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In This Issue

DOUGLAS BIGGS, professor of history and associate dean of the College of Natural and Social Sciences at the University of Nebraska–Kearney, offers an account of the final years of the "Dinkey," a street railway in Ames. He explains how the train went, in just a few years (1902–1907), from being the "pride of the community" to the "laughing rolling stock of the state."

JENNIFER ROBIN TERRY, a doctoral candidate in history at the University of California, Berkeley, focuses on the Midcentury White House Conference on Children and Youth in 1950, and specifically on Iowa's participation in the planning that led to the national conference. She shows how the 1950 conference, unlike earlier child welfare conferences, which tended to be top-down affairs, was marked by grassroots efforts. The 1950 conference also differed from earlier ones by taking a "whole child" approach rather than simply seeking to address children's external and physical conditions.

Front Cover

In this 1904 photo, a group of women hustle across the embankment and tracks of the Motor Line on the Iowa State College campus in Ames. Photo from Farwell T. Brown Photographic Archive, Ames Public Library. For more on the Motor Line's role in Ames and on the Iowa State College campus, see Douglas Biggs's article in this issue.

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Book Reviews and Notices

"The Laughing Rolling Stock of the State": The Ames & College Railway, 1902–1907

DOUGLAS BIGGS

STREET RAILWAYS came in many forms across the Midwest in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Many, such as the Citizens Street Railway Co. in Danville, Illinois, and the St. Paul Railway Company in St. Paul, Minnesota, were horse-drawn operations.[1] Others, such as the Chicago Passenger Railway and the West Chicago Railroad Co., were cable car lines. Iowa had a wide variety of urban and rural transportation systems. Although tiny Red Oak built and maintained a horse-and-mule–drawn street railway, steam proved to be the most viable mode of power for most street railways across the state.[2] But these midwestern

A version of this article was delivered at the 58th Missouri Valley History Conference at Omaha, Nebraska, in March 2015. I appreciate the comments on my paper by Professor Harl Dalstrom and the audience. I also wish to thank the Special Collections staff at Iowa State University, especially Becky Jordan, for help as I researched this article. Gloria Betcher of the English Department at Iowa State University discussed points large and small with me at length. All of their comments helped me improve the article.

1. James J. Buckley, "The Street Railways of Danville, Illinois," ed. H. George Friedman Jr., http://friedman.cs.illinois.edu/danville/Buckley.htm; Stephen A. Kieffer, *Transit and the Twins* (Minneapolis, 1958).

2. Greg Borzo, *Chicago Cable Cars* (Chicago, 2012); Richard Prosser, "The Motor Train in Iowa," *Annals of Iowa* 42 (1975), 557–63. The horse-drawn street railway in Red Oak operated from 1881 until 1902, when the track was torn up to pave the city streets. W. W. Merritt, *A History of the County of Montgomery from the Earliest Days to 1906* (Red Oak, 1906), 292–93.

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street railways soon encountered problems: horse cars got stuck in the deep snows of St. Paul; steam engines were noisy, dirty, and often an unsightly blot on the city streetscape. Although the cable car system in Chicago could be counted among the world's largest in the 1880s, it was too slow to meet the demands of its passengers. From about 1880 to 1920, street railways across the Midwest turned to electricity to provide clean, efficient, and reliable power.

The street railway in the city of Ames, with its growing state college, was no exception to this trend. By the first years of the twentieth century, the locally owned and operated Ames & College Railway, popularly known to contemporaries as the Motor Line and the "Dinkey," found itself unable to meet the transportation needs of the town of Ames and Iowa State College (ISC). The A&C's directors had originally intended to build an electric service to unite the town and the college, but the board found it too expensive a venture, so when the college would not accept the company's proposal for a horse-drawn line, the A&C, like other railroads, had to adopt steam as the only mode of propulsion it could afford.[3] Thus, the A&C began life in 1891 as a single-track, steam dummy passenger and freight service between the town and the college two miles to the west.[4] The little railroad represented the only reliable transit route between Ames and the campus: the only alternative to the Motor Line was an undrained dirt track/wagon road known as Boone Street, which ran through the flood plain of Squaw Creek.[5]

3. Trustee William McElroy from Newton served on the board of trustees committee that gave the A&C its first contract in 1891. Looking back on the committee's decision 14 years later, he wrote that concerns were expressed that "under conditions then existing [i.e., in 1891], [building the railway] involved the expenditure of considerable money by the company, with much uncertainty regarding the wisdom of the investment, viewed from the financial standpoint." Minutes, ISC Board of Trustees, Book C, July 1903–January 1907, 9/29/1905, pp. 369–72, Special Collections, Iowa State University Library, Ames.

4. For discussions of the A&C and its impact on the history of Ames, see William Orson Payne, *History of Story County: A Record of Settlement, Organization, Progress and Achievement,* 2 vols. (Chicago, 1911), 1:486–87; Gladys Meades, *At the Squaw and Skunk* (Ames, 1955), 142; Farwell Brown, *Ames: A Ride through Town on the Dinkey* (Charleston, SC, 2001); and Douglas Biggs, "Forging a Community with Rails: Ames, Iowa Agricultural College, and the Ames & College Railway, 1891–1896," *Annals of Iowa* 71 (2012), 211-40.

5. The Iowa legislature approved the building of this highway to run to the south of the college farm on April 18, 1864. *Acts of Iowa,* 1864, 69–71.

Boone Street (now Lincoln Way) was the transportation corridor between Ames and Iowa State College for decades before the Motor Line was built in 1891. In this picture of the muddy and poor road conditions, taken after electricity was installed in parts of western Ames in 1910, it is easy to see why the Dinkey became so popular with contemporaries. The buildings on the left are some of the poorly constructed boardinghouses that appeared from about 1898 onwards to serve college students. The ISC campus is to the right of the picture. The railway and bridge in the foreground belonged to the Fort Dodge, Des Moines & Southern Railway. Photo courtesy Farwell T. Brown Photographic Archive, Ames Public Library.

