroom when the court was in session.⁷⁵ In 1960 Judge Larson described this arrangement.

It’s a rather antique setup . . . and it has been there . . . ever since the State house was built. Originally the judges and their wives stayed in those cubbyholes [small rooms behind the conference rooms which were adjacent to the courtroom] and they cooked and lived there regularly. Of course as the court grew from three to five, and then to seven, such quarters were not adequate. Now the rooms behind the conference rooms have become offices and sleeping quarters, with cots, desks and books. When I joined the

73. *Knoxville Journal*, 9/9/1946; Lorin Nelson “Larry” Hays IV, e-mail to Joy Smith, 6/2/2011. Judge Hays’s father, Lorin Nelson Hays, and his uncle, E. R. Hays, moved to Knoxville, Iowa, from Fostoria, Ohio, in the decade following the Civil War and established a law practice. Hays’s uncle served a term in the U.S. House of Representatives, and his father was elected to the state legislature in 1879 and as a district judge in 1911. Hays, e-mail to Smith.

74. Robert L. Larson to Millard G. Roberts, 12/12/1955, file: Correspondence 1950–62, box 2, Larson Collection.

75. White interview.

court, all but about one or two members of the court slept there. Now only four do so. The rest of us live in hotels while we are in session at Des Moines.⁷⁶

Justice Hays's grandson recalled that when the court was in session his grandmother would drive his grandfather to Des Moines, where he would live for the week in the old Kirkwood Hotel. "Others always assumed that a Supreme Court Justice made a lot of money, but they didn't. [Grandpa] retired without much in the way of benefits and left only a small estate."⁷⁷

Although the court gradually made procedural changes in response to the demands of a growing docket of cases, the court's routine grew out of decades of tradition. The court convened in the State Capitol in Des Moines for one week of each month except July and August. Monday was reserved for judicial conference. On the remaining days of the week the justices typically heard six cases each day. The mantle of chief justice rotated among the judges, with each judge serving a six-month term.⁷⁸ Responsibility for writing opinions was also assigned on a rotating basis. Each day closed with an informal conference when the judges shared preliminary views. At the end of a week-long session the judges returned to their hometowns for the remainder of the month to research and write opinions. Once drafted, mimeographed copies of opinions were circulated by mail. Formal concurrences were sent to the author of an opinion. If a judge did not concur with an opinion, he wrote and circulated a dissenting opinion. At the Monday conference the following month the judges formally voted on each decision, indicating concurrence or dissent. If there were conflicting views, a case might be held over to allow time for both sides to

76. Robert L. Larson, "Speech to Appellate Practice Class," 4/19/1960, folder: Speeches, box 2, Larson Collection.

77. Hays, e-mail to Smith.

78. In 1960 the Iowa legislature directed a shift to a permanent chief justice elected by the justices. Judge Larson was the first person elected to this position. Larson, "Speech to Appellate Practice Class." A letter of congratulations on Judge Larson's appointment as the court's first permanent chief justice, from Clarence Kading, the Judicial Department statistician, alludes to Larson's salary increase to \$14,500. Clarence A. Kading to Robert L. Larson, 11/9/1960, file: Correspondence 1950-62, box 2, Larson Collection.

present their views and modify their opinions to gain more support.⁷⁹

The court did not require oral arguments, but an attorney's ability to craft and present an argument could significantly influence the court's opinion. The justice assigned to write the opinion read the case briefs the night before the hearing. One or two other justices might read the briefs in advance, but most had little familiarity with a case before it was heard. The appellant was allowed 30 minutes to present the case and 15 minutes on reply. The ability to briefly state the facts of the case, clearly articulate the questions of law, and persuasively and concisely present an argument was important. In a speech to a group of law students, Judge Larson emphasized the importance of oral argument.

You have the nine member court passing on your case—not just one or two judges especially interested in your problem. If you should do a poor job of arguing orally or, by repetition, put the members to sleep, they probably won't know enough about your case when it is written to take issue with the judge who wrote the opinion, and it may go through without close scrutiny of several members of the court.⁸⁰

Frederick White's University of Chicago moot court experience had taught him the importance of a carefully honed oral argument. He was prepared to capture the judges' attention.⁸¹

RESPONSIVENESS to questions of equality and civil rights is a hallmark of the Iowa Supreme Court. In the first case to come before the Iowa Territorial Court, *In Re the matter of Ralph 1839*, the court determined that Ralph, a slave working in the lead mines near Dubuque under a written agreement with his Missouri owner, could not be forced to return to slavery in Missouri when he failed to purchase his freedom. The ruling stated that "'no man in this territory can be reduced to slavery.'" In *Clark v. The Board of Directors*, decided in 1868, the court found that

79. Larson, "Speech to Appellate Practice Class."

80. *Ibid.*

81. White interview.

segregated schools were fundamentally unequal. The ruling directed that a 12-year-old African American girl be admitted to her neighborhood school, stating that “‘the law makes no distinction as to the right of children . . . to attend the public schools.’” Emma Coger, an African American woman who had been removed from a steamboat dining room, was granted the same rights and privileges as white passengers in the 1873 case, *Coger v. The North Western Union Packet Co.* In 1869 the Iowa Supreme Court was the first court in the nation to admit a woman, Arabella A. Mansfield, to the practice of law. In *State v. Walker* (1921), the court was one of the first in the nation to reason that the Nineteenth Amendment made women eligible for jury service.⁸²

Frederick White hoped to extend the court’s record of affirming civil rights. His challenge was to convince the court that the concept of loss of consortium remained valid while arguing that the justices should reject the structure of coverture, which provided the basis for the claim. If he overemphasized equality between husband and wife, the court could decide that neither husband nor wife could recover for loss of consortium. Maude would then not recover for her loss. In that context, White did not argue for a radical redefinition of gender roles in marriage. He focused on the love and affection in marriage and argued that each partner had equal rights to that love and affection. That argument was consistent with the *Hitaffer* court’s reasoning and the understanding of marriage in the 1950s.

In his brief, White emphasized the court’s opportunity to change an unjust law. He first sought to establish that a husband in Iowa could recover for loss of consortium based on negligence. In doing so, White cited older cases based in the common law that emphasized affection and love in marriage.⁸³ In this way, White focused on affirming the central role of marriage in society.

82. “Iowa Judicial Branch: Early Civil Rights Cases,” http://www.iowacourts.org/Public_Information/Iowa_Courts_History/Civil_Rights/index.asp (last accessed 10/26/2011); Brief for Mark E. Schantz et al. as Amici Curiae Supporting Plaintiff-Appellees, *Varnum v. Brien*, 763 N.W.2d 862 (Iowa 2009) (No. 07-1499).

83. Appellant’s Brief and Argument, *Acuff v. Schmit*, 248 Iowa 272 (Iowa 1956) (No. 10-48939), 10-11, 18, 20.

White opened his argument by stating that the case was “a case of first impression,” which meant that the Iowa Supreme Court had not yet decided whether a wife could bring a loss of consortium claim based on negligence. He presented the case as an opportunity for the judges to affirm the cultural understanding of marriage at that time and declare coverture dead. White stated that all reasons for denying wives the claim went “back to an era when a husband was not only lord and master of his household but was the only medium through which his wife could enter the courts.” White painted the past as a barbaric time and the present as an enlightened era.⁸⁴

White was careful not to challenge the institution of marriage itself or the roles within marriage. In fact, White stated that the married women’s property acts did not change the nature of the duties of husband and wife. Instead, he said, those acts were evidence that legislatures intended for men and women to have equal rights before the law. Equal legal rights would not entail restructuring the marital relationship; husbands and wives would maintain distinct roles.⁸⁵

White made it clear that allowing wives to bring loss of consortium claims based in negligence would affirm the marital relationship. He quoted from a previous Iowa Supreme Court decision that described the nature of marriage: “The marriage state is not one entered into for the purposes of labor and support alone. Considerations of the highest character, as the comfort and happiness of the parties . . . give to each the right to the affection, companionship, and society of the other.”⁸⁶ White deemphasized the economics of marriage and highlighted the social and relational aspects of marriage. That strategy avoided highlighting any possible disruption to marital roles and duties that giving wives the cause of action might create. White’s strategy also stressed the ability of the loss of consortium award to affirm cultural values, which was an argument for continuing to grant loss of consortium awards to husbands and extending the right to wives. Denying both husbands and wives the claim might achieve equality, but it would not reflect cultural values.

84. *Ibid.*, 8, 11.

85. *Ibid.*, 16–17.

86. *Ibid.*, 19.

White offered the court an opportunity to strengthen marriage by adding to the benefits of marriage.

Glenn Beers and R. Bruce Hughes, the attorneys for the defendant, responded to White's argument with numerous references to cases denying wives the right to bring loss of consortium claims based on negligence.⁸⁷ They noted that although no Iowa court had considered this particular issue, many courts had, and almost all had rejected White's argument. They repeated reasons for denying the claim found in other decisions and stated that "a mere listing of the cited cases [was] persuasive."⁸⁸

Without a central theme in their brief, oral argument did not go well for Beers and Hughes. White remembers that the defense lawyers argued unsuccessfully that granting the claim to wives would result in too many cases for the courts to handle. White also believes that Beers and Hughes made a crucial mistake at oral argument by noting that all the justices had represented insurance companies. White thinks the judges did not appreciate the insinuation that they did not decide cases independently.⁸⁹

The Iowa Supreme Court found White's argument persuasive. The court reversed Judge Heath's dismissal of the case and held that wives do have a claim for loss of consortium based on negligence. Norman Hays, who wrote the opinion for the majority, squarely addressed the defense attorneys' reliance on previous case law.

While we recognize the almost total lack of precedent for allowing appellant's cause of action, we deem precedent to be worthy of support only when it can stand the scrutiny of logic and sound reasoning in the light of present-day standards and ideals. We think the reasoning and logic advanced in the *Hitaffer* case is sound; that the reasoning and logic advanced by the great weight of authority denying relief is not.⁹⁰

The Iowa Supreme Court found that the married women's property acts had abolished coverture. The court also concluded that

87. Appellee's Brief and Argument, *Acuff v. Schmit*, 248 Iowa 272 (Iowa 1956) (No. 10-48939), 6-25.

88. *Ibid.*, 6.

89. White interview.

90. *Acuff*, 248 Iowa at 280-81.

consortium referred to love and affection rather than an economic exchange. White's focus on contrasting wives' rights in the modern era with wives' rights under coverture was a successful strategy; the court emphasized that contrast throughout its decision.⁹¹

Judge Hays found the contrast between current values and the values embedded in the concept of coverture especially striking. He described coverture as an "archaic rule" where "the husband and wife were considered as one, and *he* was the one." He declared that "a wife [was] no longer her husband's chattel." Using the terms "modern" and "today" several times in his opinion, Judge Hays indicated that the court's opinion was based in present values that differed dramatically from the values of coverture. Despite finding coverture "archaic," the court did not find the concept of loss of consortium, which had grown out of coverture, outdated.⁹² White had persuasively presented the case as an opportunity to strengthen marriage, and the court seized the opportunity to define the meaning of marriage for the "modern" era.

Four judges dissented.⁹³ Henry Peterson, who wrote the dissenting opinion, emphasized that "the question involved in this case ha[d] been considered by the Supreme Court of at least twenty states" and only "two or three decisions" agreed with the majority while "more than fifty decisions" reached the opposite conclusion. He quoted at length from various decisions denying the wife the claim.⁹⁴

Attorneys Beers and Hughes filed a petition for rehearing. They argued that "the decision of the majority would make Iowa an 'island' in the sea of judicial opinion." The defense lawyers again argued that the legislature should decide the issue because it involved "very grave policy questions." In his response, White cited Judge Benjamin Cardozo for the proposi-

91. *Ibid.*, 274, 278-81.

92. *Ibid.*, 274, 277-80. By contrast, the Iowa Supreme Court did abolish the alienation of affections action in Iowa in 1981, finding that the "theory [of recovery] was rooted in ideas [the court had] long since renounced, involving wives as property." *Fundermann v. Mickelson*, 304 N.W.2d 790, 791 (Iowa 1981).

93. *Acuff*, 248 Iowa at 272.

94. *Ibid.*, 281, 288-90.

tion that changing the law when social customs changed was a judicial function. Agreeing with White, the court denied the petition for rehearing.⁹⁵

Acuff v. Schmit was one of several cases in the mid-1950s in which the Iowa Supreme Court reversed precedent or decided a case differently from the majority of courts. This may have caused some consternation, for not long after the *Acuff* ruling, Judge Larson, who had sided with the majority in *Acuff*, prepared a speech describing the court's position with regard to *stare decisis*.

The volume of overruled precedents has led to the query as to whether or not we are without hesitation in upsetting established rules to reach justice in the case at bar. I do not so consider the make-up of our court. While there are perhaps a liberal or two, and a conservative or two, on this court, I could not classify the group as either liberal or conservative in its far-reaching policies or objectives. District judges and lawyers have no hesitancy in contending for positions they believe are correct, and we do carefully consider their arguments.⁹⁶

Larson discussed nine cases, including *Acuff*, filed between December 1955 and October 1956 in which the court's decision was a reversal of precedent or a decision in conflict with other courts. The court, he claimed, was not interested in challenging current social mores, but it was committed to protecting the rights of every citizen.⁹⁷

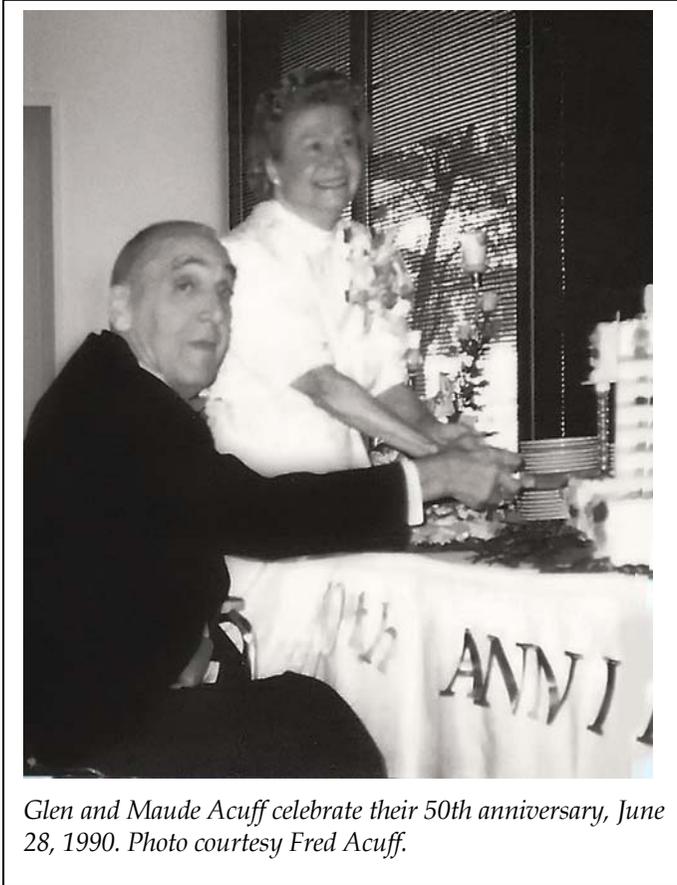
The *Acuff* decision reversed and remanded a ruling dismissing the case. Having established that a wife could claim loss of consortium, the Iowa Supreme Court directed District Court Judge Heath to hear the case. The case was set for trial in October 1957. Before the trial date, the insurance company offered to settle the case and Maude Acuff accepted.⁹⁸ White recalled that

95. Appellee's Petition for Rehearing, *Acuff v. Schmit*, 248 Iowa 272 (Iowa 1956) (No. 10-48939), 2, 5; Appellant's Resistance to Petition for Rehearing, *Acuff v. Schmit*, 248 Iowa 272 (Iowa 1956) (No. 10-48939), 5.

96. Robert L. Larson, untitled speech ("It has been said, with some evidence of truth, that the Iowa Supreme Court is not unalterably bound to the rule of *stare decisis*"), folder: Speeches 1952, box 1: Speeches 1947-1952, Larson Collection.

97. *Ibid.*

98. Acuffs interview; White interview.



Glen and Maude Acuff celebrate their 50th anniversary, June 28, 1990. Photo courtesy Fred Acuff.

Maude did not want to go through the stress of a trial and felt “vindicated” by the Iowa Supreme Court’s decision. In December 1957 White filed a motion to dismiss.⁹⁹

IN THE NEARLY FOUR-AND-A-HALF YEARS between Glen Acuff’s accident and the final resolution of Maude’s loss of consortium suit, Maude and Glen began rebuilding their family life. Maude became a “working woman,” advancing at Santa Claus Industries to the position of director of purchasing, a post she would hold until the company sold out in the mid-1960s.

99. Court documents, *Acuff v. Schmit*, 248 Iowa 272 (Iowa 1956) (No. 10-48939).

Then, with the full responsibility of financial support for the family on her shoulders, Maude answered an ad for a medical records transcriber at St. Francis Hospital. At the hospital she worked her way up to the position of director of central services, a title she proudly held until she retired in 1992.¹⁰⁰

At home, Glen was not idle. His sons became his arms and legs. With Glen providing supervision and direction, the boys remodeled the bathroom, cultivated and tended a truck garden, and canned vegetables. When the older boys moved on to other activities and left home, it fell to the youngest son, Fred, to replace them. He recalls boosting Glen onto the tractor to till the strawberries, following his father's direction to set up a mobile home, and, when he was 14, getting both of his parents in the car when his mother suffered a minor heart attack and, under his father's direction, driving to the hospital in Waterloo.¹⁰¹

Eventually Glen began assisting neighbors with their taxes, an endeavor he gradually expanded into a part-time seasonal business. Although he was proud of Maude's success at the jobs she held, the inability to support his family always ate at Glen. His son Fred put it this way: "One of the things my Dad's generation was adamant about was that a man supports the family. . . . If there was one tough thing for my father when he broke his neck it was the idea that he couldn't support his family the way he envisioned that he should." Glen Acuff was 75 when he died on April 27, 1996. Maude died on August 20, 2010.¹⁰²

Acuff v. Schmit established Frederick White's reputation as an attorney who was willing, once he took a case, to follow through to appeal if appropriate. Following the *Acuff* decision, Yale Law School placed the case in its moot court program, and White received inquiries from plaintiff and defense lawyers seeking to understand how he had developed his argument.¹⁰³ White was well on his way to becoming a respected member of the Iowa Bar and establishing a general practice that extended across 50 years.

100. Acuffs interview.

101. *Ibid.*

102. *Ibid.*; "Metro Deaths—Glen Robert Acuff," *Waterloo Cedar Falls Courier*, 4/29/1996; "Obituaries—Maude L. Acuff 1922-2010."

103. White interview.

AFTER THE IOWA SUPREME COURT decided *Acuff* in 1956, courts around the country gradually allowed wives to bring loss of consortium claims based on negligence.¹⁰⁴ Progress was uneven and slow; in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s, most states decided that the wife could recover, but some courts continued to issue decisions denying wives the claim, and as late as 1997 six states still denied recovery for the wife while granting it to the husband.¹⁰⁵ Today all jurisdictions in the United States allow both husbands and wives to recover for loss of consortium based in negligence. In contrast, in England, where the loss of consortium claim and the doctrine of coverture originated, “courts came to regard all actions for loss of consortium as misconceived.” In the United States, the debate between judges who would allow the claim and those who would deny it was at times lively, and the reasons judges gave for their positions illustrate the nuances in views on marriage and women in the mid-twentieth century.¹⁰⁶

The forceful dissenting opinions in two cases denying recovery show how a wife’s right to the loss of consortium claim could be alternately framed as an equality issue or as a decision on the significance of marriage and its definition. In *Deshotel v. Atchison*, decided in 1958, the Supreme Court of California refused to allow the wife to recover for loss of consortium. Judge Jesse Carter, who wrote “frequent and outspoken” dissents, declared the majority’s opinion “neither logical nor sound”; he could see no difference between a husband’s loss of consortium and a wife’s loss of consortium. He argued that the court’s decision was “a denial of the equal protection of the laws guaranteed by both the federal and State constitutions.” He believed that marriage gave the parties rights that, when destroyed, deserved compensation. Carter described the wife’s loss in dramatic terms:

104. Minzer et al., eds., *Damages in Tort Actions*, 11.02[2][b].

105. *Ibid.*; Dorothy Stetson, *Women’s Rights in the USA: Policy Debates and Gender Roles* (New York, 1997), 190–91; *Neuberg v. Bobowicz*, 162 A.2d 662 (Pa. 1960), overruled by *Hopkins v. Blanco*, 320 A.2d 139 (Pa. 1974); *Deshotel v. Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Ry. Co.*, 328 P.2d 449 (Cal. 1958).

106. Richard A. Epstein, *Cases and Materials on Torts* (New York, 2004), 821; *Neuberg v. Bobowicz*, 162 A.2d 662 (Pa. 1960), overruled by *Hopkins v. Blanco*, 320 A.2d 139 (Pa. 1974).

“In place of a healthy, normal husband she now has a hopelessly bedridden invalid.” His reasoning reflected sentiments expressed in other cases, but, unlike the judges in many of those other cases, he explicitly named the denial of the claim a denial of equal protection. He saw the case through the lens of gender equality.¹⁰⁷

In *Neuberg v. Bobowicz*, decided in 1960, the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania also refused to allow the wife to recover for loss of consortium, finding that the action was, “at best, a vague, indefinable and embarrassing left-over from another day and age.” Judge Michael Musmanno, also well known for his dissenting opinions, wrote a lengthy dissent in which he expressed outrage at the majority’s opinion, which he believed “reduce[d] the holy relationship of married life to one of a mere business partnership.” Judge Musmanno saw *Neuberg* as a case about whether to strengthen or weaken “the most respected relationship in civilization, the marriage relationship.” Judge Musmanno celebrated gender roles within marriage and believed the married women’s property acts strengthened that structure.

The remedial legislation [married women’s property acts] was not aimed at toppling over the husband. The husband is still the head of the household, he is still the person responsible for the security of the home, he is still the protector of his wife and children, all of which, of course, he should be. . . . The remedial legislation . . . has increased rather than diminished the strength of the bonds of mutuality between her and husband. If it did not do that, it could scarcely be regarded as ‘remedial.’ Anything which weakens the marital status is catastrophic, not remedial.

Denying the wife recovery for loss of consortium was denying the sanctity of marriage and its significance in society.¹⁰⁸

Judge Musmanno contrasted his definition of marriage with the majority’s definition, concluding that gender was irrelevant

107. *Deshotel v. Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Ry. Co.*, 328 P.2d 449, 451–52, 454, 455 (Cal. 1958); Corinne Lathrop Gilb, “Justice Jesse W. Carter, An American Individualist,” *Pacific Historical Review* 29 (1960), 145; *Rodriguez v. Bethlehem Steel Corp.*, 525 P.2d 669 (Cal. 1974), later overruled *Deshotel*. See *Boeken v. Philip Morris USA, Inc.*, 230 F.3d 342, 347 (Cal. 2010).