Throughout the 1890s Ames citizens and ISC students loved to ride what they called the Dinkey, with all of its attendant excitement, and they saw the "fussy, stuffy, little motor" as their "pet Motor Line."[6] The little train was almost universally described as "the pride of the community."[7] Yet, by the final months

6. Meades, *Squaw and Skunk,* 142. Roger Grant argues that this feeling of excitement was nearly universal across small towns and rural areas in the Midwest. H. Roger Grant, *Twilight Rails: The Final Era of Railroad Building in the Midwest* (Minneapolis, 2010), 1–4.

7. The pride in and civic ownership of the A&C are perhaps best demonstrated by articles in contemporary publications such as the *Ames Times,* 1/5/1893, and the *ISC Bomb,* 1895, pp. 121–22. It is also clear that Ames citizens and ISC students reflected their pride in the Motor Line to visitors from across the state;

of 1902, the same *vox populi* that had lionized the railroad since its inception seemed to find nothing but fault with it, and vented increasing levels of frustration at the little train. By 1904, contemporaries described the Dinkey as a "dilapidated" enterprise, where passengers sat in "dirty tram car[s]" pulled "in the wake of an engine that beggars description." The track had "more jogs in it than the road to success," and some considered "the junk pile" the only fitting mausoleum for the train. In fact, at least one newcomer to the community, Fredrica Shattuk, who took up her duties on the faculty of ISC's Speech Department in 1907, was not quite sure what the Dinkey even was and thought it "a very curious little contraption." By 1907, the same railroad that less than a decade before had been described as the "pride of the community" had become the "laughing rolling stock of the state."[8]

How could such a reversal of fortune happen in such a brief period of time to such a successful and beloved local business? An investigation into the last five years of the A&C reveals three main causes for the railroad's demise. First, although in the years following the autumn of 1902 the Ames & College Railway had transformed Ames and ISC into one community, the railroad's infrastructure had become so stressed that it could not bear the weight of the service the community demanded. Between 1902 and 1907, as the A&C's physical plant degraded, students and townspeople alike noted employee carelessness and overcrowding that resulted in accidents of increasing severity. The second main cause for the A&C's demise was simply a lack of funds to make sorely needed upgrades. An inability to charge the legally allowed passenger fare, combined with the company's

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some of their observations found their way into far-flung newspapers such as the *Cedar Falls Gazette,* 4/5/1895.

8. *ISC Student,* 3/5/1904; *ISC Bomb,* 1908 (the 1908 edition did not have page numbers); Jenny Barker Devine, "'A Very Curious Little Contraption': Getting to and from Campus in the Early Years," in *Traditions and Transformations: A Sesquicentennial History of Iowa State University,* ed. Dorothy Schwieder and Gretchen Van Houten (Ames, 2007), 5–6; *Ames Intelligencer,* 12/5/1907. The horse-and-mule-car street railway in Red Oak faced a similar type of public abuse so that by 1900, "the mule car system became more or less of a standing joke among traveling men throughout the Western country." Merritt, *History of Montgomery County,* 293.

focus on community service instead of profit, meant that the railroad did not possess the resources to make the necessary change from steam to electricity that would have ensured the continued success of the company. In spite of these businesses practices, the A&C was able to limp along with its outmoded and outdated equipment until it sold out because of the third cause of its demise: the changing nature of its relationship with its most important customer, Iowa State College. The increasing number of students and a change in college leadership in 1902 led the new president and the trustees to conclude that ISC needed "nothing short of a replanning—a new campus" that required a different transportation system than the dilapidated one they had.[9]

BY THE AUTUMN of 1902, Iowa State's enrollment had reached 1,272, more than enough students to fill the 228 dormitory rooms that the college possessed.[10] Before his death in August 1902, President William Beardshear had encouraged entrepreneurs to construct boardinghouses on the southern fringe of campus and within the city limits. No fewer than five boardinghouses had been built by the end of 1899, but they were hastily erected, poorly built, and soon became overcrowded.[11] These establishments, which were certainly convenient to the campus, lacked city water, sewer, and electric services, shortcomings that made the houses unhealthy. After an outbreak of typhoid fever in 1906 in a boardinghouse called The Colonnades, students found more attractive housing options downtown, where all city services—and a nightlife—were readily available. President Beardshear's successor, Albert Storms, decided in 1904 to allow Greek Letter fraternities and sororities, which had been banned from campus

9. Earle Ross, *A History of the Iowa State College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts* (Ames, 1942), 243. As part of this replanning, the trustees demanded that the A&C upgrade its line to "electricity, gasoline or some other motive power not accompanied by smoke." Minutes, ISC Board of Trustees, Book C, July 1903–January 1907, 9/29/1905, pp. 369–72.

10. The figure of 228 beds is drawn from J. C. Schilletter, "The First 100 Years of Residential Housing at Iowa State University, 1868–1968," Internal Publication, Iowa State University, 1970, Special Collections, ISU Library, p. 54.

11. Ibid., 66. For a discussion of these five boardinghouses, see President's Report, 10/5/ 1899, p. 5, William Miller Beardshear Papers, folder 1/9, box 1, RS 2/5, Special Collections, ISU Library.

since 1891, to colonize at ISC.[12] Some of these Greek houses were interspersed with the boardinghouses south of campus, but a number of Greek Letter houses colonized downtown and, like their non-Greek compatriots, relied on transportation that the Dinkey provided.

The housing crisis and the sudden rise in the number of students living in town meant a significant increase in ridership for the A&C. In the 1902–3 fiscal year, the little train carried 177,560 passengers, 35 percent more than the year before, at a time when only 2,400 people lived in the town and 1,300 students were enrolled in the college. The following four years saw a substantial increase in ridership, culminating in 403,460 riders in the 1906–7 fiscal year—more than doubling 1902 passenger levels (see table).

The level of heavy and sustained ridership created significant overcrowding problems for the A&C. When the railroad had begun operations in 1891, eleven trains per day carried the student population of 425. The level of service had doubled to 22 trains per day by 1897, with a student population of 547.[13] At that level of service, as photographic evidence demonstrates, passengers packed the cars by occupying all of the seats and standing in the aisles, on the outside platforms, and on the stairs.[14] The overcrowded conditions only worsened as ISC's enrollment neared 1,300 students by 1902. To try to meet the needs of its community, that September the A&C expanded its timetable to 34 trains per day on roughly a half-hourly basis from 6:40 a.m. to 10:30 p.m.[15]

Even at 34 trains per day, the service could not keep pace with passenger demand. The A&C had only two stations: one

12. Schilletter, "First 100 Years," 66. Not all of President Storms's correspondents on the issue of the Greek system supported its adoption. See, for example, letter dated 11/25/1907 in folder 4/10, box 4, RS 2/6, Albert Boynton Storms Papers, Special Collections, ISU Library.

13. *ISC Student,* 7/28/1897.

14. Contemporaries noted that when the cars arrived from Des Moines in 1891 they were not equipped with strap-hangers for standing passengers. The A&C quickly rectified that glaring error by installing straps in all of the cars. Meades, *Squaw and Skunk,* 142.

15. *Ames Intelligencer,* 10/2/1902. The timecard took effect on September 14, 1902.

In this post-1900 photograph, the Dinkey sits at its campus terminal, the Hub, ready to pull out for downtown. The cars are so overcrowded that some passengers are forced to stand on the platforms and the stairs, while others who could not find room wait on the station platform. Photo from Special Collections, ISU Library.

at the Hub on campus, and the second at its shed, or "round house," at the opposite end of its two-mile route at the east end of downtown. In 1896 the college had decided to build an unsheltered platform at the rear of the Farm House on campus, but the princely sum of five dollars that the college board of trustees committed to the project suggests that it was not a grand structure.[16] At all other points along the route, passengers stood at street corners in whatever weather awaited them. The *Intelligencer* captured this frustrating situation for posterity, reporting that, on the first day of classes in the fall term of 1906, one frustrated student could do nothing but watch as the overcrowded Dinkey prepared to roll out for the college with no room for him. The student turned to Conductor Hank Wilkinson and asked, "Say, Hank, did you ever try putting on enough cars to haul half the crowd?"[17]

16. The ISC Board of Trustees had ordered its construction in 1896, provided that the platform cost no more than five dollars. Minutes, ISC Board of Trustees, Book E, August 1894–July 1898, 5/15/1896, pp. 236-37; *ISC Student,* 4/13/1904.

17. *Ames Intelligencer,* 8/30/1906.

The increase in the number of passenger trains conflicted with ISC's demands on the A&C for freight service. Over the five years from 1902 to 1907, the Dinkey hauled the building materials for at least five new barns and agricultural research buildings and three faculty cottages.[18] In addition, the A&C hauled the freight needed to build all of the new major structures on campus: Central Hall (1904–1907, now Beardshear Hall), East Hall (1904–1907), Alumni Hall (1904–1907), Engineering Hall (1901–1903, now Marston Hall), and the new Agricultural Hall (1906–1909, now Curtiss Hall). These last five buildings alone cost over $1,007,000, nearly three times what the entire college had been valued at in 1891.[19] Hauling freight accounted for over 24 percent of the A&C's total income from 1902 to 1907. It was common for many small rail lines to move freight traffic at night after passenger service had ceased, but the A&C also moved freight during the day.[20]

Blending increased campus construction needs with expanding passenger timetables on a single rail line was an unenviable task. In the effort to meet the challenge of juggling passenger and freight traffic, the A&C found it difficult to remove empty freight cars in a timely manner; some sat empty on campus for extended periods, much to the frustration of the ISC board of trustees.[21] In spite of the money the A&C spent maintaining its track in these years, and even though the company almost

18. H. Summerfield Day, "The Iowa State University Campus and its Buildings, 1859–1979" (unpublished internal document, Ames, 1980), 480, Special Collections, ISU Library (also accessible at www.add.lib.iastate.edu/spcl/exhibits/150/campus.html).

19. Ibid., 159–62, 171–74, 215–16, 224–25, 341. In 1891 the total value of the college was estimated at $355,000. *Iowa State College of Agricultural and Mechanic Arts, Catalog, 1891* (Ames, 1891), 11.

20. For example, in 1901 Conductor Hank Wilkinson and Engineer Frank Lange were hauling an empty boxcar from campus on a June afternoon. Lange was riding the brake wheel on top of the boxcar. As the Dinkey moved down the city streets he was caught by a telephone wire, thrown off the back of the boxcar, and suffered severe injuries. *Ames Times,* 7/4/1901. In 1907 pedestrians walking to campus along the A&C embankment one afternoon were forced off the tracks by a string of freight cars being pushed back to town by the Dinkey engine. *Ames Intelligencer,* 10/3/1907.

21. Minutes, ISC Board of Trustees, Book C, July 1903–January 1907, 9/29/1905, pp. 369–72.

completely rebuilt its road in 1902, the number of delays and accidents increased as numbers of heavily laden freight cars stressed the 30-pound rails, which were not meant to withstand such weight.[22] While contemporaries often made fun of the delays, critics warned that these "numerous little accidents are only the forerunner of something that may be more than funny."[23]

The crowded cars, the lack of upgrades to the old, degraded equipment, the presence of so many freight cars used for campus construction, and the diminishing level of service led some contemporaries to assume that the A&C was simply awash in profits. The *Student,* for example, proclaimed in March 1904 that, in spite of its shortcomings, the A&C was the "best paying railroad in the United States." The same publication noted in February 1906 that the A&C paid "the largest dividends in Iowa" to its shareholders.[24] Both claims were untrue, but for some, seeing the full cars and deplorable conditions on the Motor Line, it was easiest to blame a greedy corporate board.

Contemporary comments on the condition of the A&C obscured the fact that the company did work to maintain its physical plant. In fact, the company spent more than ever before between 1902 and 1907 to properly maintain its cars (see table), but the stress of such heavy, daily use was so great that the company found it difficult to keep its physical plant in a proper state of repair. The floors of the cars were muddy, the windows were dirty, and hot cinders from the engine flew through the open windows of the passenger cars.[25] In May 1903 a flange came off a wheel of a passenger car, driving it off the tracks.[26]

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22. For reports of derailments on the Motor Line, see, for example, *ISC Student,* 1/27/1904, 3/5/1904, 3/16/1904, 4/13/1904. In 1906, after another widely covered derailment, Engineer Stull of the A&C told the *Intelligencer,* "I can't understand why it would leave the track with such a light load when we have been hauling so many heavily loaded trains over the road lately." *Ames Intelligencer,* 9/20/1906.