108. *Neuberg v. Bobowicz*, 162 A.2d 662, 666, 675–77 (Pa. 1960); Joel Fishman, “Justice Michael A. Musmanno and Constitutional Dissents, 1967–68,” *Albany Law Review* 68 (2004–2005), 350.

in the majority's definition. He lamented that "it used to be that when Mary Quadrille married John Cabot they truly became Mr. and Mrs. Cabot. Under today's decision, the wedded couple will become Quadrille & Cabot, Partnership."¹⁰⁹ In his formulation, gender matters; the couple would use "Mr." and "Mrs." in Musmanno's ideal marriage. The couple would also share the same name. Under the majority's definition of marriage, gender is irrelevant and the couple retains their separate names. Musmanno argued that denying the wife recovery actually destroyed gender roles, while allowing recovery would strengthen them.

Judge Musmanno also emphasized the distinctive nature of the wife's loss. Believing that the family was "the flesh and blood of our American civilization," Musmanno asked how depriving the "sacred right to motherhood" could "mean nothing to the law." He believed that a woman was entitled to "comfort, companionship, society and love" when she "[gave] up her home and family" to join her husband.¹¹⁰ Her loss of consortium was a gendered loss. The different approaches of Judges Carter and Musmanno reflected conflicting cultural responses to the changing nature of marriage and gender roles.

Indeed, in the 1950s, when many families were separated from extended family and other social ties and wives often stayed at home, the loss of a husband's companionship would have been a significant loss. The expansion of suburbs "weakened extended-family ties . . . and fostered a style of life based on traditional gender roles in the home."¹¹¹ Weakened ties between extended family members elevated the significance of marriage in people's lives. The Iowa Supreme Court and other courts decided loss of consortium cases in the context of a culture where the importance of marriage was growing.

An inability to have children was also particularly significant to women at that time. As Elaine Tyler May explains, "The message in the popular culture was clear: Motherhood was the ultimate fulfillment of female sexuality and the primary source of a woman's identity."¹¹² According to Judge Musmanno, al-

109. *Neuberg*, 162 A.2d at 674.

110. *Ibid.*, 668-69.

111. May, *Homeward Bound*, 166.

112. *Ibid.*, 135.

lowing the wife to recover for loss of consortium recognized and celebrated the traditional gender structure the wife had lost in her marriage through the injury to her husband.

Arguments based in the concept of equality could have led to widespread abolition of the loss of consortium action altogether, but the cultural background of the 1950s provided judges with persuasive reasons to allow wives to recover. Later cases more clearly addressed the concept of equality, but judges decided those cases in the context of the earlier cases.¹¹³ *Acuff* and other early cases established authority that later judges could rely upon.

THE LEGAL RIGHTS of wives have been extended in the years since *Acuff*, but economic equality between men and women remains elusive. Because women remain largely responsible for household labor and care of dependents and because the “ideal employee” is often expected to be available for full-time and overtime work, women often remain dependent on men.¹¹⁴ The effects of coverture in shaping marital roles persist.

The judges who allowed wives to recover for loss of consortium recognized a wife’s disadvantage before the law, but they did not question the inequality inherent in the economic structure of the marital relationship. Despite the focus on love and affection in marriage in many decisions, the result of allowing a wife to bring a loss of consortium claim was a monetary award. That monetary award was an acknowledgment of the inequality of economic opportunity facing a wife who struggled to support the family after her husband could no longer provide that support. Because Maude Acuff’s monetary award was small, she needed to get a job outside the home, which reversed gender roles in the marriage. However, a monetary award does contribute to a wife’s ability to maintain the traditional eco-

113. *Hopkins v. Blanco*, 320 A.2d 139 (Pa. 1974).

114. For a discussion of the persistence of wives’ subordination and dependency within the marital relationship even after the dismantling of coverture, see Martha Fineman, *The Autonomy Myth: A Theory of Dependency* (New York, 2004), 1-28, 110-200; Sullivan, *Constitutional Context*, 1-22, 41-150; Williams, *Unbending Gender*, 1-39, 115-20.

conomic structure of the marital relationship. In this way, a monetary award may reinforce the wife's role as a dependent.

Allowing a wife to recover for loss of consortium allowed the state to "pass the costs of welfare on to private individuals."¹¹⁵ If a wife received money from a private citizen for the consequences of a disruption in her marital relationship, her family would not be forced to rely heavily on the state for economic assistance. This recovery added to the benefits of marriage, an institution itself designed to ensure that the state does not have to pay these costs, according to Martha Fineman. Fineman argues that "the institution of the family frees the market to act without consideration or accommodation for dependency." As Joan Williams puts it, "Mothers marginalize to enable fathers to perform as ideal workers." This family structure perpetuates gender inequality by assigning care for dependents to women, who are then unable to perform as "ideal workers" in the economy in the way that men can. Allowing a wife to recover for loss of consortium made sense within a system designed to ensure that the state would not be responsible for dependents.¹¹⁶

Decisions allowing wives to bring loss of consortium claims did not radically restructure gender roles or question the institution of marriage. These decisions did, however, reflect a change in the cultural understanding of marriage in the mid-twentieth century. Previously seen as an economic exchange, marriage now also signaled companionship and romantic and sexual love; it became one of the principal sources of emotional support in many people's lives.

The Iowa Supreme Court decided *Acuff* in the context of a culture that celebrated marriage as the primary relationship in people's lives. This cultural background made possible the gradual emergence of the wife's right to loss of consortium based on negligence. Courts could have rejected the claim for both wives and husbands by finding the claim rooted in outdated concepts. Instead, they found the claim relevant. Marriage and the common understanding of its significance in the culture were central themes in the decisions allowing wives to bring

115. Hartog, *Man and Wife*, 159.

116. Fineman, *The Autonomy Myth*, 37; Williams, *Unbending Gender*, 39, 115.

loss of consortium claims. The cultural landscape of the 1950s, when marriage defined people's lives, allowed for the continuation and expansion of the loss of consortium claim.

Opening Doors for Iowa Women: Gender, Politics, and the Displaced Homemaker, 1977–1983

ANNA L. BOSTWICK FLAMING

IN WENDY SCARCELLO'S CLOSET hung a red and gold Bill Blass evening gown, a reminder of the "comfortable and lovely life" she had led during the 1970s as "a good homemaker." She had raised two children, kept house, and cooked; she did volunteer work. Although Scarcello earned no wages, the family lived comfortably on her husband's income. But the salary that paid for the designer dress disappeared when her husband did. When divorce displaced her from her occupation as a homemaker, Scarcello was left to support herself and her two children. If she had been a nurse or a secretary, she might have collected unemployment or relied on professional acquaintances to ease her transition into a new job. As a laid-off housewife, however, Scarcello had no such help. She could clean toilets and manage a home, but without recent experience in the waged workforce, she discovered that she had "nothing concrete to offer employers." In the 1970s she had been a financially secure housewife; by the early 1980s Scarcello and her children were making do on about a third of their previous income.¹

I am grateful to the State Historical Society of Iowa for a 2010–11 SHSI Research Grant, which supported my work on this article. I am also grateful to Shirley Sandage, who died in the summer of 2012, and Joyce Krukow for allowing me to interview them for this project.

1. Scarcello's story is told in Sherry Ricchiardi, "Wage Gap Creates New Class: The 'Pink-Collar' Poor," *Des Moines Register*, 10/31/1982.

THE ANNALS OF IOWA 72 (Summer 2013). © The State Historical Society of Iowa, 2013.

The experiences—divorce, widowhood, or the disability of a spouse—that thrust Iowa women like Scarcello into the job market after years of unwaged homemaking were certainly not a new phenomenon in the United States. Yet efforts to ameliorate the plight of wives and mothers expelled from their domestic careers by the loss of a breadwinning spouse were galvanized when activists in the 1970s and 1980s made displaced homemakers a household name.

Letitia “Tish” Sommers, a California divorcée, had coined the term *displaced homemaker* in 1974. A feminist activist who led the Task Force on Older Women for the National Organization for Women (NOW), Sommers had both the organizing experience to articulate the problem and the media savvy to popularize the term.² The zeal of Sommers and her allies led to legislation in the Golden State that funded the nation’s first displaced homemaker center, which opened in Oakland in 1976. Soon after, a similar bill in Maryland established the nation’s second center in Baltimore. As a result, the still limited scholarship on the history of displaced homemakers has emphasized the movement in California and, to a lesser extent, Maryland.³ Yet the displaced homemaker movement was national in scope, and the strategies adopted by each center varied according to local circumstances.

The Door Opener, a displaced homemaker center that opened in Mason City, Iowa, in 1977, was the vision of Shirley M. Sandage and Margaret Garrity, energetic activists whose commitment to displaced homemakers combined expertise from previous antipoverty work with a keen understanding of gender inequality and community politics. For the displaced homemaker movement to thrive in Iowa, activists needed to cultivate friends in what historian Dorothy Schwieder has called the

2. Patricia Huckle, *Tish Sommers, Activist, and the Founding of the Older Women’s League* (Knoxville, TN, 1991), 14, 186; National Organization for Women, “NOW Task Force on Older Women,” November 1973, box 5, Tish Sommers Papers, Special Collections and University Archives, San Diego State University, San Diego.

3. Much of the history of the movement has been written by movement activists and others close to the movement. See, for example, Laurie Shields, *Displaced Homemakers: Organizing for a New Life* (New York, 1981); and Huckle, *Tish Sommers*. See also Annegret S. Ogden, *The Great American Housewife: From Helpmate to Wage Earner, 1776–1986* (Westport, CT, 1986).

“middle land.”⁴ Helping displaced homemakers in rural Iowa not only required a different approach than in Oakland or Baltimore, but also carried with it the symbolic value of mobilizing in America’s heartland. In a place and time marked by skepticism of both feminism and state-run antipoverty programs, The Door Opener’s success depended on a strategic use of government funds and feminist critiques to better the lives of former homemakers in Iowa.

Focusing on the history of the movement in northern Iowa broadens our understanding of efforts to help displaced homemakers in three significant ways. First, the agency’s efforts to help displaced homemakers coincided with debates about the proper role of government in people’s lives. The Door Opener opened its doors for the first time in 1977 with funding from the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA). Originally passed in 1973 to combat unemployment through job training and job creation, by 1977 CETA legislation was the subject of congressional hearings on reauthorization. Opponents weary of the Great Society’s expansion of federal government rejected CETA’s job creation programs and charged that it was prone to fraud and inefficiency at the local level. The Door Opener and programs like it became even more conspicuously linked to federal antipoverty programs in 1978, when President Carter signed the reauthorized CETA into law, explicitly recognizing displaced homemakers as one of the disadvantaged groups on whom federal funds should be spent.⁵ Support for the War on Poverty had been precarious almost from the moment of its inception, and stereotypes about poor women’s manipulation of welfare were already congealing. Negative images of obese, lazy, non-white welfare mothers appeared in the speeches of Ronald Reagan and in publications like *The New Yorker*.⁶ Despite these problems, government funds were a crucial component in helping poor

4. Dorothy Schwieder, *Iowa: The Middle Land* (Ames, 1996), ix–xii.

5. Dorothy McBride Stetson, “Gendering Policy Debates: Job Training and Abortion Regulation,” in *Gender and American Politics: Women, Men, and the Political Process*, ed. Sue Tolleson-Rinehart and Jyl J. Josephson (Armonk, NY, 2000), 119–21.

6. Susan Sheehan, “A Welfare Mother,” *The New Yorker*, 9/29/1975, 42–43, is described in Susan J. Douglas and Meredith W. Michaels, *The Mommy Myth: The Idealization of Motherhood and How it Has Undermined Women* (New York, 2004), 173–75.

women. Operating during an economic recession and amid a political climate that included suspicion of government assistance, The Door Opener attempted to unite the potential of federal grant programs with the flexibility of a local, private non-profit organization. It navigated the restrictions attached to federal money, and it reassured community members that the agency helped to keep vulnerable people off of government assistance.⁷

Second, The Door Opener highlighted the gendered dimensions of poverty and violence in an environment skeptical of the women's movement. Evidence of destitute or beaten women challenged pretenses to community serenity. Only 15 years before The Door Opener opened, Warner Bros. movie studio promoted Mason City not only as the inspiration for the community immortalized in *The Music Man*, but also as a living example of tranquil American life where patriarchy meant peace and order rather than the feminization of poverty.⁸ The displaced homemakers served by The Door Opener challenged this Hollywood fantasy. Issues of sexual assault were so threatening to the community and so rarely discussed that Joyce Krukow, an intern and later a board member of The Door Opener, recalled, "One of the first things that I learned was the word 'incest,' and I had to look it up in the library."⁹ Today, Music Man Square, a nostalgic tribute to a fictional, idyllic version of Mason City, stands just around the corner from The Door Opener's old office. In this atmosphere, displaced homemaker activists struggled to market their movement to a constituency that could be wary of feminist critiques. The Door Opener's staff could choose to prioritize feminist identity or to do feminist work. As activists within the national Displaced Homemakers Network, Shirley

7. Shirley Sandage, interview with author, 8/30/2010, Iowa City, Iowa Women's Archives, University of Iowa Libraries, Iowa City (hereafter cited as IWA). Historians are rethinking the War on Poverty, highlighting successes at the grassroots level that benefited and empowered poor people in communities across the nation. See *The War on Poverty: A New Grassroots History, 1964-1980*, ed. Annelise Orleck and Lisa Gayle Hazirjian (Athens, GA, 2011). See also Annelise Orleck, *Storming Caesar's Palace: How Black Mothers Fought Their Own War on Poverty* (Boston, 2005).

8. Linda A. Robinson, "Right Here in Mason City: *The Music Man* and Small-Town Nostalgia," in *Taking Place: Location and the Moving Image*, ed. John David Rhodes and Elena Gorfinkel (Minneapolis, 2011), 133-56.

9. Joyce Krukow, interview with author, 6/24/2012, Mason City, IWA.

Sandage and others could be frank in their feminist leanings. In a 1979 speech, for example, Sandage compared her efforts to help women become financially independent to the efforts of Victoria Woodhull, a nineteenth-century feminist activist who, Sandage acknowledged, had been too radical even for many American suffragists.¹⁰ But for *The Door Opener* to succeed in helping women locally in northern Iowa, its staff could not emphasize feminism.

Finally, focusing on northern Iowa broadens our understanding of the movement by highlighting the particular experiences of displaced homemakers in rural areas. The heritage of political activism that shaped local understandings of the displaced homemaker centers in Oakland (the birthplace of the Black Panthers) and Baltimore (where social upheaval followed Martin Luther King's assassination) differed from the political discourse in rural northern Iowa. Mason City had a population of 30,000, and only ten percent of the other communities in the multicounty area *The Door Opener* served had populations greater than 5,000.¹¹ Although the divorce rate in rural areas was beginning to match the rate in urban areas, many Iowa women felt that the stigma of divorce and welfare was greater for rural women.¹² Isolation was a significant reality for women on farms, and that isolation tended to shield domestic abuse from public recognition.¹³ The particular experience of the farm crisis of the 1980s, when interest rates skyrocketed and farm incomes plummeted, meant that many of Iowa's rural homemakers were forced into waged employment just to keep their families afloat.¹⁴ One former Iowa farm wife

10. Sandage also cited the British feminist philosopher Mary Wollstonecraft as an intellectual foremother. Shirley Sandage, "The Door Wasn't Locked; Only Slammed," keynote address, Waterloo Area Extension Service Workshop, 12/4/1979, box 3, Shirley M. Sandage Papers, IWA.

11. Sandage, interview with author; Shirley Sandage, "Rural Women," speech for the Women's Study Group in the People's Republic of China, May 1981, box 3, Sandage Papers.

12. *The Feminization of Poverty . . . Is this Happening in Iowa?* (Des Moines, 1984), 4; Deborah Fink, *Open Country Iowa: Rural Women, Tradition and Change* (Albany, NY, 1986), 208.

13. Krukow interview.

14. Schwieder, *Iowa: The Middle Land*, 309, 313; Mark Friedberger, *Shake-out: Iowa Farm Families in the 1980s* (Lexington, KY, 1989).

who faced bankruptcy—though not the experiences of divorce or widowhood that characterized the displaced homemaker in other parts of the country—explained that the term *displaced homemaker* “defined what happened to me as a housewife” during the farm crisis in Iowa.¹⁵ Rural Iowa homemakers faced their own particular set of problems and possibilities.

THE DOOR OPENER began “opening doors for women” in the summer of 1977. The agency was proud of being “multi-purposed and multifunded.”¹⁶ Although its founders were always concerned about the difficulties faced by those they called “reentry” women, the staff did not originally connect with the emerging national displaced homemakers movement. They envisioned the new center as a resource for solving whatever problems women in north central Iowa faced. The staff dealt with a wide variety of crisis situations, including domestic violence, unemployment, incest, and widowhood. Each year hundreds of displaced homemakers visited The Door Opener in Mason City and its satellite offices in Algona, Osage, and Kensett.

From the beginning, a guiding principle was that the center would collaborate, rather than compete, with existing agencies. The Door Opener guided women through the often bewildering bureaucracy of federal, local, and internal programs ranging from counseling and food assistance to job training and safe houses for victims of abuse. The women (and a few men) who sought assistance at the center met individually with a staff member to assess options, receive referrals, and create a strategy for “follow-through, follow-along, and follow-up service.” In this way the center created an independent space for women while it also influenced and partnered with mainstream institutions. One client enthused, “I feel less trapped. The Door Opener helped me find a way out.”¹⁷

15. Krukow interview.

16. “The Door Opener,” undated brochure, box 2, Sandage Papers.

17. Ibid. In her study of the Texas Battered Women’s Movement, Claire Reinelt explains how a “politics of engagement,” in which autonomous women’s institutions educate and work with mainstream institutions, offers both risk in the form of co-optation and reward in the form of opportunities for growth. Claire Reinelt, “Moving into the Terrain of the State: The Battered Women’s

The Door Opener drew funding from a variety of private and public sources, beginning with a \$100,000 grant through the governor's discretionary CETA funds.¹⁸ Iowa was then one of more than two dozen other states with displaced homemaker legislation pending.¹⁹ In its 1978 session, the Iowa legislature appropriated \$60,000 through the Iowa Department of Social Services to fund a pilot project for displaced homemakers, which was awarded to The Door Opener.²⁰ The center also received some revenue-sharing funds in amounts such as \$1,000 and \$5,000 from the counties it served, though never as much as it requested.²¹ Volunteers were also crucial to the center. Locally recruited workers from AmeriCorps's Volunteers In Service To America (VISTA) ran The Door Opener's nationally recognized rape hotline. The agency also won financial support from private groups such as the Ms. Foundation for Women, churches, and

Movement and the Politics of Engagement," in *Feminist Organizations: Harvest of the New Women's Movement*, ed. Myra Marx Ferree and Patricia Yancey Martin (Philadelphia, 1995), 85.

18. Dix Hollobaugh, "N. Iowa Project Pioneers in Aid for Working Women," *Des Moines Register*, 11/26/1978; Ford Foundation Proposal, 1982, box 2, Sandage Papers.

19. Shields, *Displaced Homemakers*, 64.

20. "The Helpmate: A Resource Guide for Women," 3, box 2, Sandage Papers; "Door Opener May Be National Model," undated newspaper clipping in scrapbook, box 18, Sandage Papers. The \$60,000 allotted for a year of displaced homemaker services in Iowa was less than the \$180,000 in state funding for two years awarded to the nation's first displaced homemaker center in Oakland. See Aileen C. Hernandez and Associates [San Francisco], "First Quarterly Report: Evaluation of the Displaced Homemakers Center, Inc., September, 1976–November 30, 1976," D-216 Displaced Homemaker Archives, Special Collections, University of California–Davis. The state of Maryland funded the nation's second displaced homemaker center, in Baltimore, at \$190,000 per year for three years. See "Maryland Center for Displaced Homemakers, First Year Report—October, 1976–October, 1977, D-216 Displaced Homemaker Archives. In 1979 the Iowa legislature appropriated \$100,000 for each of the fiscal years 1979 and 1980 for programs for displaced homemakers, including the new six-week transition program in Des Moines cosponsored by Drake University and the Des Moines Junior League. See "The Helpmate"; Hollobaugh, "N. Iowa Project."

21. In 1982 The Door Opener requested \$35,000 from the Cerro Gordo County Board of Supervisors and received \$5,000. Franklin County supplied \$4,000, and Mitchell County and Forest City put in \$1,000 each. "Door Opener to Ask Council to Reconsider Aid Request," *Mason City–Clear Lake Globe-Gazette* (hereafter cited simply as *Globe-Gazette*), 3/10/1982.



individuals. Sometimes wives subverted antagonistic spouses by donating money behind their husbands' backs.²²

Other displaced homemaker centers existed in Iowa and throughout the Midwest, but The Door Opener achieved an unusual degree of national recognition. During her visit to The Door Opener in 1980, First Lady Rosalynn Carter declared, "We are using [The Door Opener] program as a model program for those across the country, and I want to assure you that you have a friend in Washington." The agency's director, Shirley Sandage,

22. Sandage, interview with author.

became prominent in the displaced homemakers movement. She had won a Winthrop Rockefeller Award for Distinguished Rural Service, served on an exchange delegation to China, and, in 1981, was elected president of the national Displaced Homemakers Network's board of directors. *Ms. Magazine* profiled *The Door Opener* in its September 1982 issue.²³

Such visibility increased the significance of the center's successes and failures because contemporaries often viewed Iowa as a "barometer of the times."²⁴ *The Door Opener* thus had significant symbolic value as a litmus test for national sentiment.²⁵

MOST OF THE WOMEN who became displaced homemakers in the 1970s had walked down the aisle at a time when wives had little choice but to pursue the occupation of housewife—whether or not they balanced it with waged work. Testifying before the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women, one displaced homemaker explained, "I did everything society asked me to do—grew up, got married, did my very best to raise kids, kept my house cleaned. Now he's gone and I have nothing." Other women explained that their husbands urged them to focus exclusively on homemaking and childrearing, shortsightedly discouraging education or wage-earning for their wives.²⁶

For brides of the Depression era, the protection of male breadwinners justified institutionalized discrimination against wage-earning wives. Iowa women's participation in the work-

23. *The Door Opener*, Annual report for July 1, 1979–June 30, 1980, box 2, Sandage Papers; Ruth Fossedal, "Comprehensive Planning and the Displaced Homemaker Network 1980's Style," box 4, Sandage Papers; Joseph D. Le Valley, "Safe-House Network for Rural Victims," *Ms. magazine*, September 1982.

24. David A. Cooper Associates, Inc., "The State of Iowa: A Survey of Voter Attitudes and Opinions Concerning ERA," May 1980, box 9, Iowa ERA Coalition Records, IWA.

25. This is not to say that Iowa was statistically representative. Judith Ezekial's study of feminist activism in the 1970s focused on a location considered "typical"—Dayton, Ohio—but Ezekial finds that the history of feminism in Dayton departs from the model that emerges from studies of larger cities. See Judith Ezekial, *Feminism in the Heartland* (Columbus, OH, 2002). I make no claim that the experience of displaced homemakers or of their advocates in Iowa was actually typical, even of the rural Midwest.

26. *The Feminization of Poverty. . . Is this Happening in Iowa?*, 4, 28.

force increased 56 percent during World War II as women found employment at the hemp plants in northwest Iowa, in an ammunition plant in Burlington, or driving city buses in Waterloo. After the war, however, postwar sentimentality and fears of economic depression combined to encourage many wives to return to their homes.²⁷ Postwar prosperity ensured that even many working-class families could afford to keep mother at home.