23. *ISC Student,* 3/5/1904.

24. Ibid., 3/5/1904, 2/24/1906.

25. Ibid., 3/5/1904.

26. The mandated maximum speed of 8 mph while steaming across campus or in town probably prevented many injuries when accidents and derailments happened like the one that occurred on May 27, 1903. *ISC Student,* 5/28/1903.

TABLE
AMES & COLLEGE RAILWAY OPERATIONS SUMMARY, 1901–1907

	1901–2	1902–3	1903–4	1904–5	1905–6	1906–7
Income						
Passenger	5,824	8,878	10,754	12,066	13,835	16,542
Freight	3,300	2,085	3,928	5,574	4,549	3,871
Other	—	471	—	799	—	17
Gross Income	9,124	11,434	14,682	18,439	18,384	20,430
Expenses						
Repairs	2,169	2,365	2,076	5,562	1,558	1,230
Coal	1,185	1,712	1,802	2,304	2,109	2,876
Equipment	512	1,490	1,353	754	1,704	556
Salaries	1,805	2,645	3,031	3,128	3,510	3,527
Other	677	1,442	1,617	1,724	1,829	317
Total Expenses	6,348	9,654	9,879	13,472	10,710	8,506
Net Income	2,776	1,780	4,803	4,967	7,674	11,924
Passengers	116,483	177,560	215,070	241,324	276,669	403,460
No. of Students at ISC	1,064	1,272	1,271	1,412	1,353	1,363

Source: *Annual Reports of the Railroad Commission for the State of Iowa.*

As the tires on the cars wore away and could not be replaced, flat spots eventually developed on the wheels themselves that only added to the discomfort passengers felt as the train rumbled its way across the Squaw valley.[27]

The increased burden of heavy freight traffic meant that the A&C also had trouble maintaining its roadbed, rails, and ties. The 1891 contract with the college stipulated that the A&C would keep its right-of-way clear of grass and weeds that could, at certain times of the year, pose a serious fire hazard either from hot cinders flying from the Dinkey's smoke funnel or from hot clinkers falling through gaps in the engine's firebox. As early as 1895 the college trustees had chastised the little railroad for failing to keep the right-of-way clear of weeds and grass.[28] The growth of vegetation on the roadway was still a problem nine years later; in the autumn and winter of 1903–4, the "shower of sparks" cast from the engine started several serious brush fires.[29]

27. *Ames Times,* 9/12/1907.

28. Minutes, ISC Board of Trustees, Book E, Aug. 1894–July 1898, 7/17/1895, p. 121.

29. *ISC Student,* 3/16/1904.

Increased stress on the Dinkey to keep to its expanded timetable led to employee carelessness, and overcrowding sometimes resulted in dangerous, even life-threatening incidents. Employee carelessness resulted in a serious accident in January 1896, when the train ran over five-year-old Davy Allen, resulting in the amputation of the lower portion of his right leg and a lawsuit that ended in a substantial judgment against the company.[30] Still, the A&C did not make significant changes to its safety procedures, and contemporaries took note of seeming employee carelessness with the Motor Line's equipment. In 1904, for example, one of the three passenger cars had to be taken off line and repaired because it had come into "violent contact with a freight car." A more dangerous incident occurred in July 1906 when one of the steam dummy engines "without engineer or fireman . . . ran away going at a furious gait." The engine ran the five-block length of Story Street, right through the heart of town, and would have run headlong into a Chicago & North Western (C&NW) freight train had not the C&NW employee in the control tower thrown a derailer switch that "half buried" the A&C's runaway train in a ditch.[31]

The overcrowded conditions on the Motor Line also resulted in serious accidents. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries it was not uncommon for passengers to leap up on the platforms of slowly moving trains, either in the hope of riding them for brief distances or to avoid waiting for another train—or just to avoid paying the fare.[32] Perhaps because contractual obligations with the city and the college restricted the Dinkey to a maximum speed of 8 miles per hour on city streets and on college grounds, some students, townspeople, and college faculty would leap on the rear platform of the cars as the train steamed

30. *Ames Times,* 1/30/1896; *Ames Intelligencer,* 1/30/1896; Supreme Court, State of Iowa, *Allen v. Ames and College Railway,* 106 Iowa, 602, 76N.W. 848, 10/26/1898, pp. 1–86. For the A&C's lack of a safety manual of any kind in 1896, see pp. 7–9.

31. *ISC Student,* 3/5/1904; *Ames Intelligencer,* 7/5/1906.

32. One notable local example of this kind of behavior occurred after ISC allowed a Greek system to recolonize in 1904, after being banned in 1891. One of the new local fraternities was the "train-bumming brotherhood, Quo Vadis—abolished some years later after several accidents and one death had resulted from the qualifying activity of illicit travel." Ross, *History of Iowa State,* 247.

A group of women hustle across the Motor Line's embankment and tracks ahead of the oncoming train in this 1904 photo. By regulation, the Dinkey's speed was limited to 8 miles per hour through town and across campus, but with so many people on campus after 1902, scenes such as this were not uncommon, giving President Albert Storms some anxious moments. Photo from Farwell T. Brown Photographic Archive, Ames Public Library.

slowly past. Of course, leaping on the platform of a moving train is a tricky enterprise in the best of times, but on rainy, snowy, or icy days it could be extremely dangerous.[33]

One newsworthy accident that resulted from this behavior occurred on April 20, 1903, when Frank French, associate professor of electrical engineering, slipped while trying to board the Motor as the train "was moving at full speed." Newspapers across the state noted that French went tumbling, broke four ribs, and suffered other internal injuries that, fortunately, were not life threatening. Another serious accident on the Dinkey line that received similar statewide attention came on January 19, 1905, when a popular, well-known senior student, Ralph Collette

33. Ames City Ordinance #94, which established the Ames Street Railway (before the investors changed the name to the Ames & College Railway), stated that a strict speed limit of 8 mph was allowed on city streets. City of Ames, Council Proceedings, 1880–1891, book 1, part 2, frontispiece.

from Ida Grove, fell under the platform of the rearmost passenger car as he tried to board the moving train as it passed by Agricultural Hall. No bones were broken, but the story spread all the way up to northern Iowa, where the tiny *Buffalo Center Tribune* reported that Collette had recovered from his injuries and returned to campus by the end of February.[34] Clearly, the A&C needed to address safety issues, but it could not afford to do so.