Married women who did pursue waged work faced the reality of a second shift performing domestic duties at home. Even college-educated women assumed that homemaking would be an important part of their future. Until 1958, home economics students at Iowa State College (later Iowa State University) learned homemaking skills and child development in the nation's longest-running "home management" program, complete with live-in babies.²⁸ Childrearing could further complicate the lives of women who managed to combine marriage with a professional career. In the era before the U.S. Supreme Court ruled, in *Griswold v. Connecticut* (1965), that a ban on the use of contraceptives violated the right to marital privacy, even married women had limited access to contraceptives; and some school districts dismissed pregnant teachers.²⁹ Community disapproval was also a concern. As Shirley Sandage explained, "A married mother stretches that umbilical cord to the office at her own risk. If her kids get in any trouble, she'll be blamed."³⁰

27. Schwieder, *Iowa: The Middle Land*, 283.

28. Megan Birk, "Playing House: Training Modern Mothers at Iowa State College Home Management Houses, 1925–1958," *Annals of Iowa* 64 (2005), 39. This is not to suggest that home economics lacked academic rigor. Scholars are increasingly reassessing home economics as a serious discipline—even when it was marketed as preparation for homemaking. See Sarah Stage and Virginia B. Vincenti, *Rethinking Home Economics: Women and the History of the Profession* (Ithaca, NY, 1997); Margaret Rossiter, *Women Scientists in America: Before Affirmative Action, 1940–1972* (Baltimore, 1995); Megan Elias, *Stir it Up: Home Economics in American Culture* (Philadelphia, 2008); and Gwen Kay, "If it did not exist, it would have to be invented: Home Economics in Transition at Iowa's Regents Institutions," *Annals of Iowa* 70 (2011), 132–60.

29. The legality of such regulations continued to be disputed in the 1970s. See *Cedar Rapids Community School District and Cedar Rapids Board of Education, Appellants, v. Joan Parr et al, Appellees*, Supreme Court of Iowa 227 N.W.2d 486 (1975).

30. Shirley Sandage, "Women's Work," convocation speech presented at Morningside College, Sioux City, Iowa, 10/22/1980, box 3, Sandage Papers.

In 1975, as the country prepared for bicentennial celebrations and the term *displaced homemaker* entered the national lexicon, housewives faced a myriad of laws, regulations, and traditions that suggest how substantially their legal and social identities continued to be tied to their husbands. Many legal and institutional rules still evinced the legacies of coverture—a system of gender relations rooted in British common law in which woman’s civil existence in marriage is “suspended” or “entirely merged . . . in that of the husband.”³¹ Many American institutions still assumed the primacy of the idealized American family arrangement—male breadwinner and stay-at-home mother. As late as the mid-1960s, for example, a female student enrolled at the University of Iowa could lose her resident tuition status if she married a non-resident, while marriage had no effect on the residency of a male student.³²

This system made it particularly difficult for non-wage-earning housewives to benefit from social safety nets. A housewife could not qualify for workers’ compensation benefits, even if her injuries required a family to purchase replacement help at substantial cost. If homemakers lost their jobs as a result of divorce or widowhood, they could not qualify for unemployment benefits while they looked for a new means of supporting themselves. Because non-wage-earning housewives earned Social Security only in their husband’s names, they lacked their own disability, retirement, or health benefits. A housewife had access to survivors’ benefits, but a young widow whose children reached the age of 18 (or 22 if enrolled as students) lost those benefits until she turned 60. Until 1979, a divorced woman who had been married for fewer than 20 years lost any right to her husband’s Social Security—no matter how much her contributions inside the home had allowed him to flourish in the job that

31. William Blackstone, *Commentaries on the Laws of England, Book the Second*, 7th ed. (Oxford, 1775), 433.

32. Plaintiffs’ Opening Brief on the Merits, *George Clarke and Joan Clarke v. S. Redeker, et al*, Civil Cases, 1963–1969, Des Moines, Iowa, Central Division, Southern District of Iowa, Records of the U.S. District Court, Record Group 21, Central Plains Region, National Archives and Records Administration, Kansas City; Nic Goeres, “Tuition Rates to Be Studied by Regents,” *Daily Iowan*, 3/11/1966. In 1967 the Regents removed marriage as a factor in determining residency for tuition purposes. “Tuition and Marriage,” *Des Moines Register*, 5/12/1967.

provided those benefits. President Carter's signature on PL 95-216 lowered the Social Security marriage requirement to ten years, a revision that offered no help to women whose marriages lasted less than a decade.³³

Many displaced homemakers found themselves caught in this gap—too young to collect Social Security, but too old to compete successfully for a living wage. Age coupled with gaps in a professional resume could seem insurmountable. One client explained that, without The Door Opener, "I would have killed myself. I was so afraid. I finished college 20 years ago. I didn't think anyone would want me." Another client of The Door Opener added, "I worked hard to put my husband through school. I worked hard to start the business. Now he wants a divorce and I'm left with two children to raise. I only have a high school diploma and I'm scared."³⁴

Meanwhile, changes in divorce law ensured that more and more Iowa housewives would lose their vocations. California, the birthplace of displaced homemaker activism, first instituted no-fault divorce in 1969; Iowa quickly followed, becoming the second state to do so on July 1, 1970.³⁵ A writer in the *Drake Law Review* waxed poetic, declaring approvingly, "The winds of change in this field are now blowing strongly."³⁶ While many in Iowa's legal circles believed that no-fault divorce would encourage, as one attorney put it, "a more human and humane approach to dissolution of hopeless marriages," others worried that divorce had become "as easy as buying a package of gum."³⁷ Be-

33. Richard B. Corbett, Carol C. Fethke, and Nancy R. Hauserman, "Achieving Economic Justice for Homemakers," *Journal of Home Economics* 72 (Summer 1980), 17-23; Carol C. Fethke and Nancy R. Hauserman, "Homemaking: The Invisible Occupation," *Journal of Home Economics* 71 (Summer 1979), 20-23.

34. "The Door Opener."

35. Nancy Cott, *Public Vows: A History of Marriage and the Nation* (Cambridge, MA, 2000), 205; Stephen L. Sass, "The Iowa No-Fault Dissolution of Marriage Law in Action," *South Dakota Law Review* 18 (1973), 629.

36. Jack W. Peters, "Iowa Reform of Marriage Termination," *Drake Law Review* 20 (1970-1971), 212.

37. Quoted in Sass, "Iowa No-Fault Dissolution of Marriage Law," 637, 629. Costs of a divorce ranged from a \$300 attorney fee for those who did not qualify for legal aid to court costs of \$14 to \$17 for those who could qualify for legal aid.

tween 1963 and 1982, the number of divorces in Iowa more than doubled.³⁸

So-called “easy” divorce seriously affected a housewife’s financial security. Iowa legislator Minnette Doderer recalled her frustration upon realizing that no-fault divorce eliminated women’s ability to offer resistance or bargain in divorce proceedings. One constituent explained to Doderer that, when she was married, her family had three cars and five kids. After her divorce, however, “he has a business, and he has three cars, and I have five kids.”³⁹ This displaced homemaker experienced for herself the newly recognized feminization of poverty as she realized that her former class status had depended on the presence of a wage-earning husband. Between 1969 and 1979, more than 5,000 new female-headed families fell below the poverty line in Iowa.⁴⁰

Housewives’ increasing financial and social vulnerability underscored the need for The Door Opener. As founder Shirley Sandage explained in a 1979 speech, “When the Cinderella dream of living happily everafter [*sic*] in a vine covered cottage ends in an abrupt divorce, the change can be devastating.”⁴¹

THE DOOR OPENER was the pet project of friends and colleagues Shirley Sandage and Margaret Garrity. Born in 1927 in Cerro Gordo County, Iowa, and raised in a white, working-class family, Sandage had seemingly followed a conventional path. She married, mothered her three sons, and volunteered her time leading the local chapters of the League of Women Voters and Church Women United.⁴² Sandage had discovered feminism as a young pregnant mother; as she read Betty Friedan’s *The Feminine Mystique*, Sandage realized, “My God, she’s talking about me.”⁴³

38. *The Feminization of Poverty . . . Is this Happening in Iowa?*, 171.

39. Louise R. Noun, *More Strong-Minded Women: Iowa Feminists Tell Their Stories* (Ames, 1992), 166.

40. *The Feminization of Poverty . . . Is this Happening in Iowa?*, 171.

41. Sandage, “The Door Wasn’t Locked; Only Slammed.”

42. “Church Women Elect,” undated clipping, box 1, Sandage Papers.

43. Shirley Sandage, quoted in Stephanie Coontz, *A Strange Stirring: The Feminine Mystique and American Women at the Dawn of the 1960s* (New York, 2011), 134.



Shirley Sandage, co-founder of The Door Opener.

Yet Sandage's first significant forays into political activism had not been in the feminist movement. Through her work with Church Women United and the Iowa Council of Churches in the 1960s, Sandage learned about the plight of migrant farmworkers in the Mason City area.⁴⁴ Shocked by the poverty they faced, Sandage was especially concerned about the children, who had few educational opportunities.

44. "Interview with Shirley Sandage: History of Iowa's Migrant Action Program: Migrant Research Project," interview by Scott Sandage, 8/13/1984, Sandage Papers. Sandage's path was not unique. Many women became active in campaigns for racial and gender equality through religious groups. See, for example, Caryn E. Neumann, "Enabled by the Holy Spirit: Church Women United and the Development of Ecumenical Christian Feminism," in *Feminist Coalitions: Historical Perspectives on Second-Wave Feminism in the United States*, ed. Stephanie Gilmore (Urbana, IL, 2008), 113–35.

In working with migrants on various projects involving job training, day care, education, health, and research, Sandage formulated some of the language and strategies that she later employed on behalf of displaced homemakers. The Migrant Action Project (MAP) prompted Sandage to think about the ways that titles might serve as metaphors for change. In her 1967 report, MAP became “a word with a new meaning. Where it used to signify the long road, it now stands for new hope, opportunity and escape.”⁴⁵ Nearly a decade later, the metaphor of The Door Opener would similarly transform opening doors from an act of male chivalry to a means of female empowerment. The concept of displacement also figured prominently in Sandage’s work with migrant families. In her 1969 book, *Child of Hope*, Sandage wrote of migrant farmworkers “being displaced by mechanization,” and appealed to readers to help and to “ACCEPT DISPLACED AMERICAN BRETHREN.”⁴⁶

MAP had become a reality in part because Sandage’s work with migrant farmworkers coincided with America’s War on Poverty. Seeking funds, Sandage applied to the federal Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) for help. The head of the OEO’s migrant division was Margaret Garrity.⁴⁷ Garrity helped Sandage secure funding for the project and became an important friend and mentor.

Nearly a decade older than Sandage, Garrity had built an impressive resume, evidence of her passion for helping others and her experience with large bureaucratic offices. After dropping out of college following her father’s death, Garrity took a job in a county welfare office. There, she became concerned about the discrimination faced by poor African Americans. A position as race relations secretary of the U.S. Catholic Conference brought her to Washington, D.C. There she worked for the President’s Committee on Government Contracts (PCGC), a

45. MAP Annual Report, 1967, Sandage Papers. For more on Sandage, MAP, and other migrant assistance programs in Iowa, see Anne B. W. Effland, “The Emergence of Federal Assistance Programs for Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers in Post-World War II America” (Ph.D. diss., Iowa State University, 1991), 217–66.

46. Shirley M. Sandage, *Child of Hope* (South Brunswick, NJ, 1969), 20, 95.

47. Sandage, interview with Scott Sandage.



Margaret Garrity, co-founder of *The Door Opener*.

group charged with overseeing government compliance with the clause in employment contracts prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, or national origin. The group lacked enforcement power but reviewed and documented up to 5,000 cases of discrimination per year. In 1957 she began serving as director of the PCGC's Midwest regional office in Chicago. In 1960 Vice President Richard Nixon appointed Garrity executive director of the committee. She returned to Chicago to become regional director of the State Services Division of the Bureau of Labor Standards, where she became interested in the concerns of Mexican Americans. When Sandage first encountered her, Garrity was heading the migrant division of the OEO.⁴⁸

48. "Job Bias Head Named," *New York Times*, 6/5/1960; "Interview with Sandage about Margaret Garrity," interview by Scott Sandage, IWA; Older Wom-

Sandage and Garrity quickly became friends as well as allies. Their varied experiences made them an effective team, blending compassion and expertise. A colleague at The Door Opener remembered Garrity, the experienced bureaucrat, as “a sweet-heart” and Sandage, the former housewife, as an “intelligent” and “courageous” woman who “knew how to work the system.”⁴⁹ Together, the pair cooperated on several projects, beginning with the program to provide education and job training to migrant workers and their families. Sandage began splitting time between Iowa and Washington, D.C., to work with Garrity at the OEO. The two eventually formed their own firm, and they were hired to investigate hazardous waste in Iowa. Sandage later recalled, “We became very aware that, as women, we were not always taken seriously in our dealings with corporations.” Sandage and Garrity turned male chauvinism to their own advantage, discovering that industry leaders would freely tell the seemingly powerless women “anything we wanted to know.” Another experience further reinforced their understandings of sexism, especially the difficulties faced by “a woman alone”: realtors and loan officers repeatedly hampered Garrity’s efforts to purchase a house in Iowa, insisting that a single woman ought to live in an apartment.⁵⁰

Eager to start a new project and with their experiences with sexism fresh in their minds, the pair decided in the mid-1970s to open a multipurpose women’s center. It would be the first stop for women experiencing anything from unemployment to domestic assault. Sandage and Garrity navigated bureaucracies and a few suspicious community leaders and cultivated the support of local women’s groups. Members of the nominating committee that proposed membership for The Door Opener’s board of directors included women from the North Iowa Women’s Political Caucus, the American Association of University Women, and the YWCA. Other members represented working and professional women and women prominent in education and busi-

en’s League, “Margaret Garrity Dies,” 1983, box 4, Sandage Papers; Tom Wicker, *One of Us: Richard Nixon and the American Dream* (New York, 1991), 180.

49. Krukow interview.

50. Sandage, interview with Scott Sandage; Dianne Rose, “Centers Help Women Find New Roles in Life,” *Sioux City Journal*, 10/22/1980.

ness. A dozen local leaders, including three men, served on the board of directors, chaired by Helen Bottorff, a local realtor. Sandage and Garrity called in the help of other allies, many of whom were well known, including Betty Jean "Beje" Clark, a Republican elected to the Iowa House of Representatives in 1976. Governor Robert Ray's office helped them secure CETA funding.⁵¹

FROM THE BEGINNING, *The Door Opener* evoked strong reactions. Sandage later recalled that more than a hundred people attended the center's first organizational meeting. "There was so much interest," she explained, that "the women refused to go home when the meeting ended." The local newspaper published a laudatory description of the meeting, pronouncing it a "success" and repeating the temporary chairperson's report of an "enthusiastic response." Several months later, after the official opening of the agency, the paper's editor remained supportive, encouraging readers to attend an open house. "You can look at the place, talk to the staff, and ask your questions. I think you'll find they have some good answers."⁵² People did indeed have questions about the center, and not all of them were friendly.

The existence of *The Door Opener* surely troubled at least some of the spouses of the center's potential clientele, but public criticism centered on less personal concerns. One frustrated individual vented anonymously in a newspaper's "hotline opinions" column, arguing that the only doors being opened by the new center were for its three staff employees: "And what a plush office they do have to sit around and do nothing in all day."⁵³ Such critics resented the implication that local women faced problems like sexual harassment or displacement. They argued that the center was an unnecessary drain on public funds. Another cynic offered a more cutting attack: "This pro-

51. "Door Opener First Meeting Is Successful," *Globe-Gazette*, 1/24/1977; Barbara Keeler, "Door Opener Office Waiting for Women to Open Door," undated newspaper clipping, box 2, Sandage Papers.

52. "Door Opener May Be National Model," undated newspaper clipping in scrapbook, box 18, Sandage Papers; "Door Opener First Meeting Is Successful"; editor's weekly column, *Globe-Gazette*, 9/14/1977.

53. "Hotline Opinions," 7/26/1977, newspaper clipping in scrapbook, box 18, Sandage Papers.

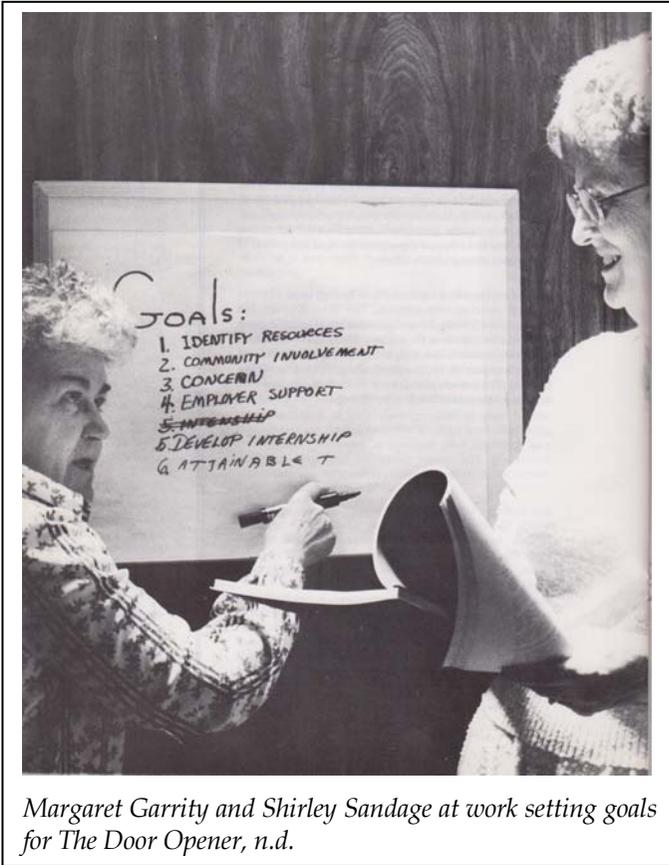
gram will be most beneficial to three people, namely, Shirley Sandage and her staff of two, who weas[e]led out another federal grant to fund this fiasco under the banner of do gooders.”⁵⁴ Helping women was apparently a noble enough purpose that these critics decided not to attack it on those grounds. Instead, they argued that the center was not needed and that it relied on funds distributed by an ill-advised federal program. Despite these claims, The Door Opener never lacked clients.

Nationally, detractors often declared displaced homemaker services a waste of money that would only be spent on white, middle-class women. Movement activists insisted that displaced homemaker centers must be “for all classes of displaced homemakers. . . . The common experience of being ‘displaced’ in middle life brings women from different backgrounds together in their common struggle to be self-supporting.” They argued that race and class status were irrelevant, insisting, “You can be just as hungry if you are white and middle class, if you don’t have any money.” They emphasized that so long as women continued to be unwaged homemakers, class had a gendered element. As one displaced homemaker in Iowa explained, she had gone from being “Miss Middle-Class American” to a “Welfare Mother” in a matter of just two weeks.⁵⁵ In fact, most displaced homemaker centers, including The Door Opener, did include and serve less privileged women.

The Door Opener sought to draw from the best components of the War on Poverty – namely, the funds that made local programs possible – while addressing some of its shortcomings. In the proposal that would lead to the formation of The Door Opener, Sandage and Garrity underscored “the problem of duplicative eligibility for programs and thus duplicate funding of certain individuals but no funding i.e. service for other individuals.” What was needed was “better coordination of all special programs through the development of inter-locking goals

54. Ibid.

55. “Questions Most Frequently Asked about the Displaced Homemakers Center,” undated, Sommers Papers; Unsigned carbon copy of a letter (possibly written by Tish Sommers) to Susan Wrigert, 10/15/1975, Sommers Papers; Unidentified displaced homemaker’s testimony, reprinted in *The Feminization of Poverty . . . Is This Happening in Iowa?*, 193, 194.



Margaret Garrity and Shirley Sandage at work setting goals for The Door Opener, n.d.

and objectives” in such a way that money would be channeled more equitably and would benefit rural as well as urban areas.⁵⁶ “When my first husband walked out and then filed for bankruptcy, they came and cleaned out my house. I had nothing,” explained Judy Tuthill, a displaced homemaker and mother of four who received assistance at The Door Opener. “I called every agency and they all said, ‘We can’t do anything for you.’

56. “Draft of a Proposal for Establishing the NIAD Center for Human Development,” undated, box 6, Sandage Papers. Although the War on Poverty was usually understood as primarily an urban program, various historians are exploring its importance in rural areas. This point is underscored by several of the essays in Orleck and Hazirjian, eds., *War on Poverty*.

It took six months to get ADC assistance. They are nice, but to them you are just a Social Security number." With The Door Opener's help, Tuthill developed a plan for her future that included becoming a VISTA volunteer with a monthly stipend.⁵⁷

The Door Opener navigated a complicated terrain in which even some of its supporters might be hesitant about the role of government in antipoverty campaigns. In particular, many statements of support focused on the ways the agency's clientele differed from the "welfare queens" debated in contemporary presidential campaigns. The overtones of such arguments surfaced in one Iowa newspaper writer's assurances that displaced homemakers had problems that "were just as serious as those borne by women in inner city tenements." Other defenders of The Door Opener were more explicit in their condemnation of welfare recipients. As one of the agency's supporters put it, the center was "a lot better than what I call the biggest rip-off of all, ADC." ADC, or Aid to Dependent Children—later called Aid to Families with Dependent Children (ADFC)—was a federal program that provided financial assistance to poor families. The people helped by welfare, this person maintained, "collect ADC and child support besides. [They] sit in bars and drink the taxpayers' money." The Door Opener, on the other hand, promised to "keep some of the less fortunate ones on their feet." Indeed, displaced homemakers themselves often insisted that they did not wish to be among those receiving welfare. They defined their status as deserving poor for whom welfare represented an unsavory last resort, not an opportunity to play the system. "Welfare is no fun," one client of The Door Opener declared.⁵⁸ These arguments drew a firm line between two distinct images of female poverty—recidivist poor mothers who supposedly preferred to live on handouts, and the temporary poverty of a displaced homemaker who only wanted help restoring her middle-class respectability. The complicated reactions The Door Opener and other displaced homemaker centers

57. Judy Tuthill, quoted in Hollobaugh, "N. Iowa Project."

58. Jerry Collun, "'The Door Opener' Here Is Pilot Plan for the U.S.," 1/25/1979, newspaper clipping in scrapbook, box 18, Sandage Papers; "Hotline Opinions," 7/26/1977.

elicited help to explain the difficulties all activists faced in forging cross-class alliances.⁵⁹

IOWANS' PERSPECTIVES on feminism also affected their understandings of the center. The emergence of The Door Opener coincided with important developments in the feminist movement in Iowa. In 1972 the Iowa legislature had been quick to ratify the federal Equal Rights Amendment (ERA), but efforts to rescind—or unratify—the controversial amendment began soon after.⁶⁰ An umbrella organization called The Iowa ERA Coalition launched a coordinated campaign for a state version of the amendment.⁶¹ By 1978, the year The Door Opener began its pilot program for displaced homemakers, the state was embroiled in a debate about feminism and the role of women.

Some Iowans opposed equal rights legislation in part because they thought that it conflicted with their belief in the importance of female homemaking. In articulating the value of homemaking, they often described feminism as a threat to the family and to the nation. Opponents of the amendment sometimes overlooked wage earning as a necessary component of many women's lives. Kathryn Cutcher, a leading opponent of the ERA from Sioux City, believed that the women's movement hurt families because selfish working mothers ignored the needs of their children. "I could see how they were getting new furniture and new drapes," Cutcher argued, "but there were their children with no one around; the children paid for it."⁶² Such arguments obscured the plight of women—including displaced homemakers—whose very survival necessitated employment. The debate over the amendment tended to center on the

59. See, for example, Martha F. Davis, "Welfare Rights and Women's Rights in the 1960s," in *Integrating the Sixties: The Origin, Structures, and Legitimacy of Public Policy in a Turbulent Decade*, ed. Brian Balogh (University Park, PA, 1996), 144–65.

60. Paid ads in local newspapers urged readers to sign petitions asking Iowa legislators to rescind ratification of the federal Equal Rights Amendment. *IWPC Newsletter*, 5/1/1974, box 2, Margaret "Peg" Anderson Papers, IWA. In 1977 Senator Eugene Hill and 13 other legislators introduced a bill to rescind the ERA. *Caucus Comment*, April 1977, box 2, Anderson Papers.

61. *Caucus Comment*, September/October 1978, box 2, Anderson Papers.

62. Michael Wegner, "Iowa Poll: Our Attitudes Slowly Change," *Des Moines Register*, 8/5/1979.

actions of middle-class women who were able to choose freely between waged employment and homemaking. Displaced homemakers, meanwhile, demonstrated that trading the occupation of housewife for wage earning could be obligatory rather than chosen.

Class divisions and beliefs about sexual equality shaped rural Iowans' understandings of feminism and the displaced homemaker center. In her anthropological study of women in rural northwestern Iowa, which she calls "Open Country," Deborah Fink notes that in the 1970s and early 1980s "women were not permitted to promote structural changes that empowered them as women."⁶³ While some affluent Open Country women worked to promote the state ERA and, later, Roxanne Conlin's 1982 gubernatorial bid, they found little support in their communities. For women anxious about their grocery bills, the complaints of privileged middle-class white women about the monotony of housework did not resonate. Furthermore, class divisions prevented some women from joining the cause because they felt snubbed by the more affluent feminists.⁶⁴ In her study of Farm Bureau women in Iowa, however, Jenny Barker Devine has found that through the mid-1960s Iowa farm women engaged in "social feminisms" that "celebrated feminine ideals" and viewed "their daily labor as inherently political," but did so without challenging male authority.⁶⁵

That feminist legacy suggests a philosophical basis for rural Iowans to embrace the displaced homemaker center, which emphasized the value of homemakers. Yet some of the same opposition that resisted the federal and state ERA fueled distrust of displaced homemaker centers. Anti-ERA leaders warned that the centers were "nothing but indoctrination & training centers for women's lib" used by feminists "to push ERA, abortion, Federal child care, lesbian privileges, etc." — all at taxpayer expense.⁶⁶

63. Fink, *Open Country Iowa*, 223.

64. *Ibid.*, 222–27.

65. Jenny Barker Devine, "'The Secret to a Successful Farm Organization': Township Farm Bureau Women's Clubs in Iowa, 1945–1970," *Annals of Iowa* 69 (2010), 425, 420.

66. Phyllis Schlafly, *Eagle Forum Newsletter*, August 1977. ERA proponents widely credit Illinoisan Phyllis Schlafly with defeating the Iowa ERA in 1980.

The emergence of displaced homemaker activism in Iowa offered the potential to redefine feminism and feminist concerns. Yet for many Iowans that potential was never realized.

Although the founders of The Door Opener had feminist connections, advocates of the northern Iowa center often felt obligated to distance the center from feminism. When the center opened, a local newspaper clarified that it was "not a militant feminist type of organization." Helen Bottorff, who chaired the organization's board of directors, explained, "We're not as concerned about the feminist movement as we are with helping women." Shirley Sandage reassured the media that issues of *Good Housekeeping* would be made available in the waiting room alongside copies of *Ms.* magazine. Euphesenia Foster, head of the U.S. Department of Labor's regional Women's Bureau in Kansas City, offered a distinction between the work of the center and feminist agendas that might have confounded some Iowa feminists. The center, she avowed in a northern Iowa newspaper, "has nothing to do with feminism or women's lib." Instead, "It has to do with equality and survival. There is a great need to put women in touch with vital information concerning them, with all the options for employment there are and more." Joyce Krukow, an intern with The Door Opener who eventually served on its board, recently recalled that The Door Opener was not "necessarily a feminist organization. I think they were just there to support women." Nor did Krukow categorize herself or the staff generally as feminist, remarking, "I don't think we ever thought of that word; we were just there to help women and their children." Furthermore, although she now understands The Door Opener's work as "activist," she could not recall that they "ever used that word."⁶⁷

DESPITE THE PRESSURES to avoid the image of a consciousness-raising second-wave feminist organization, the movement's leaders often viewed job placement as neither the only nor the

See, for example, Peg Anderson, letter dated November 10, 1980, "Campaign Handbook, July–Nov. 1980," box 2, Iowa ERA Coalition Records, IWA.

67. Keeler, "Door Opener Office Waiting for Women to Open Door"; Diane Cobb, "Sound Philosophy Becomes Year-Old Program," *Globe-Gazette*, 6/21/1978; Krukow interview.

most critical purpose of the center. The Door Opener's staff believed that counseling displaced homemakers through the events that had displaced them in the first place—particularly death and divorce—would prepare women to start the process of finding work. From July 1977 through March 1979, 222 of The Door Opener's clients had received job training, but more than twice that number had "received appropriate and complete counseling" that helped "the client to understand and overcome social and emotional problems." Such counseling took place in support groups and individual sessions, often sub-contracted with private psychologists, the North Iowa Mental Health Service, or the North Iowa Chemical Dependency. Associate director Margaret Garrity explained, "No matter what services we give women, it seems they always talk about the emotional support and self-confidence they get from us. Even when we spend money to get them education or training, they don't think about that." The goal was not simply a paycheck, but a promise of a better life.

One woman's case history, profiled for The Door Opener's annual report, details how "Kathy," an unemployed divorced mother of two, received job training that eventually led to full-time employment. Yet even after Kathy was earning a "reasonable wage," The Door Opener and the woman looked beyond this "immediate goal," continuing to work together in pursuit of Kathy's dream of starting her own business. Nevertheless, employment help was an important part of displaced homemakers' experiences with the center. For example, for 1981-82 The Door Opener reported that 124 of the 510 displaced homemakers who sought help found full-time jobs, and nearly a hundred more found part-time work or enrolled in a training program.⁶⁸

In dealing with the employment concerns of displaced homemakers, The Door Opener was particularly concerned with reimagining the gendered division of labor. Displaced homemaker advocates were part of a broader trend among

68. "Why We Are Opening New Doors for Women," undated, box 2, Sandage Papers; The Door Opener, Annual report for July 1, 1981-June 30, 1982; "Door Opener Helps Area Women Start New," May 1981, newspaper clipping in scrapbook, box 18, Sandage Papers; "What It's All About: Kathy" in The Door Opener, Annual report for July 1, 1981-June 30, 1982. Kathy is a pseudonym.

individuals as well as feminist and antipoverty activists promoting women's entry into nontraditional fields.⁶⁹ Securing traditionally male jobs was the most obvious way for female heads of household to earn enough wages to survive economically without a male breadwinner. As Sandage explained in a 1980 speech, "As your mother may have told you, it may be as easy to fall in love with a rich man as a poor one. At The Door Opener this is translated to mean it may be just as easy to find satisfaction in a good paying job as a low paying job—probably easier."⁷⁰ Gendered stereotypes about labor were deeply ingrained; many leading newspapers retained sex-segregated help wanted sections well into the 1970s.⁷¹ The Door Opener had to convince traditionalist displaced homemakers and employers that women could work in conventionally male fields without abandoning their femininity. The agency did so by focusing on the presence of transferrable skills.

Under the concept of transferrable skills, housewives could label their time spent comparison shopping for groceries or preparing state and federal tax forms as "financial management" experience. Vegetable gardening might be categorized as experience working in "horticulture." Displaced homemaker advocates suggested parallels between housework and waged labor that echoed the Rosie the Riveter recruitment campaigns of the World War II era. They explained that a homemaker whose hobby involved using a CB radio could be a good candidate for working as a vehicle dispatcher, air traffic controller, or disc jockey. A homemaker who did tailoring could work in a job that required reading blueprints because a dress pattern resembled a blueprint. Eventually, The Door Opener employed a computerized system that used data from 21 questions to gen-

69. Nancy MacLean, "The Hidden History of Affirmative Action: Working Women's Struggles in the 1970s and the Gender of Class," *Feminist Studies* 25 (1999), 32-52.

70. Shirley Sandage, "You Can Get There From Here," speech for the You Can Do It Workshop, sponsored by Buchanan County Extension Service, Independence, Iowa, 4/22/1980, box 3, Sandage Papers.

71. Nicholas Pedriana and Amanda Abraham, "Now You See Them, Now You Don't: The Legal Field and Newspaper Desegregation of Sex-Segregated Help Wanted Ads 1965-75," *Law & Social Inquiry* 31 (2006), 905-38.

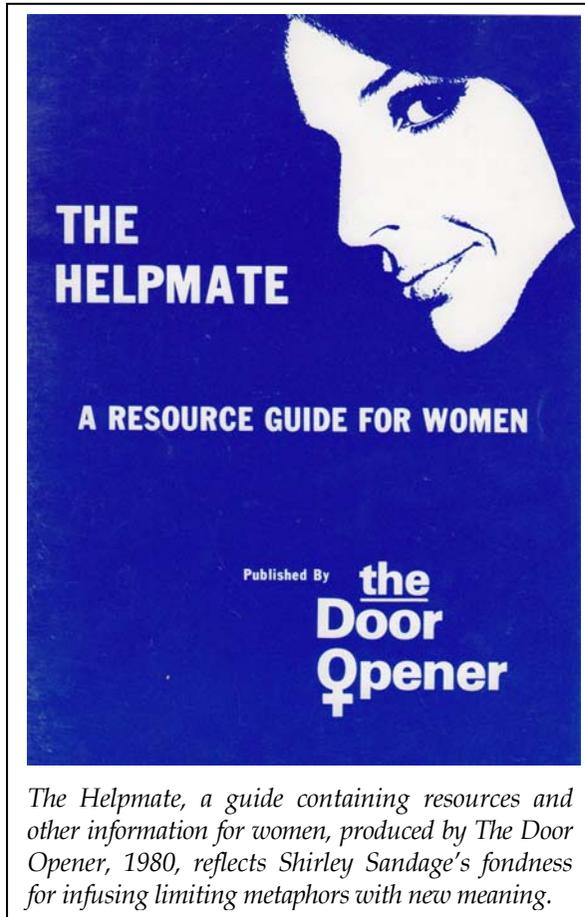
erate job possibilities from nearly 300 job classifications. Staff explained that “women frequently do not receive recognition for the life experience and the skills and knowledge developed in the process of living [because] . . . they use different terminologies to describe the same competencies.” This strategy, calculated to improve the self-esteem of a woman who regarded herself as “just a housewife,” also helped activists to argue that women’s labor merited the same pay as work performed by men.⁷²

When many housewives explained their contributions, they tended to do so in ways that emphasized their work as help-meets rather than as sustainers of the family.⁷³ Even farm wives, who frequently shared in much of the labor of running a farm—from driving a tractor to bookkeeping—tended to embrace this view. Often husbands and other family members took on a similarly narrow understanding of the importance of women’s labor. One Iowa farmer refused to allow his daughter-in-law to participate in discussions about the family farm even though she had cosigned all the farm’s loans.⁷⁴ Many displaced homemakers lacked self-confidence in general (after all, some had just been deserted by their husbands for younger women), especially when it came to their employability. Displaced homemakers’ need for self-esteem influenced the center’s efforts to help them find jobs. The worksheets provided by The Door Opener to help women list their previous experience had housewife-affirming titles such as “Yes, I Do Have Skills” or “A New Appreciation of the Old You.” Activists strategically met two of the most important needs of displaced homemakers by offering both improved self-esteem and hope for employment. “You may not

72. “Homemaking Work Experience,” undated, box 2, Sandage Papers; Ruth Milkman, *Gender at Work: The Dynamics of Job Segregation by Sex During World War II* (Urbana, IL, 1987), 61; “Door Opener Expands Services,” *Globe-Gazette*, 6/19/1980; “The Door Opener”; The Door Opener, Annual report for July 1, 1979–June 30, 1980; Nancy C. Baker, *New Lives for Former Wives: Displaced Homemakers* (Garden City, NY, 1980), 201.

73. Many farm women saw little division between their farm and their home duties because they occurred in the same place. See Sarah Elbert, “The Farmer Takes a Wife: Women in America’s Farming Families,” in *Women, Households, and the Economy*, ed. Lourdes Benería and Catharine R. Stimpson (New Brunswick, NJ, 1987), 180–85.

74. Fink, *Open Country Iowa*, 208, 240.



have perfected your skill and you may not have been paid to do them," one skills assessment exercise read. "But the important thing is that you have already developed some of the skills that these jobs require."⁷⁵

Ironically, when displaced homemaker advocates explained that voluntarism and homemaking had value on the job market, they were simultaneously bolstering a social system in which wages were a measure of worth. Indeed, groups that promoted

75. "Yes, I Do Have Skills," undated, box 2, Sandage Papers; The Door Opener, "Curriculum for Jobs Club," *ibid.*; "A Women's Way: Skills Recognition: A New Appreciation of the Old You," *ibid.*; The Door Opener, "Skills Transfer Project," *ibid.*

the importance of housewives frequently did so by attaching replacement value to their work.⁷⁶ These were concerns held by the women's movement more generally, where the importance of financial remuneration as an indicator of status in that era was evident in the protests against the 59 cents that women made for every dollar men made.⁷⁷ They were also arguments made by activists in the welfare rights movement, most prominently in the 1960s, who attempted to dignify childrearing and housework as legitimate work.⁷⁸

Projects developed by The Door Opener similarly emphasized displaced homemakers' domestic experiences in a feminist effort to increase women's incomes. One project, a business called Clean and Green, evolved directly from the skills and experiences of homemaking. A career assessment workshop sponsored by The Door Opener found that many local women had experience painting, hanging wallpaper, and cleaning—experience that could be organized into a profit-making business. With a CETA grant arranged by The Door Opener, women received training from volunteer business people, attorneys, insurance representatives, and a full-time project manager who helped the participants learn marketing techniques. By 1978, Clean and Green operated as a privately owned corporation with contracts to clean homes and provide landscaping services

76. Gerda Lerner cites a study finding that “the aggregate value of earnings forgone by housewives due to their unpaid domestic labor [is] . . . a sizable portion of the Gross National Product, if it were included in it.” See Gerda Lerner, *The Majority Finds Its Past: Placing Women in History* (New York, 1979), 137. Several groups in the 1970s advocated wages for housework to, as Sylvia Federici put it, “at least recogni[ze] that you are a worker.” See Sylvia Federici, “Wages Against Housework,” in *Dear Sisters: Dispatches from the Women's Liberation Movement*, ed. Rosalyn Baxandall and Linda Gordon (New York, 2000).

77. Jane J. Mansbridge, *Why We Lost the ERA* (Chicago, 1986), 36–44, demonstrates that in the late 1970s the issue of equal pay for equal work became one of the central arguments for the federal Equal Rights Amendment (ERA). Mansbridge argues that the ERA likely would not have changed the wage gap, but nevertheless feminists across the country donned buttons that read “59¢” to call attention to the discrepancy between women's wages and men's wages.

78. Premilla Nadasen, “Expanding the Boundaries of the Women's Movement: Black Feminism and the Struggle for Welfare Rights,” in *No Permanent Waves: Recasting Histories of U.S. Feminism*, ed. Nancy Hewitt (New Brunswick, NJ, 2010), 168–92; Anne M. Valk, *Radical Sisters: Second-Wave Feminism and Black Liberation in Washington, D.C.* (Urbana, IL, 2008), 30–59.

for homes, rental properties, and buildings under construction. In fact, there was enough demand for their services to sustain a newly formed branch operating outside of Cerro Gordo County as well as the original company in the Mason City area. These companies also posted new positions with The Door Opener so new clients could apply to work for the firm. By 1980, the company's president, Audry Warren, reported that it was a "thriving commercial and residential cleaning company" with hopes for further expansion. Its success created momentum for several other entrepreneurial projects.⁷⁹

In rural America, where many displaced homemakers were former farm women, it made sense for The Door Opener to emphasize job opportunities that drew on farm experience. One business, the Mobile Agricultural Company Services (MAC) Corporation, effectively made use of the aptitudes of displaced farm wives. The company offered soil testing and pest monitoring. The project began in 1979 under another CETA special project grant. The Door Opener worked with the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Labor's Women's Bureau, and Iowa State University to research the viability of such a company and to establish the training requirements for the women who would participate in it. The company executed contracts with local grain elevators, which provided information about the land. The company then mapped the land and conducted the actual testing, sending soil samples to laboratories for analysis. With training from Iowa Lakes Community College, the company began testing grain moisture levels in order to ensure work during the cold winter months.⁸⁰

Although The Door Opener, especially project coordinator Fran McCarty, did much to facilitate the development and training of the MAC Corporation, it operated totally independently of The Door Opener. The corporation was owned by its members, only half of whom held a high school diploma. Five of the seven women were divorced or separated; one was a single

79. The Door Opener, Annual report for July 1, 1979–June 30, 1980; Audry Warren to Shirley Sandage, 10/31/1980, box 2, Sandage Papers.

80. "A Report on Agricultural Services Job Creation Project: A Project of The Door Opener," 1980, box 2, Sandage Papers; The Door Opener, Annual report for July 1, 1979–June 30, 1980.

mother of three. While the work differed from the tasks performed by most housewives—even those living on farms—working for MAC built on displaced homemakers' previous experiences. Laura Lane, a contributing editor for *Farm Journal* and an enthusiastic supporter of the company, described how she had been "exhilarated" by the "women's increasing sense of self-worth." Furthermore, the company offered women a career with opportunities for promotion. The women involved in the business explained that they had been attracted to the program because they wanted the independence, flexible schedule, and job security they associated with owning their own business. They also wanted to "gain respect—self respect and respect of others." By the end of its first year, the business already had eight elevator contracts covering more than 17,000 acres. The company's president, Betsy King, recounted how the company had "done better than most people thought possible"—especially considering the unfavorable weather and the increasingly distressing economy.⁸¹

Because The Door Opener served displaced homemakers while remaining a multipurpose women's center, it could pilot projects that centers devoted exclusively to displaced homemakers might not have tackled. One of The Door Opener's more successful projects endeavored to expose young women to traditionally male fields of employment. Doing so not only helped to remove the stigma of women working in supposedly male fields, but also promised to prevent the tragedy of becoming a displaced homemaker, especially as the economy became more difficult. Between 1978 and 1981, The Door Opener worked with school districts to provide job-shadowing opportunities to female junior and senior high school students. The program allowed the young women to explore careers as auto mechanics, laboratory technicians, postal clerks, gas station attendants, law enforcement officers, lawyers, truck drivers, taxidermists, and morticians. With \$165,000 of federal funding from the U.S. Department of Labor, the Non-Sexist Vocational Acquaintanceship Project (NSVAP) enrolled more than a hundred

81. "Report on Agricultural Services Job Creation Project, 1980"; Laura Lane to Shirley Sandage, 3/3/1982, box 2, Sandage Papers; Betsy King to Shirley Sandage, 11/3/1980, box 2, Sandage Papers.

young women per year and placed them in shadowing programs with a wide range of employers. The center pitched the program as a preferable alternative to assistance programs, and one that served a deserving poor: "The breaking of these attitudinal barriers to women's entry into the skilled trades . . . will ultimately be the only effective way of reducing the number of women heads-of-households who are poor and receiving AFDC." While the program promoted gender equality in the waged workforce, explaining the project in terms of shrinking welfare rolls accommodated community skepticism about both The Door Opener and federal poverty programs generally.⁸²

Whereas the 1970s had been, in general, a decade of prosperity in Iowa, 1980 marked the beginning of the farm crisis and an economic downturn that took legislators and state officials by surprise.⁸³ The Door Opener reported that the rising unemployment of the early 1980s compounded the limitations that "traditional values and social mores" placed on women's career options.⁸⁴ To combat this, the agency developed the Start on Success program in 1982 as one way to expand women's opportunities. The program was funded in part by a \$7,000 "challenge" grant from the Dayton-Hudson Foundation requiring The Door Opener to raise additional funds that eventually came from a wide variety of private and public sources, including nearly \$10,000 from the U.S. Department of Labor. The program advertised itself as an opportunity for "an individualized career . . . as your own boss!" that would match women's existing skills with "unmet community needs." Entrepreneurship offered a promising way to move women from work in the home to non-exploitive waged work. In an area with a high rate of unemployment, creating new jobs was an attractive alternative to forcing former housewives to compete in an especially tight job market. It also kept men from feeling threatened by female jobseekers.

82. "The Door Opener"; "'Shadows' Learning of Possible Careers," *Globe-Gazette*, 11/20/1978; Annual report for the July 1, 1979–June 30, 1980; The Door Opener (NIAD Center for Human Development), *Non-Sexist Vocational Acquaintanceship Program (NSVAP): A How-to-do-it Manual* (Mason City, 1980), box 2, Sandage Papers.

83. Schwieder, *Iowa: The Middle Land*, 309, 313; Friedberger, *Shake-out*.

84. The Door Opener, Annual report for July 1, 1981–June 30, 1982.

Furthermore, unlike some other entrepreneurship programs, this one included special efforts to demystify business terminology and emphasize the transferability of home management skills to managing a business. An early meeting for the project attracted nearly a hundred women on a rainy evening.⁸⁵

The image of “housewives and mothers . . . attempting to give inflation a swift kick by starting their own businesses” attracted media attention. The recession in Iowa was forcing more and more women to earn or earn more in order to keep their families afloat. Yet again, several of the proposed businesses built on skills acquired as married women. One woman envisioned a “dirty jobs” agency through which she could hire herself out to perform household chores like scrubbing toilets and cleaning ovens. A homemaker from a farm wanted to do custom agricultural work like plowing. By the end of the program, participants had proposed more than 20 new low-overhead businesses ranging from custom sewing to pet grooming and boarding. The women were guided through the process of developing their proposals by the president of the Iowa Small Business Employers in Mason City. When the project started, women owned only about 3 percent of the 60,000 businesses in the state. One month after the program ended, 15 new woman-owned businesses were in operation in the area, ranging from a florist shop to a business offering custom clothing for handicapped people. Start on Success was considered such a success that it became the model for a U.S. Department of Labor guide published in 1985, *From Homemaking to Entrepreneurship: A Readiness Training Program*.⁸⁶

FROM ITS FOUNDING in 1977, The Door Opener had navigated suspicions about second-wave feminism and federal funding. Conditions were not improving, however. In the same vote

85. Ibid.; Advertisement in *Globe-Gazette*, 8/6/1982, box 18, Sandage Papers; Advertisement in *Mason City Shoppers News*, 8/31/1982, *ibid.*; U.S. Department of Labor, *From Homemaking to Entrepreneurship: A Readiness Training Program* (Washington, DC, 1985), Sandage Papers; Sherry Ricchiardi, “Mason City’s ‘Cottage’ Idea,” *Des Moines Register*, 10/17/1982.