FOR THE SHAREHOLDERS and officers of the A&C, the new century seemed to offer the promise of continued prosperity for their proud local franchise. Relations between the A&C and ISC appeared to be stronger than ever.[35] To anyone familiar with the way the railroad conducted its operations, however, the seeds of future difficulties were evident. While prosperous in its dilapidated state, the Motor Line could not afford to make the $80,000 worth of improvements necessary to keep pace with modern technology and safety protocols. So, while the A&C was a solvent enterprise, its prosperity was insufficient to meet the company's needs.

The Motor Line's insufficient profitability resulted, in part, from its relationship with its chief customer, Iowa State College. From the A&C's inception in 1891, the college's board of trustees had mandated that no one-way ride would ever cost more than 5 cents. The A&C began as a railway of the "third class," which allowed it to charge 3 cents per mile carried for each passenger. Thus, it could have charged 6 cents for a trip to the college. In the early days, the loss of one penny per rider did not seem to make much difference. But when the A&C became a railway of the "second class" in 1901, state railroad regulations allowed it to charge 4 cents per mile for passenger traffic, or 8 cents to or from downtown. Thus, it could then have charged 16 cents for a round-trip fare (instead of 10 cents), 60 percent more than it was charging. ISC's board of trustees, however, would not hear of

34. *ISC Student,* 4/18/1903; *Dubuque Telegraph Herald,* 4/20/1903; *Des Moines Capital,* 1/20/1905; *Sioux County Herald,* 1/25/1905; *Cedar Falls Gazette,* 1/27/1905; *Buffalo Center Tribune,* 2/27/1905.

35. For example, the Motor Line was at the table as an equal partner when the college discussed transportation matters with the C&NW in 1900. Minutes, ISC Board of Trustees, Book F, July 1898–July 1903, 5/25/1900, p. 210.

raising the fare, and as late as 1905 the board was still demanding that a one-way fare would never cost more than 5 cents.[36]

While some of the railway's insufficient profitability may be blamed on the college, other factors contributing to its lack of profitability in these years were its own doing. Contemporaries noted that the A&C was more concerned with "neighborliness" and being part of the community than with increasing the railway's profitability.[37] The board of directors and Marcellus K. Smith, the A&C's general manager, seem to have viewed the train first and foremost as a servant of the community.[38] For example, the community certainly appreciated the A&C's efforts when, after four ISC students died as a result of an outbreak of typhoid fever in October and November 1900, the Dinkey laid on special trains to and from the funeral services on campus free of charge.[39]

This use of the Dinkey as a community servant was not an isolated incident but, rather, a pattern of behavior. The Dinkey was dressed overall with ISC banners for Excursion Days, when thousands of Iowans visited campus, and for homecoming weekends. After ISC football victories, the Motor Line allowed students to "borrow" the flat car to carry lumber to campus for victory bonfires, and in May 1902 "[Conductor Henry Wilkinson's] five cent conveyance [was] no less a feature of importance

36. William H. Thompson, *Transportation in Iowa: A Historical Summary* (Ames, 1989), 113; *Daily Iowa Capitol,* 1/7/1901. For the ISC Board of Trustees' demand that the charge never rise above 5 cents for a one-way fare, see the A&C's initial agreement with the college in 1891 in Minutes, ISC Board of Trustees, Book D, May 1888–May 1894, 1/9/1891, pp. 159–60. In 1905 the trustees demanded that a one-way fare still never exceed 5 cents. Minutes, ISC Board of Trustees, Book C, July 1903–January 1907, 9/29/1905, pp. 369–72.

37. Meades, *Squaw and Skunk,* 143. According to the *Ames Intelligencer,* 4/23/1908, the Dinkey's timetable "correspond[ed] to the opening and closing of public and private affairs," rather than having those events correspond to the A&C's needs.

38. It was not unusual for street railways in smaller Iowa towns to operate this way. For example, in 1886, when local Red Oak businessman Marcus Bonham acquired the horse-and-mule–drawn street railway in the town, "he made no attempt to run [the car] on schedule, except that he regularly made the trains." Merritt, *History of Montgomery County,* 293.

39. President Beardshear appreciated the Motor Line's efforts and asked the trustees to give the company their thanks, as well. President's Report to the Trustees, 12/11/1900, p. 9, folder 2/4, box 2, RS 2/5, Beardshear Papers.

regarding the yellow and white" banners and decorations for May Day.[40]

General Manager Smith also served his community by assisting the local school district. In spite of the growth in the community to the south and west of the ISC campus, the Ames school board understood that the district could not sustain another school in western Ames because there was only an average of seven children per class beneath high school. Thus, the children had to be brought to schools in town, so the district worked out a relationship with the A&C so that the 75 children who lived in the Fourth Ward (the area to the south and west of the college) would be able to ride the Dinkey to school, to home and back for lunch, and then home for the day, for a total of $50 per month, rather than the $300 per month that the Motor Line would have received had the company required the students, their parents, or the district to pay the full fare.[41] More often than not, it seems that considerations of community good outweighed the good of the company. The combined effect of these business practices before 1902 ensured that the A&C always had two things: the love of the community and a modest net income.