86. Ricchiardi, “Mason City’s ‘Cottage’ Idea”; U.S. Department of Labor, *From Homemaking to Entrepreneurship*.

that rejected the Iowa ERA in 1980, the majority of Iowans voted to elect a president who opposed feminist legislation. Ronald Reagan had opened his post-nomination campaign with a speech about states' rights in which he told his audience, "I believe in people doing as much as they can at the private level."⁸⁷ Although the center had thrived by using private money to more flexibly address the needs of Iowa women, it relied primarily on public money. The Door Opener had long cobbled funding together from a variety of public sources, including the Iowa Department of Social Services, the U.S. Department of Labor, and the federal VISTA program.

As the declining economy and changed ideology of the early 1980s forced private sources to make tough decisions, The Door Opener, like many other antipoverty programs, suffered. As early as February 1981, finances had become such a problem that The Door Opener publicly admitted its worries. The agency hoped to raise some money with local fundraisers, but it clearly required more to maintain its services. Beginning in 1981, agency representatives visited 117 pastors from a list of 227 area churches, contacting additional churches by mail or telephone, to appeal for contributions.

These efforts yielded little relief, however, and previous sources of money looked less and less likely to deliver. President Reagan's proposed budget compounded the problem. Director Shirley Sandage told a group of fellow displaced homemaker program directors in Waco, Texas, that the president's budget demanded an "inequality of sacrifice" from American women. By 1982, despite the increasing numbers of individuals seeking help, The Door Opener operated on a drastically reduced budget. The Iowa Department of Social Services was providing only about a quarter of its previous allocations for services to displaced homemakers. In 1982 the Algona satellite office closed, although the Department of Public Instruction funded the local Iowa Lakes Community College to offer some services once provided by The Door Opener. To help cover the fiscal shortfall, the agency requested money from the counties.

87. Lewis L. Gould, *Grand Old Party: A History of the Republicans* (New York, 2003), 419.

Administrators again pressed the issue in numerical terms that focused on welfare recipients. "If only 10 of the persons are kept off [of welfare]," a spokeswoman insisted, the "savings would be \$88,000, more than is being asked of the [individual] counties."⁸⁸

In October 1982, Shirley Sandage and Margaret Garrity announced their resignations. Garrity was retiring, and Sandage decided to accept a longstanding offer to become executive director of the Older Women's League, a national organization founded in Des Moines in 1980 by Sandage and other leaders in the displaced homemakers movement that initially focused primarily on access to health care insurance and equity in Social Security and pensions. Sandage's explanation for her resignation suited the political rhetoric that had shaped so much of the discussion about the agency. "The time has come for the community to accept the responsibility," she explained.⁸⁹

For the most part, the community was either unable or unwilling to accept her challenge. After six years, The Door Opener's financial problems forced the center to cease its employment and education counseling for nearly 1,000 displaced homemakers and women "in transition." The center eliminated several positions, including those of its new director, Susan A. Vee, the bookkeeper, the secretary, and a counselor. Anne Duffe, who had served as a program coordinator and counselor for the past several months, took on the role of acting center director while also doing part-time counseling. The Door Opener's budget of \$136,000 had shrunk by more than \$100,000. Sympathetic landlords allowed The Door Opener to stay rent-free so that it could continue to provide its crisis line and domestic abuse and sexual assault services. (The Door Opener's legacy of services

88. Jane McClure, "Door Opener Future Jeopardized by Cuts in Social Service Money," *Globe-Gazette*, 2/23/1981; Elise Gibson, "Budget Would 'Devastate' Women," [Waco?] *Tribune-Herald*, 6/8/1982, newspaper clipping in scrapbook, box 18, Sandage Papers; The Door Opener, Annual report for July 1, 1981-June 30, 1982; Gary Grimmond, "Door Opener Help Center Asks County for \$35,000," *Globe-Gazette*, 1/13/1982.

89. "Coming of Age: The First Report of the Older Women's League," box 14, Sommers Papers; Gary Grimmond, "Door Opener Leaders to Resign," *Globe-Gazette*, 10/18/1982. Shirley Sandage corresponded with two scholars, Patricia Huckle and Kathleen Kautzer, about corrections to their work on the Older Women's League. See box 6, Sandage Papers.

for domestic abuse and sexual assault lives on in the Crisis Intervention Service, which continues to operate today.) As The Door Opener's displaced homemaker services came to an end, the new director explained, "The Door Opener name conjures up suspicion and ill feelings of some sort. It stands there on the corner reminding the community of problems in its midst. Unfortunately, the public doesn't want to be reminded of those problems."⁹⁰

For six years, however, The Door Opener had succeeded in making women's problems impossible to ignore. The very act of identifying displaced homemakers as a community issue revealed how the gendered, allegedly private work of homemaking was—and is—simultaneously honored and ignored in American culture. As movement activists pointed out, no amount of Mother's Day celebration made up for housewives' institutionalized vulnerability under American law and culture. The Door Opener destabilized this cultural pretense. Older celebrations of domesticity had worked to justify women's exclusion from public policy measures on the reckoning that individual families should reward homemaking on a private basis. Instead, The Door Opener celebrated homemaking skills in order to direct women away from poorly compensated, traditionally female work. In doing so, it walked the narrow line between feminist identification and feminist practice, between government money and government programs.

90. Paul Holley, "Door Opener Forced to Cut Education, Job Aid Services," *Globe-Gazette*, 4/7/1983.

Reconsidering the Heartland: A Review Essay

MARVIN BERGMAN

Remaking the Heartland: Middle America since the 1950s, by Robert Wuthnow. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011. xiii, 358 pp. Appendix (23 statistical tables), notes, bibliography, index. \$35.00 hardcover.

Red State Religion: Faith and Politics in America's Heartland, by Robert Wuthnow. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012. xii, 229 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$35.00 hardcover.

OVER THE PAST FEW DECADES, many books and countless articles have appeared bemoaning the existing and declining state of the rural Midwest.¹ Others have attacked a perceived unhealthy relationship between religion and politics in the region.² In response, Robert Wuthnow, an acclaimed and prolific sociologist of American religion, has produced two significant books about his native Midwest. One counters the dominant narrative of the decline of the rural Midwest; the other provides a rare nuanced account of the relationship between religion and politics in a midwestern state.

1. An early, influential example is Osha Gray Davidson, *Broken Heartland: The Rise of America's Rural Ghetto* (1990; expanded edition, Iowa City, 1996). Other examples of just a few focusing on Iowa include Dale Maharidge, *Denison, Iowa: Searching for the Soul of America through the Secrets of a Midwest Town* (New York, 2005); Patrick J. Carr and Maria J. Kefalas, *Hollowing out the Middle: The Rural Brain Drain and What it Means for America* (Boston, 2009); Nick Reding, *Methland: The Death and Life of an American Small Town* (New York, 2009).

2. See especially Thomas Frank, *What's the Matter with Kansas? How Conservatives Won the Heart of America* (New York, 2004).

Remaking the Heartland can be read as an answer to the pervasive declension narrative. Its argument is simple but striking: "By the first decade of the twenty-first century, the Middle West was a more vibrant contributor to the national economy than it had been a half century earlier" (ix). For many readers, accustomed as they are to reading about how awful conditions are in the rural and Rust Belt Midwest, this claim will come as a surprise. We have, of course, heard the worst stereotypes of the declension narrative answered by midwestern apologists with vapid generalizations about midwestern character, as Iowans did in response to a controversial essay by journalist Stephen Bloom published just weeks before the 2012 Iowa caucuses.³ Wuthnow's approach is much more substantive. He does not deny that some places and some elements manifest decline, but, as he often says after stating a prevailing understanding, "it's more complicated than that." He then presents hard evidence to support his countervailing view. That approach tends to inspire trust.

Furthermore, I believe that residents of the places he writes about would recognize their places in his telling; I'm never sure about that when I read books that carry the declension narrative. Those residents, too, are agents in his stories rather than mere victims of larger historical forces. He writes, for example, "The farmer's son who leaves for college and the father who worries that his son may not return reflect the human drama taking place here in rural America. It is understandable that people

3. Stephen G. Bloom, "Observations from 20 Years of Iowa Life," *The Atlantic*, 12/9/2011, www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2011/12/observations-from-20-years-of-iowa-life/249401/, accessed 3/26/2013. The web site includes many, many responses. University of Iowa president Sally Mason's published response was typical. She wrote, "What defines Iowans are their deeds and actions and not some caricature. When I travel the state, what I see is a land that is rich not only because of its soil but because of how its people are grounded. Iowans are pragmatic and balanced, and they live within their means. This lifestyle, while not glitzy, is humble and true and can weather the most difficult of times. One's reputation and word are understood to be his or her most valued attributes. As a result, people cultivate a sense of fairness, cooperation, and humility." Sally Mason, "Stephen Bloom Does Not Speak for the University," *The Atlantic*, 12/15/2011, www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2011/12/stephen-bloom-does-not-speak-for-the-university/250073/, accessed, 3/26/2013. Mason's response also appeared in newspapers across Iowa.

mourn the departure of their children, but it is equally important to understand that they know this is the reality they face and have usually played a positive role in encouraging it. Populations decline not only because people are forced to leave but also because they choose to do so, and because those who stay behind are often better able to be productive and efficient as a result" (13).

People interested in the larger history of the region will also appreciate that, for a book ostensibly about the years "since the 1950s," a surprisingly high proportion is about the years *before* 1950, especially settlement patterns. Many of his explanations begin, perhaps unexpectedly for a sociologist, with a comment to the effect that to understand the given issue requires a look at the longer history.

In chapter one, Wuthnow establishes that life in the Midwest in the 1950s was not the idyllic rural life of nostalgia or contemporary stereotype. Housing conditions were harsh for a large minority of people, and mobility and transience were common in the 1950s as they had been earlier (especially in the 1930s) and would be again later.

Chapters two and three focus on *images* of the Midwest (both self-image and external), emphasizing how those images were shaped by understandings or distortions of the experiences of (1) the Wild West (as reflected especially in Wild West shows); (2) homesteading (especially as in Laura Ingalls Wilder's Little House books), and (3) the Great Depression (*Grapes of Wrath* and *The Wizard of Oz*). A theme that runs through these chapters—and, indeed, throughout the book—is that midwesterners survived through hard times not only because of characteristics commonly attributed to them (ingenuity, persistence, and self-reliance) but also because of (seldom acknowledged) government assistance. Depending on the reader's ideological bent, some may think that Wuthnow makes too much of this point; others will believe that the point could be stressed more explicitly and emphatically.

Readers of this journal will be interested to note that in his chapter on education (chap. 4), Wuthnow selected Vinton, Iowa, as representative of "the development of Middle Western education" (98), though nothing in the text or footnotes sug-

gests how or why he did so. His attention to higher education as well as primary and secondary education is welcome. It is amazing to see how quickly attitudes toward higher education changed. For most of the region's history, few rural students went to college; by the late 1960s, even rural midwesterners acknowledged that most good students *would* pursue higher education. An inevitable theme of this chapter is the so-called brain drain from the Midwest. Wuthnow's analysis, which observes that Iowa, Nebraska, and the Dakotas suffer more from brain drain than Minnesota, Kansas, and Missouri, fails to note the role of larger urban areas in the latter states as a factor in the differing rates of brain drain.

Chapter five, on the decline of small communities, especially since 1980, offers a large array of statistics to support a mostly common-sense explanation for why some have declined and others have not. The smaller a town was, the more likely it was to face decline. It was also more likely to decline if it was not a county seat; if the number or value of farms in the county declined at a rate above the average for the region; and if there were more than two competing towns in the county or if the town was smaller than the average size for its county. And, of course, where there was an oil or military installation, towns grew, at least temporarily. "When none of these conditions was present, 96 percent of the towns grew, but when four or five were present, about two-thirds of the towns declined" (136). One counterintuitive finding: the Great Depression was *not* a major factor in community decline in the region. Wuthnow devotes only one paragraph (145) to the effects of location near an interstate highway, even though that impact is statistically more telling than some of the others discussed at greater length.

Chapter six focuses in on what is probably the most potent factor altering midwestern communities: the dramatic changes in agribusiness, especially meatpacking. Once again, Wuthnow is careful to set recent developments in a longer history. As he says, to understand the issues related to the recent history of meatpacking and new immigration "requires starting earlier than . . . the 1980s." He then offers an account of the development of the county in which Garden City, Kansas, is located, beginning with its settlement patterns (174-81). The point of his

account is to show that large-scale attempts at vertical integration of markets and their effects on local economic and social relations are nothing new in the region. Here, as elsewhere, it would have helped readers if he had made more explicit the connections he sees between the earlier history and the consequences of recent developments, but the attempt to set recent history in a longer historical context is nonetheless welcome. His account of the controversial changes in agribusiness and in the affected communities is more nuanced and balanced than most accounts of these changes. That will undoubtedly prove frustrating to readers who wish he had emphasized more clearly the costs of the changes (and perhaps equally frustrating to other readers for the opposite reason).

The chapter on edge cities (chap. 7), with its compilation of business histories, counters the assumption that these places are primarily bedroom communities for urban centers. "Together," he notes, "manufacturing and wholesale receipts were more than two and a half times larger than retail receipts in edge cities and exceeded total manufacturing and wholesale receipts in the region's core cities" (243). This chapter focuses primarily on the Kansas City and Minneapolis metropolitan areas, but its argument and development might be profitably applied as well to Des Moines and Omaha-Council Bluffs.

Throughout the book, Wuthnow employs a broad range of statistics to good effect. Unfortunately, his fascination with statistics diminishes the pleasure of the book as a reading experience. The book successfully, in my view, counters a number of assumptions and arguments about the Midwest, but it is unlikely to be widely read, not because it goes against the grain, but because all too often it reads like a compilation of statistics.

Some readers, too, may be perplexed by Wuthnow's idiosyncratic definition of the "Heartland." He excludes the states of the Old Northwest but does include Arkansas and Oklahoma. His home state of Kansas receives a disproportionate share of attention.

Kansas is even more explicitly the center of attention in *Red State Religion: Faith and Politics in America's Heartland*. In fact, the book could be profitably read as a survey history of Kansas politics, with side trips to discuss the history of religion in the state.

Like most traditional political state history texts, *Red State Religion* is based on sources traditionally used by historians, especially newspapers, oral interviews, and county-by-county election statistics; and Wuthnow often employs and addresses the work of other historians. He does, however, make greater use of survey data than most historians do. Although focused almost exclusively on Kansas, the book deserves the attention of those interested in other states in the Midwest. Kansas developments traced to "Bleeding Kansas" are unique, but much of the rest of Kansas history shows parallels to Iowa, with Kansas being perhaps the only state that can claim to be even more reliably Republican than Iowa (although Iowa has, since the 1960s, become much more a two-party state).

To be sure, Kansas is a fine laboratory for such treatment. From John Brown yielding God's sword at the time of Bleeding Kansas, through Carry Nation's saloon-smashing campaign in the first decade of the twentieth century, to the Wichita abortion battles of the 1980s and later, Kansas has seemed particularly susceptible to excess in the relationship between religion and politics, and that is the image most often portrayed in discussions of the state. Wuthnow does not minimize those episodes. Yet for much of the state's history, he struggles to relate developments in the field of religion to the realm of politics. In fact, his sections on religion often read like sidebars to a traditional state political history. But that, in fact, reflects his stated thesis: "that the Republican Party and the centrist conservatism of the state's two dominant religions—Methodism and Catholicism—actually deterred radical religious and political movements from gaining much ground during much of the state's history" (xii, articulated more fully on p. 209). It was, he argues, the emergence and rapid growth of new denominations—especially Southern Baptists—that set the stage for the activism of the Religious Right in recent years.

The focus on the centrist conservatism of the state's Methodists and Catholics means that Wuthnow tends to overlook what diversity does exist in Kansas. It would be interesting, for example, to read about how the culture of Topeka could spawn and nurture simultaneously at the turn of the twentieth century the likes of Charles Sheldon, author of the best-selling and

widely influential book *In His Steps* (which spawned a "What Would Jesus Do?" fad that predates the more recent one by about a century); Charles Parham, often credited as one of the main founders of Pentecostalism; and Karl Menninger, founder of the Menninger Foundation and Menninger Clinic.

Wuthnow acknowledges that the story of religion should not be reduced to the way it relates to politics. "Religion was generally more significant in private life than it ever was in the political sphere. People cared about it because they believed their salvation was at stake. It mattered how their children were raised, which church they belonged to, and who they married. They were willing to accept some religious differences, but not others. Those differences influenced who they saw as their friends or foes, what they felt about social issues, and how they voted" (11). He cites a study of Oskaloosa, Kansas, in the 1950s that found that 75 percent of the town's residents were members of one of the town's churches, and that churches were intimately integrated into the town's overlapping social networks (198).

Readers of this journal will appreciate that Wuthnow recognizes that "understanding the public role of religion requires playing close attention to state and local politics." That is, one should not assume that the significance of a state being blue or red matters only in national politics. Religious groups, as he shows, are often more effective in "influencing state legislators and governors, and shaping the decisions of school boards and courts" (369).

Wuthnow periodically employs statistics from religious censuses to mark the evolving relative strength of various religious denominations in Kansas, but because he uses such statistics more sparingly than he does in *Remaking the Heartland*, *Red State Religion* is generally more readable. Both books deserve attention from those who care about the history and fate of the communities and states in the Midwest.

Book Reviews and Notices

Archaeology of Minnesota: The Prehistory of the Upper Mississippi River Region, by Guy Gibbon. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2012. x, 263 pp. Tables, charts, maps, illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$34.95 hardcover.

Reviewer Matthew Donovan is an archaeologist/historian for the Iowa Department of Transportation. He is also a Ph.D. candidate in history at Iowa State University, where he is working on a dissertation on the study of archaeology in Iowa.

In his encompassing work, *Archaeology of Minnesota*, archaeologist Guy Gibbon looks at the prehistory of the state of Minnesota. Gibbon, a renowned midwestern archaeologist, presents to his readers (both public and professional) a detailed account of the archaeology and prehistory of the North Star State. Drawing on decades of archaeological research by various Minnesota archaeologists, along with the work of anthropologists and historians, he attempts to capture the cultural landscape of his state before the arrival of European and Euro-American settlers.

In his previous works, Gibbon has surveyed Minnesota's archaeological investigations of a variety of prehistoric periods and cultural groups. Drawing on his experience and scholarship, Gibbon weaves this story of prehistoric Minnesota around the discoveries of archaeologists and material evidence of past cultures. As he points out, "Archaeologists work in two worlds: the present world with its surviving record, and the past world of the people whose remains form that record" (1). With this in mind, Gibbon explains the tools of archaeological analysis, defining briefly what archaeology is and how it works to examine and uncover the past. He then discusses Minnesota's environmental landscape, its temperatures, climates, and geography, including a summary of the state's geographic and geological history, setting the stage for identifying the challenges the prehistoric cultures in Minnesota faced.

To approach the archaeology of the prehistory of Minnesota's native cultures, Gibbon begins at the beginning, discussing the Paleolithic inhabitants of the area, revealing the archaeological evidence of the Paleolithic groups while also pointing out the challenges of survival and showing their skills at adapting to the period's harsh climates. Adaptation and change are themes that Gibbon addresses throughout

his discussions of the various prehistoric cultural periods of Minnesota's prehistory, from the Paleolithic and Archaic periods (ca. 11,000 to 500 B.C.E.) through the Initial Woodland period (1000–500 B.C.E. to 500–700 C.E.) to the Terminal Woodland and the Mississippi periods (ca. 500–700 B.C.E. to 1650 C.E.). As Gibbon divides the archaeological periods and cultural manifestations, he relates each to the environmental changes they manifested and the geographic locations of the discovered material culture.

Gibbon's approach to the overview of archaeology in Minnesota is valuable. If there are any drawbacks to his approach, they lie with the amount of information readers need to assimilate as his story moves forward. Gibbon tries to allow for this by providing various images, maps, and tables to show not only the process of archaeology, but also the location and images of the archaeological record.

This work of scholarship and experience demonstrates the significance of Gibbon's scholarship in the history and prehistory of Minnesota, as well as his role as a significant American archaeologist. He successfully presents the two worlds that an archaeologist faces in telling the story of prehistory, bringing the two worlds together and creating a story and landscape that capture readers' attention and imagination.

The Ojibwe Journals of Edmund F. Ely, 1833–1849, edited by Theresa M. Schenck. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2012. xxx, 487 pp. Illustrations, maps, notes, appendixes, bibliography, index. \$65.00 hardcover.

Reviewer Bonnie Sue Lewis is associate professor of mission and Native American Christianity at the University of Dubuque Theological Seminary. She is the author of *Creating Christian Indians: Native Clergy in the Presbyterian Church* (2003).

I was going to peruse Edmund Ely's journals quickly to submit this review promptly. However, I found myself caught up in the story of this peripatetic missionary teacher and his Ojibwe-French wife, Catharine. He reflects the stories of many young men drawn to missionary endeavors in the mid-nineteenth century in his passion for God and the desire to "enlighten" those he feared were doomed to temporal and eternal destruction without the Gospel. He lacked cross-cultural training, his motives could be questioned, and his condescension toward Ojibwe beliefs and practices is reprehensible. Even so, that he chose to live with, travel with, often suffer with, and marry into the community presents a different twist on what is too often a predictable tale of misunderstanding and missionary failure during this era. I found myself unable to put the book down because Ely, his wife, and

their Ojibwe neighbors—William, Isabella, Nindipins, and others—began to matter to me.

I look forward to passing this book on to an Ojibwe friend who will find some familiar names here and who, because she is a Protestant pastor herself, will appreciate the individuals portrayed in these journals who sought to make sense of worldviews that were changed by the tumult of the era and their cross-cultural friendships.

From America to Norway: Norwegian-American Immigrant Letters, 1838–1914, volume 1, 1838–1870, edited and translated by Orm Øverland. Northfield, MN: Norwegian-American Historical Association, 2012. 472 pp. References. \$50.00 hardcover.

Reviewer L. DeAne Lagerquist is professor and chair of the department of religion at St. Olaf College. She is the author of *In America the Men Milk the Cows: Factors of Gender, Ethnicity and Religion in the Americanization of Norwegian-American Women* (1991).

Having traveled from Norway to America by boat and then overland by various means (including train, canal boat, or ox-cart), the authors of the letters published here used words to reach back across the Atlantic. Some letters are filled with details of the journey: route, company, and experiences. Others recount the conditions and activities of their lives in the United States, mostly in the upper Midwest. In 1845 a group recently arrived in Rock Prairie, Wisconsin, announced their intention to stay through the winter but then to “go west to a country called Iowa that has recently been purchased from the Indians and taken into the Union as a state.” Their decision was based on lower land prices in Iowa and reports that “in Iowa the water is healthier and there is a better balance of forest and prairie” (64).