But perhaps the thing that most contributed to the A&C's inability to realize the income fairly due to the company was its repeated failure to collect fares from every passenger. When passengers occupied all of the seats and stood in the aisles, on the platforms, and on the stairs, collecting fares from those who jumped or somehow squeezed on board when the train stopped

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40. Meades, *Squaw and Skunk,* 143; *Ames Intelligencer,* 5/8/1902; H. E. Davis, in folder 2, box 24, 13/5/15, Louis Pammel Papers, Special Collections, ISU Library. Another factor that cut into the A&C's profits was the laying on of numerous "Special Motors," which were usually late-night trains that carried passengers off the regular schedule. There were so many of these "specials" that it is impossible to track them all, let alone know what kind of income they realized. In November 1894, for example, the railroad ran Special Motors every night for a week to allow townspeople and students to attend 13 evening programs at the college. *ISC Student,* 11/6/1894. In the *Intelligencer*'s December 1907 retrospective on the Dinkey, the paper noted that "late entertainments on the campus or in town always found the dinky waiting at the close." *Ames Intelligencer,* 12/5/1907.

41. The 1903 report to the State Board of Educational Examiners noted that Dinkey conductor Hank Wilkinson kept strict rules to "govern the behavior of the pupils on the cars." *Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction for the State of Iowa,* vol. 31 [1901–1903] (Des Moines, 1903), 204.

was a difficult proposition. Standard procedure seems to have been to let passengers ride part of the way for free. For example, in 1907 the *Intelligencer* noted, "You could jump on at Duff street and ride to the crossing or get on at the barns and ride to the Central building on campus without paying the fare."[42]

In spite of the Dinkey's faults and the ever increasing deluge of complaints from its customers, the Motor Line's directors were not idle after 1902. The company worked diligently to enhance its enterprise as best it could. In the autumn of 1902, the A&C increased the number of passenger trains from 22 to 34 per day and engaged new employees to run the second engine. Since its inception in 1891, the Motor Line had always gotten by with one engineer, one conductor, one stationmaster, and the occasional "track man." In 1902, when the A&C added a second engineer and conductor, its employees were the lowest paid in the state, even lower than the notoriously underpaid employees of the Iowa Central Railroad.[43] Yet, in spite of less than ideal working conditions and low pay, the A&C never suffered the labor problems associated with larger carriers, and the men who worked on the little railroad tended to stay with the company for a long time. Many of the Motor Line's employees were from Ames, so proximity to home and family might have helped make up for a low salary. In addition, the Ames newspapers turned these employees into local celebrities, which possibly helped retention as well.

The effect of these local employees and their relationships with students and townspeople helped the A&C retain some goodwill with the community during the company's declining years from 1902 to 1907. The *Ames Intelligencer* noted that, because of the "little courtesies" that General Manager M. K. Smith and the employees tendered to the passengers, the Dinkey be-

42. *Ames Intelligencer,* 12/7/1907.

43. In 1907, for example, the A&C paid a total of $1,412, or $1.97 per day, to its two conductors for their annual salary. By comparison, the Iowa Central paid its conductors $3.49 per day. That same year, the A&C paid its two engineers a total of $1,539 for their annual salary, or $2.15 per day, while the Iowa Central paid its engineers $4.28 per day. *Thirtieth Annual Report of the Board of Railroad Commissioners for the State of Iowa for the Year Ending June 30, 1907* (Des Moines, 1908), 91–92; Don Hofsommer, *The Hook and Eye: A History of the Iowa Central Railroad* (Minneapolis, 2005), 104–5.

came a "home like vehicle." "You could not help but boost the dinky," the *Intelligencer* continued, "because M. K. Smith gave you an interest in the concern."[44] Ames native Frank Lange, for example, made a great number of friends during the decade he spent working as an engineer on the Motor Line before he retired in 1907.[45] Lange lived the rest of his life in Ames, and even in the mid-1950s he was still remembered for his time on the Dinkey.[46]

But by far the most significant of these long-serving employees was Henry P. "Hank" Wilkinson. Wilkinson had settled in Ames to raise a family and came to work for the A&C in 1892 after working for the Chicago & North Western Railroad for a number of years, and he never left. Hank was a tall, powerfully built man who was quick to laugh and made friends easily among students and townspeople. He possessed the kind of self-confidence that quickly put those around him at ease. Contemporaries thought Hank could solve any problem and handle any emergency on the Motor Line. Throughout the 15 years that he worked for the A&C, both student and city newspapers chronicled his exploits great and small and were not above poking fun at his expense. For example, the *ISC Student* noted that one May afternoon Hank found himself engaged in telling one of his jokes on the station platform, but before he could finish, the engineer opened the throttle and the Dinkey pulled out of the Hub headed for downtown. "The jolly conductor discovered his predicament and started to follow the car at a pace that would put to shame any of our 'sprinters,'" the newspaper explained, but "the timers failed to get the correct time and the best record of the season was therefore lost." In 1903 Wilkinson was mentioned prominently in the report to the State Board of Educational Examiners for his work in seeing to the safety and proper behavior of the schoolchildren who rode the Dinkey on a daily basis. In 1905 the ISC yearbook penned a laudatory poem in his honor. Even in the dark days after the sale of the A&C, when contemporaries feared that the little train would fall apart from

44. *Ames Intelligencer,* 12/5/1907.

45. Upon his departure from the Motor Line, Lange told the *Intelligencer* that he "rather [dis]liked leaving the old dinkey" because he had made so many friends. *Ames Intelligencer,* 1/24/1907.

46. Meades, *Squaw and Skunk,* 140–43.

overuse, the *Intelligencer* reminded its readers, "Pin your faith to Hank because the cars won't go up as long as he is on board to hold them down."[47]

The A&C did work to upgrade its service within the bounds of what it could afford. One way it attempted to improve its service was by taking advantage of new technologies. In January 1902, for example, C. George Greene, an inventor from Cedar Rapids, contracted with the Motor Line to install his new electrical signal system meant to inform railroads of open switches and broken rails, the latter of which was not an uncommon occurrence on the Motor Line.[48] More significantly, in the summer of 1902, the A&C undertook a complete reconstruction of the line. The company took down the original bridges across Squaw Creek and the back channel and contracted with the C&NW to build a new 160-foot-long wooden bridge over Squaw Creek.[49] The entire line was regraveled, and more than 1,000 new ties were laid at an estimated cost of $2,500.[50] Upgrading the rails themselves came in 1904. The *Ames Times* reported in November that the A&C had been able to upgrade to 60-pound rails "on about half" of the line and that the road would upgrade the remainder "as soon as practicable."[51]

In spite of what improvements to its physical plant the A&C could afford, the directors knew that to ensure the continued ex-

47. *ISC Student,* 5/15/1900; *Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction for the State of Iowa,* vol. 31 [1901/1903] (Des Moines, 1903), 204; *ISC Bomb,* 1905, p. 168; *Ames Intelligencer,* 10/24/1906. Wilkinson ended his service to the A&C as manager of operations. *Ames Intelligencer,* 2/7/1907. In spite of Ames citizens' "faith in Hank," one of the Dinkey engines did finally break down from overuse. As the *Intelligencer* reported, the engine broke down and "went to pieces like the one-hoss shay. It has seen its last days of travel." *Ames Intelligencer,* 8/15/ 1907.

48. *Cedar Rapids Evening Gazette,* 1/8/1902. See also bundle 17, box 1, series 1, MSC0225, C. G. Greene Papers, Special Collections, University of Iowa Libraries, Iowa City.

49. The editors of the *ISC Student* claimed that the bridges' poor condition and the fear they would be swept away in a flood led the A&C's directors to rebuild them and repair the entire line. *ISC Student,* 3/5/1904.

50. *Cedar Rapids Evening Gazette,* 8/12/1902.

51. *Ames Times,* 11/24/1904. The paper also noted that travel on the new rails was greatly enhanced and that the difference between the old and new rails was "felt decidedly."

istence of their franchise they would need to electrify their line. Just as the A&C had relied on ISC students to help found the railway in 1891, the directors turned to students again and used their academic work to provide the railroad with viable options for upgrading and electrifying the line. In 1904 two groups of senior students coauthored theses that studied the possibility of converting the A&C to electric power. Like the work of James Bramhall and Charles Davidson 14 years earlier, the theses were thoughtful, well meaning, and well researched.[52] Five students worked on these two senior theses: Arthur Buckley, Harold Scranton, and Earl Shreve were electrical engineers; the other two, Frank Brown and Lester Morris, were civil engineers.

Buckley, Scranton, and Shreve's thesis, titled "Design and Specifications for Changing the Present A.&C.R.R. from Steam to an Electric Road," put forward a complete redesign of the A&C. The students spent a good deal of time discussing the issues with A&C General Manager M. K. Smith, who provided them with a substantial amount of accurate information on the railroad. The students' work was straightforward and practical. It argued for a complete rebuilding of the line from its sheds at the east end of Onondaga Street to campus, including a new steel bridge across Squaw Creek. The students wanted to run rails down 5th Street, across the C&NW mainline, across the Squaw, and up the grade to the college. But rather than coming through the heart of the college farm as the line currently did, it would swing out to the north before it got to the farm and then proceed to the western edge of campus before turning back on itself—in essence, creating a loop around campus. The students proposed to run trains every ten minutes so that there would always be one car coming to campus and another coming from campus. They argued that the entire loop could be completed in about 20 minutes. They further suggested that passenger service run from 6:30 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. daily, and they thought that one

52. J. A. Bramhall and C. D. Davidson, "Electrical Railroad between Ames and the College" (senior thesis, Iowa Agricultural College, 1890). In 1898 a group of ISC engineering students had worked up a plan for electrifying the line, but nothing came of their efforts, W. J. Devine, W. H. Grover, and J. C. Kyle, "Specifications and Estimates for Complete Electrical Equipment of Ames and College Railway" (senior thesis, ISC, 1898).

of the steam dummy engines would need to be retained for the delivery of freight after passenger service had halted for the day.[53]

Brown and Morris, the civil engineering students, in their 1904 thesis, "The Ames and College Belt Line," concentrated their analysis on the requirements for preparing, building up, and grading the new roadbed that the electrical engineering students proposed. Like their electrical engineering colleagues, Brown and Morris found the officers of the A&C helpful in their research. They noted the "dilapidated condition of the present rolling stock" and the unsatisfactory state of the current roadbed. They argued that running a single-track belt line around the fringe of campus, rather than merely upgrading and electrifying the current route, would be the best solution to ISC's transportation problems.[54]

While the railroad worked with ISC students to develop plans, it also entered into negotiations with the City of Ames to provide electric power for the enterprise. In January 1905 the A&C's board of directors had detailed a committee of three to work with Superintendent F. W. Linebaugh of the Ames Power Plant to negotiate a relationship between the public utility and the railroad for the purchase of electric power. The *Intelligencer* and the *Times* could barely contain their enthusiasm for the project, the latter noting that "the smoke and shriek of the dinky will be a thing of the past."[55] President Storms was caught up enough in the excitement to tell the governor in the college's biennial report that "the substitution of electric motor power for the locomotive power of the Ames & College Ry. is not a remote probability, [it is] a probability which is becoming more and more likely of being an accomplished fact."[56]

The optimism expressed by President Storms and the local newspapers proved misplaced. No records of the meetings between A&C managers or directors and Superintendent Line-

53. Arthur R. Buckley, Harold L. Scranton, and Earl O. Shreve, "Design and Specifications for Changing the Present A.&C.R.R. from Steam to an Electric Road" (senior thesis, ISC, 1904).

54. Frank Brown and Lester Morris, "The Ames and College Belt Line" (senior thesis, ISC, 1904), 1–7.

55. *Ames Times,* 1/12/1905; *Ames Intelligencer,* 1/12/1905.

56. *Twenty-first Biennial Report of the Iowa State College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts, 1903–1905* (Des Moines, 1906), 48.

baugh of the Ames Power Plant survive, but city council minutes demonstrate that the Ames power plant had overreached capacity by 1904 and was overloaded for roughly three hours each evening.[57] Although the city expanded its power plant in late 1905, it is doubtful, given the increasing demand for electricity in the town, that the A&C could have drawn power from city electric services.[58]

With the community power plant unable to provide electricity, the A&C tried to solve the problem on its own, but that attempt led to a dead end when the directors found that they could not raise sufficient capital to fund the enterprise. Even if the student estimates were low, the costs that the students provided for the project were prohibitive. When they calculated the cost of rebuilding the line using electricity instead of steam, the grand total came to $79,772 (roughly $2.1 million in 2015 dollars).