The volume reviewed here is the first of a projected four-volume set containing English translations of *Fra Amerika til Norge* (1992–2011), a seven-volume collection already available in Norwegian. It continues the Norwegian-American Historical Association’s long involvement in collecting, preserving, and publishing immigrant letters. Organized chronologically, the letters are identified by their author(s) and recipient(s) and their locations. Following the letter, a brief note provides additional information about the people, their circumstances, or the history of the letter itself, explaining, for example, relationships or tracing the letter’s path into a newspaper or archival collection. Some readers will find familiar correspondents—perhaps their forebears or their neighbors’. A few writers, such as Elise Waerenskjold, may be known from their previously published letters (*The Lady with*

the Pen: Elise Wærenskjold in Texas [1961]). A single letter or even a fragment is all there is from some authors; from others there is a series extending over several years. Although this volume lacks an index, a cumulative index is planned. In the meantime, the detailed table of contents enables readers to select letters on the basis of location, author, or recipient.

Simply dipping into the letters, as if having discovered them in one's attic, offers the almost guilty pleasure of reading someone else's mail. It allows us to travel through time, rather than across an ocean, and provides us with entrance into the daily lives of an earlier wave of immigrants. Straightforward accounts of the price of coffee and crop yields, of family matters and religious disputes, give access to ordinary lives in the midst of much that was new to writers and their intended readers. Announcements of misfortune and death, often reported long after their occurrence, move us decades later. Although each letter is unique, readers can become lost in the particulars, overcome by the trees and missing the forest.

A respected historian of Norwegian American life, Orm Øverland provides the antidote to such disorientation in his informative, insightful introduction. He locates our reading in the period and suggests reading strategies appropriate to the writers' circumstances and intentions. For example, he alerts us to the economics of international correspondence and to the shift from immigrant letters as largely public to routinely private in about 1870. (Respect for correspondents' privacy determined the collection's end point, 1914.) Øverland's discussion of many immigrants' limited experience expressing themselves in writing adds nuance to common assertions about the high literacy rate among Scandinavians. It also illumines both the content and style of the letters, suggesting that the more formal language used to discuss religion echoed what they heard in church. Finally, he balances his estimation of the letters' historical value with their wisdom and insight about the unfolding of life in any time or place.

Across God's Frontiers: Catholic Sisters in the American West, 1850–1920, by Anne M. Butler. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012. xxi, 423 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$45.00 hardcover.

Reviewer Timothy Walch is director emeritus of the Herbert Hoover Presidential Library. He is the author of *Catholicism in America: A Social History* (1989).

It is not hard to make the case that Catholic women religious, better known as sisters or nuns, were among the most "liberated" women in nineteenth-century America. They lived together in common cause

under the leadership of women selected from within their respective religious orders. They devoted themselves to educating children, caring for minorities and the indigent, and providing for the health and recuperation of citizens of all denominations. In many ways, they collectively determined their own destinies. To be sure, these women professed vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience and were bound by rules and instructions that emanated from a conservative, patriarchal religious denomination. But as Anne Butler argues so well in this important new study, these extraordinary women shaped the landscape of the American West, and they themselves were changed by the experience.

These sisters had precious little preparation for their life's work, and they were challenged at every turn. "They climbed mountains and forded rushing rivers," notes Butler. "They lived through blizzards, earthquakes and tornadoes. They bounced over corduroy roads in stagecoaches and wagons; they traveled in leaky skiffs and small canoes. They rode horses and mules and walked hundreds of miles on blistered feet" (304). It was hardly a life of privilege.

As if the journey was not arduous enough, these women arrived in their new dioceses with limited provisions and even fewer prospects. As Butler shows in a masterful chapter titled "The Labor," these women were on their own and survived by being both entrepreneurial and flexible. They opened schools, hospitals, and orphanages to support themselves and responded to local needs for other social services. When local demand for these services declined or changed, the sisters "followed the working population, relocating to more promising venues" (305-6). Butler concludes that women religious were most successful when they filled what she calls a "service vacuum."

Simply put, these women supported themselves by making life more habitable for all residents of the West. "Nuns in many locales," writes Butler, "excelled at responding to the social, economic, and political elements of the cultures around them, using female work—domestic and professional, structured and leisure—as their admission ticket to western society" (114). Teaching and nursing required very little capital, and these services were much appreciated.

Of course, these women were not independent of the patriarchal authority of the church. Their sacred vows and the rules of their religious orders required them to acknowledge the directives of their local bishops and other church authorities, and these directives were not always in the best interest of the women themselves. "Professed women confronted layers of controls," adds Butler, "and, as with any persons regulated by an institutional system of authority, they sur-

prised themselves by exerting their own energy against complete domination" (187).

That certainly was the case for the Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, known commonly as the BVM Sisters. Butler briefly touches on the diplomatic relations between Mother Mary Frances Clarke, the founder of this Dubuque-based congregation, and the order's spiritual director, Reverend Terence J. Donaghoe. Although Clarke had organizational authority over her sisters, Donaghoe controlled the order's financial resources. Clarke never challenged Donaghoe's authority, but she did use the priest's death as the opportunity to seize her order's financial assets, file articles of incorporation with the state, and assume full control of the congregation.

Butler refers to the working relationships between nuns and their male superiors as contests for control. "From those contests," she adds, "sometimes won and sometimes lost, nuns and sisters broadened their life selections, enlarged their expectations, and found ways to forge a convent life that complemented the realities of the American West" (189). These women understood that they were not members of a democratic church; in fact, they believed in rules and a hierarchy of authority. And yet, these women also responded to particular circumstances and, like Mother Clarke, seized authority when it was opportune.

The women religious of the American West have found their voice in this book. Based on research in dozens of congregational archives, *Across God's Frontiers* is an exceptional work of research and analysis. One can only hope—perhaps pray is a better word—that the history of women religious in other regions of the country will find a scholar as diligent and thoughtful as Anne Butler.

The Tribunal: Responses to John Brown and the Harpers Ferry Raid, edited by John Stauffer and Zoe Trodd. Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2012. lix, 570 pp. Notes, bibliography, index. \$39.95 hardcover.

Reviewer Galin Berrier is a retired high school and community college history teacher. He is the author of "The Underground Railroad in Iowa," in *Outside In: African-American History in Iowa, 1838–2000* (2001).

The Tribunal derives its title from one of John Brown's letters from prison in Charlestown, Virginia, November 28, 1859: "I leave it to an impartial tribunal to decide whether the world has been the worse or the better of my living and dying in it" (69). This anthology of letters, speeches, newspaper articles, poems, and songs seeks to answer that question.

After an extended introduction in which the editors briefly sketch Brown's life and characterize his raid on Harpers Ferry as a military failure but a political success, their anthology consists of five parts: (1) John Brown in his own words; (2) Northern responses; (3) Southern responses; (4) international responses; and (5) Civil War and postwar U.S. responses. The last entry dates from 1889, exactly 30 years after the Harpers Ferry raid, "when [John Brown] becomes a marginalized figure in American culture, embraced only by blacks and radical Northern whites" (xxi).

In an earlier, briefer anthology, *Meteor of War: The John Brown Story* (2004), Stauffer and Trodd used a similar approach, trying to understand John Brown through the metaphor of a fiery meteor so often employed by literary figures of his time. Nearly all of the entries in part one of *The Tribunal* also appeared in *Meteor of War*, as did such well-known literary tributes as Henry David Thoreau's "A Plea for Captain John Brown" (105–9) and John Greenleaf Whittier's "Brown of Ossawatimie" (190–91).

As the editors point out, however, "this is the first book to distinguish between Northern and Southern responses to Brown's raid, and the first to gather international responses" (xxi). African American voices are represented not only by Frederick Douglass and Henry Highland Garnet, but also by the lesser-known John Sella Martin, an escaped slave who became a pastor in Boston and New York, and the black journalist and abolitionist Thomas Hamilton. The Southern responses include letters and diary entries of ordinary people as well as the famous. The international responses are mostly from Britain, Canada, and Western Europe, but also include a Polish poet and a Haitian newspaper editor.

An introduction to each selection identifies its author, gives the selection's context, and connects it with the overall narrative. Numerous endnotes identify allusions to events in ancient, European, or British history and to verses in the Bible. John Brown's prison letters in particular are full of references to scripture, reminding us of his remarkable ability to memorize Bible verses as well as the stern religious faith that animated so much of his behavior.

Stauffer and Trodd assume that readers of *The Tribunal* are already reasonably familiar with the 1859 raid on Harpers Ferry and the trial of John Brown that followed. Those who want a clear and readable narrative of those dramatic events may wish to consult the recent account by Tony Horwitz, *Midnight Rising: John Brown and the Raid that Sparked the Civil War* (2011).

Iowans will find but a single reference to their state. John Brown's letter to "Mr. Henry L. Stearns," the 12-year-old son of one of Brown's "Secret Six" financial backers, abolitionist George Luther Stearns, which contains a brief biographical sketch of his early life often mined for psychological insights by Brown's biographers, was written from "Red Rock, Iowa, 15th July, 1857" (20). In the editors' introduction, the Missouri raid and subsequent trek across Iowa with 12 liberated slaves in February 1859 merits only a single paragraph, and Iowa is not mentioned (xxx).

Few of the sources in *The Tribunal* reflect opinion in letters, diaries, or newspaper editorials from the Midwest. Here is one of many possible examples that might have been included, drawn more or less at random from the Underground Railroad files at the State Historical Society of Iowa in Des Moines: "The old man [Brown] would divide his last crust of bread with suffering humanity; and the very men who were the first to feel his power in the recent fray, ascribe to him all the attributes of a lion-hearted, pure minded, but misguided man" (*Iowa Weekly Citizen* [Des Moines], November 2, 1859). Might other examples reveal a similar ambivalence? Would they differ from eastern sources in any significant ways?

Stauffer and Trodd believe that "Harpers Ferry altered the course of American history and that [John] Brown is a testimony to ordinary individuals' potential to transform themselves and their world" (xxii). We cannot know if the Civil War would have occurred had John Brown not raided Harpers Ferry, but we do know this: as to the verdict of "the tribunal" of public opinion, the jury is still out.

A Punishment on the Nation: An Iowa Soldier Endures the Civil War, edited by Brian Craig Miller. Civil War in the North series. Kent: Kent State University Press, 2012. xii, 228 pp. Illustrations, map, notes, bibliography, index. \$45.00 hardcover.

Reviewer Donald C. Elder III is professor of history at Eastern New Mexico University. He is the editor of *Love Amid Turmoil: The Civil War Letters of William and Mary Vermilion* (2003) and *A Damned Iowa Greyhound: The Civil War Letters of William Henry Harrison Clayton* (1998).

During the course of the Civil War, Iowa furnished the Union with 47 regiments and one battalion of volunteer infantry for military service. In addition, one regiment of African Americans represented the state. A number of these units saw extensive action during the conflict; others served primarily in a support role. Much has been written about Iowa units that were heavily engaged in major battles; others

that rarely sniffed the gunsmoke of battle have received shorter shrift. If these relatively non-bloodied regiments had few members who left behind diaries, letters, or memoirs, it was almost a certainty that their service to the Union would gradually fade from historical consciousness.

One unit that suffers from this lack of historical visibility is the 27th Iowa Infantry. It participated in the Red River Campaign, fought in the Battle of Nashville, and took part in the assault on Fort Blakely. Yet only 24 of its members were killed in action, indicating that the 27th Iowa's battlefield contributions to the Union's military triumph were limited. Moreover, until recently it seemed that only one person in the regiment had left an account of his military service. Fortunately, it turns out that the correspondence of at least one other member of the unit had been saved for posterity. Silas W. Haven, a resident of Floyd County, wrote almost 200 letters to his friends and relatives in the Hawkeye State during his years of military service. Haven's descendants made these documents available to Brian Craig Miller. In *A Punishment on the Nation*, Miller has done an outstanding job of editing Haven's letters. In the process he has brought Haven's, and the 27th Iowa's, stories to light.

Haven, like many of the adult residents of northern Iowa at the start of the Civil War, was by birth a New Englander. A bit unusual among Iowa volunteers during the Civil War, he was married and in his mid-thirties when he enlisted. In another way, however, he was typical of most of his compatriots: he suffered from a number of maladies during the war, infirmities that kept him from participating in a number of his regiment's battlefield engagements. But Haven's mates in the 27th Iowa made him aware of their activities, and he faithfully passed along detailed accounts of the regiment's engagements in his correspondence. Haven also proved to be a keen observer of politics, and his letters give readers a sense of how the attitude of a Union soldier about northern leadership played out in real time. Finally, although he never explicitly states his reason for enlisting, Haven's correspondence suggests a strong conviction that the Union cause was a moral and just one. Thus, *A Punishment on the Nation* provides an interesting glimpse into the thinking of a Civil War combatant about the true meaning of the nation's bloodiest war.

An excellent work, the book does suffer from a few flaws. Miller identifies the Democratic candidate for governor of Iowa in 1863 as Marcus Tuttle (his actual name was James Madison Tuttle). He also states that the Union commanders at the Battle of Westport were Samuel Curtis and John Marmaduke; Marmaduke was, in fact, a Confederate general. A map of the northeast quadrant of Iowa would have

helped readers not familiar with that region visualize the location of the communities that Haven refers to in his letters. But these imperfections should not deter potential readers of *A Punishment on the Nation*. It will be a valuable source of information for anyone seeking a greater understanding of the life of a Union soldier.

Standing Firmly by the Flag: Nebraska Territory and the Civil War, 1861–1867, by James E. Potter. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2012. xxi, 375 pp. Maps, illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$29.95 paper.

Reviewer Kurt Hackemer is professor of history at the University of South Dakota. He is working on a history of the Civil War in the Dakota Territory.

Does the historical profession really need yet another book on the Civil War? After all, what more could possibly be said? In this case, the answer is a resounding “yes,” for James Potter has broken significant historiographical ground with his narrative of Nebraska Territory’s experience during this pivotal period in American history. The end result is informative and convincingly makes the case that much more remains to be done in connecting the Civil War to the people and places that occupied the country’s western periphery.

Potter tells his story chronologically, with chapters devoted to each of the war years, plus two additional chapters that take readers up to Nebraska Territory’s admission to the Union in 1867. Nebraska had been at the center of issues that were pivotal to the Civil War ever since the 1854 act that opened the territory for settlement and connected popular sovereignty to the ongoing national debate over slavery. Those issues, and the constant threat of conflict associated with them, are a consistent theme running throughout the book.

From the moment formal hostilities began with the firing on Fort Sumter, Nebraskans linked their concerns about internal security to the larger national context. The southeastern corner of the territory, where Nebraska abuts Missouri and Iowa, was particularly volatile, prompting the raising of the First Nebraska Cavalry (with many Iowa volunteers) as a counter to bushwhackers and potential secessionists. However, the regiment was quickly requisitioned by the federal government for service elsewhere, creating serious consternation that only grew over time as the threat expanded to include Native Americans who attacked the Anglo settlers threatening their way of life. This created an interesting dichotomy in Nebraska’s Civil War experience that is echoed in the way Potter has structured his story, which covers those who remained in Nebraska as well as the territory’s soldiers who confronted Confederates in Tennessee, Missouri, and Arkansas.

The First Nebraska fought in some of the western theater's early battles, most notably at Fort Donelson and Shiloh, but most of their service was devoted to garrisoning small outposts and fighting guerillas in Arkansas. For much of the war, disease and accident proved more deadly than Confederate bullets and artillery. Potter effectively mines soldiers' letters, diaries, and published accounts in making the point that their actual experience was quite different from the heady expectations of 1861. Despite the prestige of its early and important service, the First Nebraska always had a difficult time recruiting replacements because the other Nebraska units with whom it competed for manpower could promise service without leaving the territory, which meant that soldiers could stay closer to their families.

The book's strong suit is the nuanced portrait it paints of the way the war was perceived and experienced in Nebraska Territory itself. One might assume that the territory's relative isolation from the war kept Nebraskans focused on the challenges of life on the frontier. To be sure, those challenges were constant, but they became downright threatening with the 1862 Sioux War and the widespread attacks by raiding parties in the Platte River valley in 1864. However, the Civil War made its presence known even on the frontier. The bushwhackers who came to symbolize sectional strife in the antebellum years continued their depredations in the territory's southeastern corner for much of the war, ultimately requiring the raising of additional local troops to preserve order. The western trails were filled with draft dodgers and deserters from both the Union and Confederate armies who would resort to violence if challenged. More importantly, Potter documents the extent to which Nebraskans grappled with the war's ideological questions. Political affiliations were scrutinized, with members of any opposing faction often labeled as Copperheads, and the territory's citizens argued vigorously whether this was a war for the Union, a war to free the slaves, or some combination of the two. Discussion of those contentious issues, especially the political rights of former slaves, continued into the postwar period and was central to the political battle that resulted in statehood in 1867.

Potter incorporates a variety of sources, but he makes particularly effective use of materials from First Nebraska soldiers, official documents, and territorial newspapers in crafting his narrative. Given how much he uses them, the latter pose a special challenge because newspapers of the period were, by definition, partisan. In this case, they add a politicized tinge to Potter's story that may exaggerate attitudes about and reactions to the war. That is, however, a minor criticism.

Standing Firmly by the Flag is required reading for anyone who hopes to understand Nebraska's Civil War experience.

Lincoln's Forgotten Ally: Judge Advocate General Joseph Holt of Kentucky, by Elizabeth D. Leonard. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011. xii, 432 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$40.00 hardcover.

Reviewer Christopher Michael Curtis is professor of history and department head at Armstrong Atlantic State University. His teaching and research focus on the Civil War and Reconstruction, especially nineteenth-century property law.

Colby College professor Elizabeth Leonard has written a captivating biography of Joseph Holt, one of the lesser-known members of Abraham Lincoln's "team of rivals." A slaveholding Democrat from Kentucky, Holt served in the Lincoln administration as judge advocate general beginning in September 1862 and continued to serve in that capacity until he retired during President Grant's administration in 1875. Holt's tenure as the chief officer of military justice thus spanned the transformative events generated by the expansion of military authority during the Civil War and Reconstruction. Leonard focuses on Holt's role in implementing the Emancipation Proclamation, the policy struggles between military and civilian authority arising from the occupation of the South, and the prosecutions of Jefferson Davis and the Lincoln assassination conspirators (the subject of Leonard's previous book, *Lincoln's Avengers*).

The book is not simply a political biography, however. Displaying the dexterity of an accomplished historian, Leonard reconstructs Holt's personal life to reveal a fascinating portrait of the type of representative—but not "great"—man who was instrumental in constructing the modern American nation. Leonard chose her subject well. Holt proves to be a complicated man, replete with the wonderful contradictions and pretensions of the Southern bourgeoisie. An upstart lawyer in a slave society, Holt was driven by a personal ambition that was exceeded only by that of his family members who were seemingly never satisfied with his accomplishments. He drifted between practicing law in Kentucky and Mississippi but remained a restive soul who sought solace in more traditional venues like dabbling in politics and marriage. Accordingly, one is hardly surprised to learn that political ambition finally engulfed Holt and he moved to Washington to seek office in the Buchanan administration. Success arrived in the somewhat disappointing form of an appointment as commissioner of patents, but he soon proved competent and loyal and was elevated to

postmaster general, a station much more befitting his opinion of himself. As a result, Holt's political allegiance to the Union ultimately was secured when, as one of the last men left standing in the lame-duck Buchanan administration during the winter of 1861, he was appointed as secretary of war. From that unenviable position he could do little more than witness the fragmentation of the Union firsthand.

Leonard presents Holt's biography in a traditional, chronological fashion, connecting his personal episodes to the larger political narrative of national crisis. Her work is well researched and informative. She fleshes out her portrait by augmenting evidence from Holt's personal correspondence with an abundance of writings from family members and colleagues. Due praise aside, there are some missed opportunities. Holt's relationship to slavery is not explained satisfactorily given its importance. Leonard documents his ambivalence, perhaps suggesting more of an antislavery tendency than the evidence warrants, but little mention is made of his own experiences as a slaveholder, including an inadequate explanation of when the slaves he owned were emancipated. More seriously, despite Holt's achievements as the chief arbiter of military law, Leonard shies away from the subject of Holt and the law. Absent is any discussion of Holt's legal theory or understanding of the law. Indeed, it appears simply as a career, a way to make one's way in the world. Given the role that Holt played in enforcing and adjudicating issues of confiscation, emancipation, and racial justice, this oversight is significant. Occasional references to correspondence with Francis Lieber, a noted law reformer and author of a code of instructions for military conduct, only whet the appetite for a more thorough analysis. The Civil War represented the ultimate repudiation of English common law forms and actions and their replacement with a new foundation of jurisprudence. Holt appears to have played a significant role in that transformation, but any such contribution eludes the scope of Leonard's biography. These reservations notwithstanding, Professor Leonard has contributed another innovative book to her repertoire. It suggests that we still have much more to learn about the Civil War.

For the Love of Pete: An Orphan Train Story, by Ethel Barker. North Liberty: Ice Cube Press, 2012. 275 pp. Illustrations, author's note. \$19.95 paper.

Reviewer Millie K. Frese is the education and outreach manager at the State Historical Museum of Iowa. As the former editor of the *Goldfinch*, the State Historical Society of Iowa's children's magazine, she edited an issue on the orphan trains.

In her debut novel for middle-grade readers, Iowa City author Ethel Barker tells an orphan train story from the perspectives of three New York City street children. In July 1880 a "street rat" named Pete befriends two recently orphaned sisters, Iris and Rosie. A mumblety-peg lesson leads to an encounter with police and placement in an orphanage. From there, "the Reverend" invites them to board a train bound for rural Iowa. (Readers familiar with orphan train history will recognize later references to "Reverend Brace" as allusions to Charles Loring Brace, founder of the Children's Aid Society, whose emigration plan for destitute children eventually became known as "the orphan trains.") Barker's characters are placed in separate homes: Pete with a cruel farmer, Iris with an older couple who need a housekeeper, and Rosie with a wealthy—but unhappily married—couple. Chapters are narrated by alternating characters, but their voices are indistinguishable, often sounding more like an adult reminiscing about the distant past. Barker weaves a tale that "is almost too strange to be believed," to borrow a line from one of her characters.

A *Palimpsest* article, "The Orphan Train Comes to Clarion" (Fall 1988), piqued Barker's interest in this topic. From 1854 to 1929, charitable organizations removed poor children from New York City (not all were orphans), transporting an estimated 200,000 to new homes in "western" states. Approximately 8,000–10,000 children landed in Iowa. Young readers interested in learning more should look up *The Goldfinch* magazine's spring 2000 issue devoted to orphan trains in Iowa history.

Light on the Prairie: Solomon D. Butcher, Photographer of Nebraska's Pioneer Days, by Nancy Plain. Bison Books. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2012. 113 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography. \$16.95 paper.

Reviewer Kate Elliott is assistant professor of art history at Luther College. Her research and writing have focused on Western American art.

As Laura Ingalls Wilder's *Little House on the Prairie* series enters its eightieth year of publication, it is clear that the story of the American pioneer continues to enthrall young readers. No stranger to the genre of young adult non-fiction herself, Nancy Plain adds to the story of pioneer perseverance with her beautifully illustrated examination of

Solomon Butcher, the self-described “pioneer photographer of the Nebraska prairie.”

Plain offers scholars little new on Solomon Butcher’s ambitious 20-year project documenting the sodbusters of Custer County, Nebraska, finally published in 1901. She offers a slightly difference narrative—one of a failed farmer turned historian—that augments the expected narrative of the hearty pioneer transforming inhospitable prairie into fertile farmland.

Like Butcher, Plain highlights individuals with particularly interesting stories throughout her text. But this biographical approach is deftly situated within historical context such as Zebulon Pike’s 1806 assessment of the region as the “Great American Desert.” She also includes a valuable discussion of the transformational impact of the railroad on the settlement of the prairie. These historical events are laid out in a conversational tone, sprinkled with recollections of pioneers and illustrated with Butcher’s delightful photographs, creating anything but another dry historical text.

Problems with layout, especially the lack of figure numbers, make the text confusing at times, but this is a minor problem. *Light on the Prairie* serves as a model of how a book for young readers can educate as well as delight.

Buffalo Bill from Prairie to Palace, by John M. Burke, edited by Chris Dixon. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2012. xxvii, 367 pp. Illustrations, notes, appendixes, bibliography, index. \$24.95 paper.

The Life of Hon. William F. Cody, Known as Buffalo Bill, by William F. Cody, edited by Frank Christianson. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2011. xlix, 529 pp. Illustrations, maps, notes, appendixes, bibliography, index. \$27.95 paper.

The Wild West in England, by William F. Cody, edited by Frank Christianson. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2012. xli, 207 pp. Illustrations, notes, appendixes, bibliography, index. \$17.95 paper.

Reviewer J. Thomas Murphy is professor of history at Bemidji State University. His research and writing have focused on the military history of the U.S. West.

Citing his birth in Scott County, Iowa, in 1846, William F. Cody called it his “début upon the world’s stage” (*Life*, 19). It was a self-conscious statement. By the time he published his autobiography in 1879, his persona as Buffalo Bill—hunter, scout, Indian fighter—had been established in newspaper accounts, dime novels, and theatrical performances. Cody was a striver, seeking opportunity wherever he could.

He told his story, most famously after 1883 through his Wild West Show, and soon his personal identity seemed an American one, and his narrative of the past became a depiction of the nation's history. To introduce Cody's writings to modern readers, scholars working with the Papers of William F. Cody at the Buffalo Bill Historical Center in Cody, Wyoming, and the William F. Cody Archive at the University of Nebraska, Lincoln, edited and published these three volumes.

Cody was 33 years old when he wrote, or dictated, his autobiography, and it is a classic western tale designed to excite eastern readers. It is replete with stories about frontier life, both real and imagined, that follow conventions common at the time; and, in many ways, it is a prescriptive lesson in manliness. Working alongside teamsters and trappers, Cody became a kind of apprentice plainsman, displaying a young boy's pluck. At age 11, he says, "I became a hero and an Indian killer" (*Life*, 73). The account is suspect, and despite Cody's later working relationship with Pawnee and Lakota in his troupe, it begins a litany of killing and scalping that served three purposes: to satisfy expectations about the West's wildness; to reassure readers that white civilization would predominate; and to portray a man of action in the tradition of Daniel Boone, Kit Carson, and other historical or literary buckskin heroes. Cody also emphasized his horsemanship and marksmanship, skills that kindled his nickname as a buffalo hunter for the railroad.

In 1868 Cody began scouting for the Fifth Cavalry. Over the next four years his fame grew because of his exploits, and he widened his contacts among military men, especially Lieutenant General Philip H. Sheridan, and easterners with the power to popularize his name such as James Gordon Bennett of the *New York Herald* and E. Z. C. Judson. Judson, as Ned Buntline, wrote a successful dime novel, *Buffalo Bill, King of the Border Men*, and initiated Cody's theater career. To boost his stage roles, Cody returned west for material. In a skirmish in 1876 on Warbonnet Creek, he killed a Cheyenne warrior and proclaimed it "the first scalp for Custer" (*Life*, 405). The duel linked him to Lieutenant Colonel George Armstrong Custer's death at the Battle of the Little Bighorn, a story familiar and shocking to Americans, and kept himself in the public eye as a heroic protector as well as an actor.

Cody regularly played out these episodes in his Wild West Show, which was part circus, part rodeo, and part re-enactment of western life that included rescuing settlers or a stagecoach from Indian attack. In 1888 Cody described taking his show abroad and appended it to a second edition of his autobiography. It is now available separately as *The Wild West in England*, a straightforward reporting that reveals

Cody's optimism. Despite financial losses in the Wild West's first year, he believed that "the profit came to me in the way of valuable experience and I was in no wise discouraged." Instead, he was "determined to win success with my prairie Wild West Show or go down in complete failure" (*Wild West*, 5). He found an experienced theatrical manager in Nate Salsbury, hired John M. Burke to handle public relations, and gathered his performers, including the "the world famous Chief Sitting Bull" (*Wild West*, 10). He also brought his props: a stagecoach, teepees, and herds of horses, elk, and bison. It proved "too colossal to take to Windsor, and so the Queen came to the Wild West" (*Wild West*, 74). In *Buffalo Bill from Prairie to Palace*, Burke reuses Cody's format for *The Wild West in England* but adds his own flair. He also inserts letters from army officers to underscore the authenticity of Cody and his show. "Men who have criticised Buffalo Bill as an actor," wrote Burke, "forget wholly that he is the only man who is *playing himself*. He plays his part as he knows it, as he has acted it upon many a field" (*Prairie to Palace*, 203-4).

Together, these books tell us much about Cody's life, his showmanship, and his complex narrative. He is not an easy subject; the editors have much to clarify and do an admirable job. They include thoughtful introductions as well as photographs and illustrations that display Cody's self-promotion. They also provide notes, although those for the autobiography are less helpful than they might be. Famous names get attention while many others are unfortunately left unidentified. Overall, however, these books offer readers a fresh look at Cody and his famous self, Buffalo Bill.

Corn Palaces and Butter Queens: A History of Crop Art and Dairy Sculpture, by Pamela H. Simpson. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2012. xx, 248 pp. Illustrations, notes, index. \$29.95 paper.

Reviewer Chris Rasmussen is associate professor of history at Fairleigh Dickinson University. He has written extensively about the Iowa State Fair and county fairs.

It would be easy to poke fun at kitschy works of art created from grains, vegetables, and butter, but Pamela H. Simpson's well-crafted book persuasively makes the case that crop art offers a vivid source for understanding the history of fairs and agriculture. In *Corn Palaces and Butter Queens*, Simpson recounts the neglected history of food art and reveals how mosaics pieced together from grain and statues sculpted from butter speak to the larger history of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century America. Corn palaces are not found in text-

books on architectural history, and butter sculptures are not preserved in museums, but Simpson's history uses crop art to offer a perceptive analysis of the history of the Midwest and the boundary between fine art and crafts.

In the late nineteenth century, midwesterners anointed their own royalty, crowning King Corn and building palaces to display their agricultural bounty. The corn palace at Sioux City, Iowa, built in 1887, attracted publicity and visitors and launched a vogue for palaces decorated with grain. Residents of Sioux City erected a new palace each year from 1887 to 1891, but decided not to build the palace after the city was inundated by a flood in 1892. Boosters in Mitchell, South Dakota, seized the opportunity to build their own corn palace, one destined to become *the* corn palace. As Simpson notes, boosterism fueled the construction of grain palaces, as cities and states vied with one another for publicity and prosperity. The success of the Mitchell corn palace inspired boosters in other towns to build the Creston blue grass palace, Algona hay palace, and Forest City flax palace to promote their crops and their communities.

Many states also featured food art in their exhibits at the world's fairs in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. State exhibits did not simply promote agricultural abundance, but were literally made from it. Models of the California state capitol built from almonds or the Liberty Bell made from California oranges delighted fairgoers both as works of art and as testaments to agricultural abundance. Iowa's exhibits at world's fairs were temples of grain, painstakingly constructed from cornstalks and thousands of kernels of the state's staple crop.

At the same moment that grain art became popular, butter sculpture became a staple of state fairs in Iowa, Minnesota, Wisconsin, and other states. While some sculptors created busts of mythological figures or Theodore Roosevelt, butter cows soon became an icon of the dairy industry and one of the most famous exhibits at the fair. As Simpson notes, the butter cow became the emblem of the dairy industry at a moment when dairy farming was being remade by mechanization and the growth of corporations, and dairy corporations often sponsored butter sculpture in order to promote their products.

Ah, yes, but is it art? Some butter sculptors, such as Caroline S. Brooks, became successful artists and sculpted in marble, but butter sculpture was usually disparaged by art connoisseurs. In an era when midwesterners strove to demonstrate that their region's agricultural bounty could lay the basis for real artistic achievement, critics disparaged butter sculpture as a novelty, but this vernacular art proved pop-

ular with fairgoers, and remains a must-see icon at many state fairs today.

Why create art from food, instead of applying oil to canvas or sculpting marble or bronze? Simpson rightly characterizes corn palaces, grain art, and butter sculptures as “icons of abundance” (xvi, 111, 181, 190, 195) that tangibly displayed the Midwest’s agricultural prosperity. As she observes, using food to create art was downright wasteful—and thus attested to the Midwest’s status as America’s breadbasket, capable of producing bin-busting harvests.

Simpson also acknowledges that midwestern boosterism concealed some misgivings. In an era when agriculture was being transformed by technological and economic change, icons such as King Corn, grain murals, and butter cows harked back to a Jeffersonian ideal that was rapidly vanishing. Perhaps a bit more attention to this nostalgic yearning for a vanishing world would balance the boosters’ irrepressible optimism that predominates in Simpson’s account.

Corn Palaces and Butter Queens succeeds in recovering the history of neglected art forms and rescuing grain palaces and butter cows from what historian E. P. Thompson called “the condescension of posterity.” Grain murals and butter sculpture are not mere curiosities. Treated seriously by an accomplished art historian, corn palaces and butter cows really do offer “a broad and unique index to the ideas and attitudes” of the turn-of-the-century Midwest (xv).

Defining Deviance: Sex, Science, and Delinquent Girls, 1890–1960, by Michael A. Rembis. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2011. x, 227 pp. Illustrations, appendixes, notes, bibliography, index. \$50.00 hardcover.

Reviewer Joan Gittens is professor of history at Southwest Minnesota State University. She is the author of *Poor Relations: The Children of the State in Illinois, 1818–1990* (1994).

Defining Deviance examines the records of the Illinois Reformatory for Girls in Geneva, focusing on the persistent inequitable treatment of girls in the juvenile justice system over the 70 years from 1890 to 1960. Girls were most frequently brought to court for sexual misbehavior, a charge rarely made against boys. And although there were many fewer girls in the system, they were incarcerated at much higher rates than boys. Even when accused of rape, boys were less likely to be incarcerated than girls for much less serious charges. Girls modern readers would unequivocally classify as victims—those who suffered incest, rape, or other forms of abuse—were incarcerated and subject to all the rigors of reformatory treatment.

Michael Rembis's interest is in the girls assessed as "feebleminded," in the language of the early twentieth century. This was a staggering number of the Geneva population, according to their longtime superintendent, who declared 85 percent of her charges to be feebleminded. The period from the 1890s through 1915 was the heyday of the eugenics movement, and the Geneva superintendent was an enthusiastic believer, one of many in Illinois. In the early twentieth century it was generally assumed that most delinquents suffered some degree of mental impairment, but it was girls the eugenics crusaders saw as the greatest danger to society. It was confidently asserted that feebleminded women produced far more children than other women, a direct threat to the eugenicists' program of "better breeding." The solution was to institutionalize these young women for life, or at least for their childbearing years.

The triumph of the eugenicists in Illinois was the involuntary commitment law that was passed in 1915, enabling the state to institutionalize those considered unfit. There were some civil liberties protections within the law, but few of those protections worked for girls already placed at Geneva. They were examined, using the Binet intelligence tests deemed the last word in scientific accuracy. The tests confirmed what eugenics advocates already suspected: a sizable portion of the Geneva population should never be released but should instead be transferred to the state institution for the feebleminded permanently.

The eugenics craze began to fade after World War I, but the modifying of outright eugenic ideas did not have much impact on the treatment of delinquent girls. They were still incarcerated at rates far exceeding those for boys and were routinely examined for mental deficiency. Some of the most interesting and poignant material in *Defining Deviancy* is the description of those tests from the point of view of the girls, who did their best to negotiate what was both a terrifying and momentous experience. They attempted to mitigate poor responses by explaining that they were badly educated, very nervous, or worried about their families. Rembis notes how consistently those assessing the young women underrated or ignored the traumatic experiences that so many of them had had prior to their arrival at Geneva. Environmental factors, he insists, were never given equal attention to a foregone conclusion that there was something biologically impaired about the subjects.

After World War II, the emphasis shifted away from what was by then called mental deficiency, but, for the population of delinquent girls, this was a shift in approach, not an abandonment of the biological diagnosis of their problems. In the neo-Freudian climate of the

1950s, the girls went from mentally impaired to emotionally impaired or “maladjusted.” But they were still incarcerated at much higher rates than boys and, in Illinois, at four times the rate of girls in Boston. And the harsh environmental circumstances of their lives were still under-emphasized in favor of a psychological analysis rooted in biology.

Rembis is writing a disability history, an important effort in a new field. But his use of theory is excessive, and his theoretical jargon is distracting, diminishing the power of the story. *Defining Deviance* treats a fascinating subject, raising important questions about the malleability of psychological categories to suit the needs and anxieties of the times. Using case studies from the Geneva Reformatory allows Rembis to give voice to the girls themselves, the most compelling part of the book. The historical material in general is engaging, the result of careful and thoughtful scholarship and a spirit of fairness in his assessment of his historical subjects.

Picturing Illinois: Twentieth-Century Postcard Art from Chicago to Cairo, by John A. Jakle and Keith A. Sculle. Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2012. xiii, 232 pp. Illustrations (mostly in color), notes, credits, index. \$32.95 hardcover.

Reviewer Jane Simonsen is associate professor of history and women’s and gender studies at Augustana College, Rock Island, Illinois. She is the author of “Descendants of Black Hawk: Generations of Identity in Sauk Portraits” (2011) and “On Level Ground: Alexander Gardner’s Photographs of the Kansas Prairies” (1999).

The heyday of the postcard, from 1900 to 1930, occurred alongside cultural fascination with urban modernity, whose themes—efficiency, progress, industry—translated effectively to the mass-produced form. With their size and cost inviting visual and verbal terseness, postcards created iconographies of place that functioned as visual shorthand for the complexities of Chicago’s urban culture and the Illinois hinterlands. In their visual tour, John Jakle and Keith Sculle follow this upstate-downstate divide, examining streetscapes, factories, and buildings as both real and idealized landscapes.

Interpretive essays bracket two illustrated sections devoted to Chicago and “downstate,” respectively. The preface legitimates the postcard as a window into cultural expectations about landscape; the introduction and epilogue provide interpretive lenses through which to read the postcards. They highlight themes such as urban monumentalism, “self-congratulation” through narratives of progress, and geography as a record of historical change (5). Identifying Chicago as a

publishing hub, the authors note the postcard's role in Chicago's self-representation as modern, urban, and powerful, as opposed to the more prosaic hinterland.

The book's two parts focus first on various districts in Chicago (including key suburbs) and then on "Illinois beyond the Metropolis"—other urban areas such as Springfield and Peoria, and, more briefly (because they were less represented), rural towns and natural areas. Literary voices, including Carl Sandburg, Edgar Lee Masters, Frank Norris, and Theodore Dreiser, combine with those of urban observers, and, occasionally, of postcard senders themselves to enrich or provide counterpoints to idealized images of the industrial sublime or "Arcadian" pastoral (182). Historical reality often undercuts representations; for example, an image of the Chicago cruise ship *Christopher Columbus* appears alongside the authors' description of a 1915 passenger-ship tragedy that cost 812 lives. In the process, they provide intriguing details of Chicago history, the impact of politics and transportation on other cities, and architectural history.

Because these sections are organized by location, though, interpretive themes can recede into the background, and the postcard art can sometimes function more as illustration than as text to be read. For example, information about the architecture of the Wrigley Building and Tribune Tower takes precedence over the soaring, impressionistic vista of North Michigan Avenue that accompanies the description; provocative details of the images themselves are sometimes lost in the authors' faithfulness to the material aspects of place. Rare images of people—of Chicago stockyard workers and teamsters and a few of rural families—also interrupt the conventional postcard depiction of monumental buildings and urban grids and suggest meanings of "modernity" that invite even more discussion.

The authors succeed in their effort to establish postcards as worthy of analysis and to suggest their importance as texts through which individuals, private businesses, and governments engaged with state history and landscapes. Moreover, they powerfully articulate how geography served to mitigate the contradictions of "midwestern" identity. Postcards provide a record of state history that celebrates the achievements of modernity, yet leaves tempting clues to the "mindscapes" (xiii) that gave them their meaning.

Prosperity Far Distant: The Journal of an American Farmer, 1933–1934, by Charles M. Wiltse; edited by Michael J. Birkner. Athens: Ohio University Press, 2012. xxxvi, 272 pp. Photographs, notes, index. \$29.95 hardcover.

Reviewer Pamela Riney-Kehrberg is professor and chair of the history department at Iowa State University. Her books include *Waiting on the Bounty: The Dust Bowl Diary of Mary Knackstedt Dyck* (1999) and *Rooted in Dust: Surviving Drought and Depression in Southwestern Kansas* (1994).

This book is a pleasant surprise. Someone picking it up off the shelf might anticipate that *Prosperity Far Distant* is the usual Great Depression farming story, but that is not, in fact, what this book is. Charles M. Wiltse is far better known to most historians as John C. Calhoun's biographer and the editor of Daniel Webster's papers. Even those who knew him well (including Michael Birkner, who inherited Wiltse's academic library and this manuscript upon his death) did not know that Wiltse had spent a very discouraging year early in the Great Depression on a painfully small southern Ohio farm. The book should not be read as a representative chronicle of the experience of the agricultural ravages of the Great Depression, but it does provide a unique perspective on those years. Wiltse was no dirt farmer but a stranded academic who spent a very frustrating year as a reluctant back-to-the-lander.

Wiltse did his farming alongside his parents, Herbert and Mary Wiltse. Herbert Wiltse was raised on a farm and planned eventually to return to agriculture in retirement. That retirement came sooner than expected when he lost his job early in the depression. Charles Wiltse, a newly minted Ph.D. in history, was without employment. Together they planned to raise chickens on the very small farm the elder Wiltses had purchased. Their farming adventure was one problem after another. They thought their farm was 60 acres, but they soon discovered that they had been cheated and had purchased a parcel of 42 acres. They owned neither horse nor automobile and had to hire neighbors to do their plowing. Much of their living required purchasing goods and services from reluctant neighbors, who viewed them as unwelcome interlopers. Their attempts to secure a government loan to help them pay their mortgage and stay afloat met with failure time and again. They did have reasonably good luck getting their chickens to lay a plentiful supply of eggs, but those eggs did not provide them a living. When Wiltse sat down to figure out how profitable their venture had been, he discovered that they were earning approximately five dollars per month. They were not subsistence farmers but below subsistence farmers, surviving only because his parents were slowly cashing in their Liberty Bonds from World War I.

Wiltse paints a highly articulate and engaging picture of the frustrations of attempting to make a living farming when the agricultural economy was imploding all around. Bankers, government bureaucrats, and capitalists of all stripes come in for abundant criticism, while

Wiltse waxes Jeffersonian about the virtues of small farmers. It seems that all that made that year livable were the two kittens the family adopted in an attempt to control the abundance of rodents on the property. All else was hard work, drafty rooms, and disappointment. Nevertheless, Wiltse is such a skillful writer and social critic that reading of his constant trials is not burdensome but interesting. In the end, Wiltse abandoned the farm for a job in Washington, D.C. What happened to his parents' attempts at agriculture we never find out. Both were dead before the decade ended. *Prosperity Far Distant* is the story of an interlude, one that did not produce fruit. For an academic reader, imagining the perils of ending up in a similar situation, the book is a thought-provoking page-turner.

The Big Empty: The Great Plains in the Twentieth Century, by R. Douglas Hurt. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2011. xi, 315 pp. Maps, illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$29.95 paper.

Reviewer Amahia Mallea is assistant professor of history at Drake University. Her research and writing have focused on the environmental history of the Missouri River Valley and the Great Plains.

People belong to the Great Plains more than the Great Plains belongs to people. The venerable historian of agriculture and the region, R. Douglas Hurt, has written a mostly beautiful synthesis of the high plains in which he argues that, as Willa Cather wrote in 1913, "the great fact was the land itself" (*O Pioneers!* [1913], 5). Filled with facts, data, and summaries of scholarship, *The Big Empty* holds readers' interest with well-chosen quotes from primary sources.

Hurt begins with a map outlining the Great Plains, a region ringed by cities but "empty" in the middle. His attention to oft-neglected cities is important (especially now that the demographic weight is urban). To achieve the central emptiness on the map, however, he labels only cities at the edges. If population matters, why not include Grand Island, Rapid City, and Minot? Also, the Canadian cities, representing millions, are on the map but left out of the book—as is the quarter of the region above the 49th parallel. Including work on Canada or the northern borderlands by historians like Sterling Evans would help answer the question for readers whether land, people, or policy makes the "big empty" or if the plains are solely an American creation. In sum, the meaning of the title is vague but invites discussion.

The book follows the arc of American history—organized by subject and chronologically, with overlapping chapters—but still Hurt shows the region to be unique. There are similarities to Iowa's history,

but the differences usually fall back on aridity, climate, and geography. Readers may be surprised by the failed attempts to adapt the environment with tree planting and forestry on the ill-suited prairie. Significant is the attention given to the usually neglected subjects of race and ethnicity. The diverse social groups—including Native American tribes, Germans, Mennonites, African Americans, and farmers of northern and eastern European origin—did not all find fairness or achieve parity. However, Hurt shows a fertile ground for the civil rights movement; the groundbreaking *Brown v. Board of Education* decision arose out of Topeka, and the lunch counter sit-in movement started on the southern plains in Wichita and Oklahoma City. Throughout the century, Latinos were an important part of labor shifts in industrial agriculture, like sugar beets and meatpacking.

Politics and political leaders receive a lot of attention, which puts the focus on states (not bioregions, for example). Hurt identifies a plains pragmatism that is less ideological or partisan than the American norm. Yet there is radicalism; Populists, isolationists, and the Non-Partisan League all put a unique stamp on the region and American politics. The political and cultural characteristics reflect the land: the people are resilient yet vulnerable, self-reliant though “pragmatic” enough to take federal aid beginning in the 1930s; and they put faith in technological adaptations to overcome environmental limitations but assumed new risks.

The tension between centralization and decentralization is exhibited by a corporate farm and livestock economy amidst an independent-minded rural population that is alienated from basic services. The complex relationship between hope (a booming war economy) and despair (drought and recession) highlights that people do not control their destiny on the plains. Because the economy is extractive and therefore boom and bust, because financing continues to come from outside, and because the region suffers from brain drain, Hurt argues that “the economy remained colonial” at the end of the century (209). Irrigated farmland, meatpacking, CAFOs, and energy production (including the recent fracking boom) all depend on limited water resources like the Ogallala Aquifer, which makes the current manifestation of the plains tenuous.

I respect the parameters of *The Big Empty* but note that by excluding the nineteenth century the story of the plains is less contested, more uniform, and unable to show circularity. (Contrast Elliott West’s *The Contested Plains: Indians, Goldseekers, and the Rush to Colorado* [1998].) Hurt’s book begins with plow agriculture as the norm, which follows a largely Anglo population and has the advantage of keeping agricul-

ture at the center, but misses the fact the plains has had other functions besides row crops. There is no mention of bison, the Poppers' "buffalo commons," Ted Turner's ranches, or the Land Institute. Prairie preserves and restoration are not connected back to climate, nomadism, grazing, or bison but compared to the "visible historical footprint" of more recent government shelterbelts (115).

Hurt contributed to the making of Ken Burns's documentary *The Dust Bowl*, which debuted shortly after the book was published. The plains have come to be known only by the "dirty thirties," and Burns replicated that narrow view by failing to engage all of the academic work that places the plains in a wider economic and ecological context. Hurt's *Big Empty* is a much better representation of the Great Plains. I only wish that Hurt would have engaged the historiographical debates and considered whether the region forces a redefinition of the American narrative.

Overall, this is a fine addition to the literature on the plains. Hurt justifies identifying the Great Plains as a region while also showing it to be "amorphous" (xi). I especially like the land-as-base perspective and the attention to social diversity.

Gudrun's Kitchen: Recipes from a Norwegian Family, by Ingeborg Hydle Baugh, Irene O. Sandvold, Edward O. Sandvold, and Quinn E. Sandvold. Madison: Wisconsin Historical Society Press, 2011. vii, 260 pp. Illustrations, recipes, sources for Norwegian cooking implements and foods, glossary, index. \$22.95 paper.

Reviewer Jill Nussel is a lecturer in history at Indiana University-Purdue University Fort Wayne. Her research and writing have focused on using ethnic cookbooks to gain a fuller understanding of ethnic communities.

Occasionally, historians are so busy looking at the big picture with big concepts that we forget that history is made of individuals. Our American story is made up of women and men who came from disparate backgrounds and forged a nation doing everyday things. *Gudrun's Kitchen: Recipes from a Norwegian Family* is a heartwarming recollection, written by members of her family, of Gudrun Thue Sandvold's childhood in Norway and her forging of a fulfilling life in the United States.

Sandvold's story unfolds as an adventure story set in the global historical context of the first half of the twentieth century. We first meet little Gudrun in part one, "The Gudrun Chronicles," as the youngest of 11 children born in 1902. Gudrun spent an idyllic childhood on the family farm in Aheim, Norway, a coastal area of glaciers,

inlets, and narrow valleys. The family eventually moved to Molde for better economic opportunities. Gudrun spent her days exploring, studying, and learning from her mother, and was apparently noted for a wonderful singing voice.

At the time, Norway, like most of Europe, was undergoing significant social and political change. As a result, nearly 800,000 Norwegians found their way to the United States and Canada. At age 21, Gudrun and two of her sisters finally convinced their parents to allow them to go to America to meet their older siblings and cousins, whom they knew only from letters. The plan was for the sisters to work for a couple of years and return to Norway. But over the next decade, the sisters lived in Brooklyn and later in Chicago's Little Norway, where the older sisters married and lived until their deaths. At the height of the Great Depression, Gudrun married Irving Sandvold; the next year they started their family. So much for returning to Norway.

With the onset of World War II, the family moved to Fort Atkinson, Wisconsin. After their children were grown, Gudrun and Irving moved to Boulder, Colorado, but part of her heart always remained in Wisconsin.

Gudrun lived through two wars, the Great Depression in between, a Cold War, and the turbulent 1960s, while raising a close-knit family spread across two continents. The tie that bound them all, and the tie that binds so many similar families, was the kitchen. From her earliest days, Gudrun had been known as an extraordinary cook. In part 2, "Recipes and Traditions," readers are treated to the histories of Norwegian wedding and Christmas celebrations and to Gudrun's favorite recipes for *frokost* (big breakfast) and *smorgasbord* (big meal). Readers will not be surprised to see recipes for smoked salmon or countless ways to prepare herring, *klubb* (Norwegian potato dumplings), and pickled everything. My only small criticism is that I would have liked to see more exploration of Gudrun's interaction with her non-Norwegian friends and neighbors who likely shared their recipes for more "American" fare like baked beans, Jell-O salad, and chop suey, which are also included in this book. The appendixes, with a section on where to purchase Norwegian cooking implements and a glossary of Norwegian culinary terms, are a must for anyone trying to replicate Norwegian culinary skills. For anyone from cold climates, the appendix on how to can and preserve foods through long winters of Norway or Wisconsin is also a must.

Following Gudrun's son's death in 2005, daughter Irene and her children and nephew were urged to put Gudrun's recipes into a book for all to enjoy. The result, *Gudrun's Kitchen*—part memoir, part his-

tory, part cookbook—is a testament to a woman who became part of the American fabric not through protest or activism but through her amazing talents in the kitchen. Perhaps that should be a lesson to us all. Let’s solve all of our problems with Gudrun’s chocolate chip cookies.

Minnesota Railroads: A Photographic History, 1940–2012, by Steve Glischinski. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2012. xv, 298 pp. Illustrations (many in color), notes, bibliography, index. \$39.95 hardcover.

Reviewer Kevin Byrne is professor emeritus of history at Gustavus Adolphus College. His research and writing have focused on military history and the history of railroads and technology.

Minnesota Railroads is one of a number of outstanding books relevant to railroad history in the upper Midwest that the University of Minnesota Press has published over many years. With photographs and text, Steve Glischinski helps readers comprehend and visualize the past 72 years of railroading in Minnesota. The book’s first 100 pages cover 1940 to 1960, an era of technological transition from steam to diesel and growing challenges from other modes of transportation. A second 100-page chapter surveys the following 20 years, when railroads struggled to survive, many succumbing to bankruptcy. Chapter 3 (44 pages) focuses on the last two decades of the twentieth century, years of revival as several railroads gradually returned to profitability. The concluding 35 pages consider twenty-first-century developments, emphasizing successful consolidations and newly created short lines. Glischinski presents this narrative through pithy four- to eight-page introductions that open each chapter. These are essential, but superb photographs of locomotives, trains, terminals, rail yards, and more—plus extensive, informative captions—provide the meat of the book. These visual documents brilliantly illuminate the railroad experience.

This impressive volume offers insights from many significant perspectives. One example: Glischinski’s choice of images sheds light on the labor force. Photographs of employees loading ice for refrigeration, servicing locomotives in maintenance sheds, sorting mail on fast-moving trains (while carrying firearms), learning telegraphy, and battling blizzards evoke a deeper appreciation for life in railroading, and for the times themselves. Overall, this book is a “must-have” for railroad enthusiasts in Minnesota and the upper Midwest. It is a rich resource about a colorful, turbulent era.

The Midwest Farmer's Daughter: In Search of an American Icon, by Zachary Michael Jack. West Lafayette, IN: Purdue University Press, 2012. xii, 266 pp. Illustrations, bibliography. \$21.95 paper.

Reviewer Jenny Barker Devine is assistant professor of history at Illinois College. She is the author of *On Behalf of the Family Farm: Iowa Farm Women's Activism since 1945* (2013).

In *The Midwest Farmer's Daughter*, author Zachary Michael Jack juxtaposes popular images of American farm women with the lived experiences of female farmers, agribusinesswomen, activists, and five generations of women on the Jack family farm in Cedar County, Iowa. Focusing primarily on the latter half of the twentieth century, Jack traces the decline of the iconic farm woman, who once symbolized strength, ingenuity, and thrift before modern agriculture took the "family" out of "family farm" and replaced it with mathematics, economics, and bottom lines. Without access to the business and politics of farming, a farm woman who came of age in the 1960s found herself in a "gendered limbo, caught in a generational divide, increasingly separate from her mother and her mother's plight, but not yet having access to her father's world" (169).

As policy makers ignored women's roles in agricultural production, so too did creators of popular culture lose interest in sentimental portrayals of country living. During the early 1970s, TV executives executed a "rural purge" of western dramas, variety shows like *Lawrence Welk*, and sitcoms like *The Beverly Hillbillies*, *Mayberry R.F.D.*, and *Green Acres*. Following the cancellation of *Little House on the Prairie* in 1982, "poor Daisy Duke had become the last country girl standing on popular TV," and women seemed to all but disappear from discussions about rural life (5). Books that emerged from the farm crisis of the 1980s, including James Waller's *Bridges of Madison County* and Jane Smiley's *A Thousand Acres*, dominated the *New York Times* bestseller list, but provided dark, oppressive images of farm women who were perhaps "more prone to sociopathic reactionism and loveless victimization than their urban counterparts" (146).

In a meandering narrative that combines self-reflection with literary criticism and journalistic reporting, readers follow Jack as he crisscrosses the Midwest to interview farm women and their families (including his own), as well as women who left the farm long ago but continue to work in associated industries. He confers with extension agents struggling to maintain high 4-H ideals amid declining numbers and dwindling resources. He sits in on a Farm Bureau conference for young farmers where women, who constitute half of the participants, eagerly discuss the big business of the modern farm. In another chap-

ter, women who left the farms of their youth but rediscovered their love of the land explain the benefits of Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) to consumers and producers. They demonstrate how women who lack the capital to invest in large, commercial operations can be successful by tapping into local markets. Jack finds that female mentorship is the cornerstone of the CSA movement and is actually vital to women in agriculture more generally, as demonstrated through discussions about the Women, Land, and Legacy project, sponsored by the Iowa-based Women, Food, and Agriculture Network.

In the final chapters, Jack considers rural-to-urban migration as he discovers hidden “farmerettes” addressing poverty and nutrition through organizations devoted to urban gardening. What is most striking about Jack’s observations of contemporary farm women is that some of the most outspoken “ag-vocates” were actually products of the farm crisis whose families lost their farms during the 1980s. They reflect on the resulting hardship and family discord and on their commitment to correcting many of the problems related to modern, industrial agriculture.

The Midwest Farmer’s Daughter offers an engaging, optimistic, and much-needed glimpse into the evolution of women in agriculture and popular discourse over the past century. Jack’s family stories enhance the narrative by clearly illustrating the changing options and attitudes among mothers, daughters, and subsequent generations. Historians might be disappointed by Jack’s cursory engagement with the wealth of secondary literature on the work lives of midwestern farm women. They might also miss a deeper exploration of popular depictions of farm women before 1960. On the other hand, scholars are just beginning to grapple with the experiences and fallout of the farm crisis. Jack lends welcome insight into how this period has shaped contemporary female farmers. Because women now own half of Iowa’s farmland, this study will help break new ground in our understanding of women’s contributions to agriculture.

A Midwestern Mosaic: Immigration and Political Socialization in Rural America, by J. Celeste Lay. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2012. x, 224 pp. Tables, graphs, appendix, notes, bibliography, index. \$29.95 paper.

Reviewer Mariana Medina is assistant professor of political science at Iowa State University. Her research and writing have focused on immigration policy.

In *A Midwestern Mosaic*, J. Celeste Lay addresses a very important question: What is the impact of ethnic diversity in rural areas? Other

researchers, notably Robert Putnam, have looked at the impact of ethnic diversity in urban communities, but little is known about its effects on rural areas, even though many rural towns are now more ethnically diverse than before because of immigration flows. This book focuses specifically on the impact of ethnic diversity on the “social capital” of rural communities.

Social capital has received increased attention in the social sciences recently. Many definitions exist, but we can think of it as the links, understandings, and shared values in communities that allow diverse individuals to trust each other and work together. Communities with higher levels of social capital are likely to have less crime, better education, better health, and better-functioning governments and institutions.

This book focuses on five Iowa towns: Perry, Storm Lake, Boone, Carroll, and Harlan. In 1990 these towns looked very similar in terms of population and ethnic composition. In the past couple of decades, however, Perry and Storm Lake have undergone significant demographic shifts because of changes in the meatpacking industry, the largest employer in both towns. When plants in both towns were bought by IBP, which then merged with Tyson, starting wages were reduced and immigrants and refugees from Asia and Latin America were hired. Unlike Storm Lake and Perry, the rest of the towns continued to be mostly homogeneous.

The focus on these five towns allows the author to conduct what some social scientists call a “natural experiment,” in which an observed phenomenon approximates the properties of a controlled experiment: the five towns looked alike in 1990, and the difference between them now is that Storm Lake and Perry have experienced an increase in immigration. So, if Storm Lake and Perry have different degrees of trust and social capital than Boone, Carroll, and Harlan, it is likely because of a different level of ethnic diversity. One could argue, however, that people choose where to settle, so perhaps those who choose to live in more diverse towns are different from those who would rather live in a homogeneous community. To make sure that did not affect the results of her research, Lay interviewed high school students in the five towns who did not choose to live there; their parents did.

Lay’s findings are interesting. First, young people in diverse communities are more likely to have warmer feelings towards immigrants than their counterparts in homogeneous towns. The more interesting results, however, are about civic engagement. Although high school students in Storm Lake and Perry were less knowledgeable about current political officials and the American political system—factors that political scientists traditionally use to measure political knowledge

—and had lower levels of generalized trust, they were more likely to participate in school activities, such as band, athletics, or science clubs, and in the community, and as likely as those from the other towns to intend to vote when eligible. This indicates higher levels of social capital, not less as some would expect. Furthermore, the results were even stronger in Storm Lake, where immigration took place earlier than in Perry, showing that any negative social consequences of diversity—such as lower generalized trust—are short-lived. Moreover, because rural communities have less residential segregation and social stratification, it is easier for people in places like Storm Lake and Perry to have contact with other ethnic groups and create social bonds, which increases the social capital of a community.

This book should be of interest to Iowans and people interested in rural communities in the Midwest. Some might fear that increased ethnic diversity in Iowa could undermine the quality of life and values of small towns. This book shows that, after a relatively brief period of adjustment, diverse communities have as much social capital or more than homogeneous communities. Even though it takes time to adapt to a “new normal,” increasing ethnic diversity in some communities is not necessarily cause for alarm.

New on the Shelves

"New on the Shelves" is a list of recent additions to the collections of the State Historical Society of Iowa. It includes manuscripts, audio-visual materials, and published materials recently acquired or newly processed that we think might be of interest to the readers of the *Annals of Iowa*. The "DM" or "IC" at the end of each entry denotes whether the item is held in Des Moines or Iowa City.

Manuscripts

Bailey, Gideon S. Papers, 1840-1880. 2½ ft. Papers of this physician and pioneer lawmaker of Van Buren County, who also served as U.S. Marshal for the District of the Iowa Territory (1845-1847). Included among the materials are a set of 11 letters from Henry Clay Dean—prominent Iowa Copperhead—some referencing the Lecompton Constitution and Dean's 1863 incarceration at Keokuk for orations and writings perceived as treasonous. DM.

Celia Cogswell Theatre Collection. Records, 1909-1930. 3½ ft. Collection of theatre documentation compiled by Celia Cogswell, an actress with the Princess Theatre stock company of Des Moines, ca. 1912-1916. Includes newsletters issued by the Princess and other local theaters, scrapbooks of national stage performers who appeared in local productions, and some photographs of Cogswell and other members of the stock company. DM.

Fleming, William H. Papers, 1850s-1923. 2½ ft. Correspondence, letter copy books, and drafts of articles and speeches of this Iowa newspaper editor (*Davenport Gazette* and *Iowa Weekly Capitol*), who also served as private secretary to a series of the state's Republican governors from Samuel Merrill (1868-1872) through Leslie M. Shaw (1898-1902) and was a state officer for the Ancient Order of United Workmen and Independent Order of Good Templars. Fleming's interest in local history is reflected in the manuscript drafts in the collection, which include such titles as "Early Schools and School Legislation in Iowa" and "Governor Shaw's Argument Against Government Ownership and Operation of Railroads." DM.

Icarian Community (Adams County). Papers, 1850s-1920s. 1 document file. Papers related to the disposition of property belonging to this French utopian colony, including a contract signed by members on January 13, 1879, prescribing the terms of dissolution, and copies of relevant records from the Adams County district court and recorder's office. DM.

Iowa State Bar Association (ISBA). Records, 1946-1968. 5½ ft. Collection includes press clippings and news releases (1958-1968) and materials compiled for submission to the American Bar Association's Award of Merit competitions (1946-1962), with special emphasis given to the ISBA's role in securing

passage of the twenty-first amendment to Iowa's constitution, a revision that replaced the partisan election of judges with the American Bar Association's plan for non-political selection and tenure. Iowa was the first state to adopt the plan for all trial courts of general jurisdiction as well as for its supreme court. DM.

Kasson, John Adam. Papers, ca. 1844–1910. 7½ ft. Papers of this prominent Iowa Republican congressman, diplomat, and authority on foreign trade agreements. Included are correspondence; speeches and essays; documentation related to his appointments as first assistant U.S. postmaster general (1861), minister to Austria (1877–1881), minister to Germany (1884–1885), envoy to the Berlin Conference on the Congo (1884), envoy to the Conference on Samoa (1889), and special plenipotentiary for negotiating U.S. reciprocity treaties; and lecture notes and book chapter drafts on the history of diplomacy, the evolution of the U.S. Constitution, the Monroe Doctrine, and international trade. Of note among his early political papers are a draft of the 1860 Republican Party platform, which he was largely responsible for authoring, and his speeches before Congress on universal suffrage and the abolition of slavery. DM.

Latchaw, John Roland Harris. Papers, 1881–ca. 1915. 1 ft. Papers of this theologian, psychology professor, and author who also served as president of Wilton College (Wilton Junction) from 1907 to ca. 1912. Materials include correspondence, articles of incorporation and by-laws for the "Christian Community at Wilton, Iowa"; draft versions of publications: "The Christian Community," "Inductive Psychology: A Guide to Self-Study," "The Kosmos," and "The Bride Unveiled: The Revelation of Jesus Christ Made Plain"; and ephemera, including several broadsides and programs related to Wilton College. DM.

United States Food Administration (USFA)—Iowa Division. Records, 1917–1919. 2 ft. Material documenting the Iowa Library Publicity Director's efforts to provide outreach and marketing for the government's food conservation program. Includes planning materials and reports; newsletters, pamphlets, and handbills circulated on behalf of the USFA; and promotional display components, including a handmade diorama. DM.

Published Materials

Barbed Wire Identification Handbook, by V. L. Grant. Dallas, TX, 1966. 18 pp. IC.

Barbed Wire: Handbook & Price Guide, by Thomas Edward Turner. San Angelo, TX: Educator Books, 1969. 102 pp. IC.

Brief Biographies of Some of the Most Prominent People Who Helped Develop Iowa Horticulture, by Harry E. Nichols. Ames: Sigler, 2012. 107 pp. IC.

Friends for a Lifetime: The Saga of a Sixty-three-year Quaker Love Affair, by Don and Lois Laughlin. Iowa City: Springdale Press, 2011. x, 211 pp. IC.

From Ruby Ridge to Freedom: The Sara Weaver Story, by Sara Weaver. N.p.: Overboard Books, 2012. 159 pp. IC.

Golden Rule Foods – The Golden Rule Way. Columbus, OH: Citizens' Wholesale Supply Co., [ca. 1930]. 123 pp. IC.

Immigration to America: A Journey in Time, by Rüdiger Lentz; edited by Lars Lierow and Elisabeth Hancock. Washington, DC: German-American Heritage Museum of the USA, [2010?]. 28 pp. IC.

J. J. *Catechetischer Unterricht von der Lehre des Heils: Dargestellt nach den Aussprüchen der heil. Schrift, auf den evangelisch-apostolischen Sinn des Geistes Gottes gegründet, zum gesegneten Gebrauch für die Jugend der wahren Inspirations-Gemeinden*. Amana: [Amana Society], 1905-1909. 2 vols. IC.

Kinder-Stimme, oder, Anleitung zum kindlichen Lob und Jugend-Uebung der Kinder, durch Trieb des Geistes verfasst von Einigen, die nach dem kindlichen Geist Christi in Ausrichtung des Herzens sich sehnen. Amana: [Amana Society], 1890. 203 pp. IC.

Murphy's Pets: Fifty Recipes for Cooking Potatoes, compiled by Mrs. De Witt C. Owen. Dixon, IL, [189-?]. 16 pp. IC.

Announcements

CELEBRATING COUNTRY SCHOOL PRESERVATION will be the focus of a regional conference that will be held in Decorah, October 11-12, 2013. During the Friday workshop, discussions will focus on topics ranging from Victorian influences on country school architecture to creating an interpretive program for a preserved school.

A tour of several preserved country schools in the area is planned for Saturday. A new sculpture of Norman Borlaug as a farm boy feeding chickens will be dedicated near the country school he attended.

Program brochures can be obtained by contacting William Sherman at wsherman41@gmail.com or by phone at 1-800-434-2039. The conference is sponsored by Preservation Iowa and several Decorah and Winneshiek County groups.

EACH ISSUE of *The Annals of Iowa* brings to light the deeds, misdeeds, and accomplishments of our predecessors and shows how they fit into the intricate mosaic of Iowa's past. Its in-depth articles will satisfy even the most serious explorer of Iowa's past.

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Contributors

MARVIN BERGMAN has been the editor of the *Annals of Iowa* since 1988. He is also the editor of the *Iowa History Reader* (1996) and coeditor of *The Biographical Dictionary of Iowa* (2008)

ANNA L. BOSTWICK FLAMING is a Ph.D. candidate in history at the University of Iowa. Her dissertation, “‘The Most Important Person in the World’: The Many Meanings of the Modern American Housewife,” explores how women across the political spectrum deployed the housewife image and identity in the late twentieth century.

KATE HOEY is an attorney in Kansas City. She earned a B.A. in English and psychology from the University of Missouri–Columbia in 2006 and a J.D. from the University of Iowa College of Law in 2009. During the summer of 2008, she worked as a law clerk at the Center for WorkLife Law.

JOY SMITH earned an M.A. in history from the University of Iowa (2009) after retiring from a career as a teacher and educational consultant. She resides in Iowa City where she is occupied as a community volunteer and continues to engage with her interest in history and women’s studies.

The State Historical Society of Iowa

The Annals of Iowa is published quarterly by the State Historical Society of Iowa, the Historical Division of the Department of Cultural Affairs of the State of Iowa. The society operates from two centers, Des Moines and Iowa City. A museum, research library, state archives, special collections, community programming, historic preservation, and membership programs are located at 600 East Locust Street, Des Moines, IA 50319, phone 515-281-5111. Publications, a research library, and special collections are located at 402 Iowa Avenue, Iowa City, IA 52240, phone 319-335-3916. The society also operates several historic sites across the state.

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Submissions

The Annals of Iowa invites the submission of articles on Iowa history and on subjects concerning the nation and the Midwest with an Iowa focus. State, local, and regional studies of political, economic, social, cultural, intellectual, institutional, ethnic, religious, material culture, archeological, and architectural history are welcome. The *Annals* also reviews significant books on related topics. A detailed set of editorial guidelines is available on request. All correspondence concerning editorial matters should be addressed to:

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