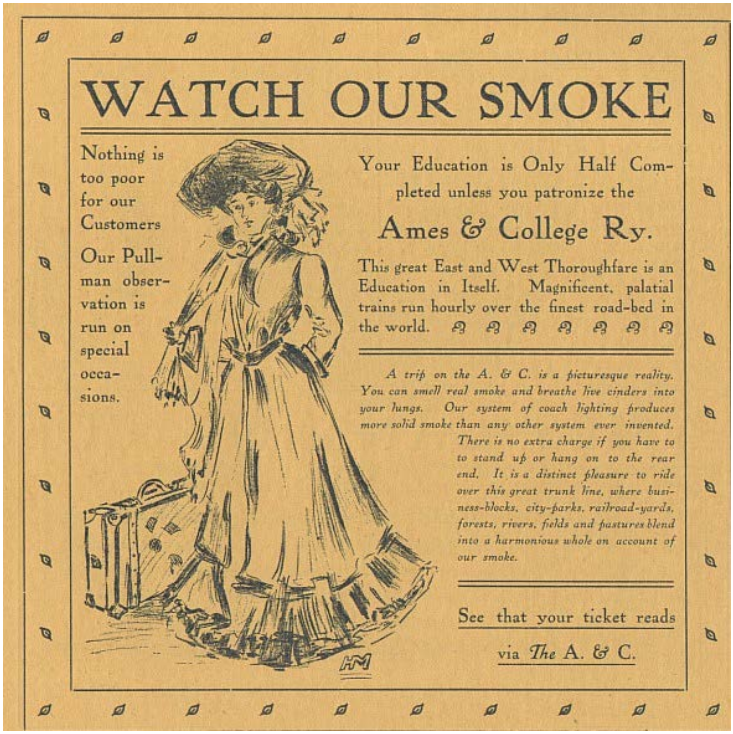
Raising that much capital probably seemed impossible to the railroad's directors and friends, who included both Parley Sheldon and Wallace Greeley, owners of the two banks in town. For the 1902–3 fiscal year, the A&C realized only $1,780 in net income. Even if the company sold all of the engines and rolling stock it owned, the profit generated would not have been enough collateral for any bank in Ames to even consider lending nearly $80,000—assuming the local banks even had access to that kind of cash.[59]

Thus, by 1905 the A&C faced a dilemma. Although the company was profitable, it was rapidly outliving its usefulness. The little railroad had no choice but to operate with the outmoded and outdated equipment that it owned, which fell into even greater disrepair. Breakdowns, overcrowding, and derailments became more common, and the Dinkey was forced to endure

57. City of Ames, Council Proceedings, 1900–1907, 11/7/1904, p. 294.

58. From 1901 to 1904 the demand for electric service in Ames had nearly doubled and there were petitions for more customers. In September 1905 the city allotted $4,440 to expand the plant, which was not brought on line until the spring of 1906. City of Ames, Council Proceedings, 1900–1907, 3/6/1905, p. 321; 7/31/1905, p. 375; 8/7/1905, p. 380; 9/7/1905, p. 395; 10/2/1905, p. 399; 12/4/1905, p. 413; 2/5/1906, p. 427.

59. When the A&C sold out to the Newton & Northwestern Railway, it received only $40,000 for the entire company, barely half of what the student studies demonstrated was needed to electrify the line.



This satirical faux advertisement, from the 1906 ISC yearbook, The Bomb, *is a good example of how the student community viewed the train by that time. Many of the frustrations the students felt about the Dinkey, including smoke, cinders, and overcrowding, are satirized in the ad.*

increasing layers of abuse as community members vented their collective frustrations on the little train. Faux advertisements for the Dinkey and even an obituary for the little train graced the yearbook's pages in the railroad's final year. For many people in the college and the city, the Dinkey, with its negative press, fading reputation, and dangerous operating conditions, had become a symbol for what was wrong with the community rather than what was right. Again and again, contemporaries offered up pleas to upgrade the service on the Motor Line "in the name of progress and common sense."[60]

60. *ISC Bomb,* 1906; *ISC Student,* 3/5/1904.

REGARDLESS of community and student complaints and the company's attempts to improve its service as best it could, the ultimate arbiter of the A&C's relationship with the community was its principal customer: Iowa State College. The pressures on the college after the Main residence hall burned in August 1902 had become acute.[61] In 1903, for example, the college found that it could house barely half of the young women who sought to enter ISC as students. Because trustee policy did not yet allow for young women to be housed off campus, many students were turned away from the "people's college."[62] Although ISC's enrollment leveled at about 1,400 by 1904, the college could still house only about 228 students.

This "housing crisis" led President Albert Storms and the trustees to try to find ways to solve the problem. The conditions in the boardinghouses and small businesses that sprang up on the southern fringe of the campus in the late 1890s were poor, and numbers could not keep pace with enrollment. Thus, the majority of students lived in town and commuted to campus on the Dinkey. By encouraging the construction of boardinghouses and allowing Greek Letter houses to colonize, the college alleviated some of its demand for housing. Understandably, the college's leaders became deeply concerned with the vehicle used to move students between their homes in town and the campus.

As the only reliable mass transit option serving the campus, the Motor Line was central to any discussion of campus replanning. What came from that replanning was a dramatic change in the very nature of the A&C's purpose vis-à-vis the college it served. Nineteenth-century educators had thought that the physical beauty of a campus was an integral part of the educational experience. The way groves of trees were oriented, where buildings were placed, and, in ISC's case, even where rail track was laid out had a didactic effect as well as a practical one. After President William Beardshear determined the route of the A&C's

61. The burning of the Main left ISC with the following residence halls: the Creamery (50 male students), the East Boarding Cottage (30 male students), the West Boarding Cottage (60 male students), and Margaret Hall (88 female students). The trustees set a committee to study the possibility of renovating the two boarding cottages in 1904, but the committee found that repairing the structures would not be cost effective. Schilletter, "First 100 Years," 55, 66.

62. Schilletter, "First 100 Years," 66.

rails across campus in the summer of 1891, visitors who would come to ISC via rail were given the grandest possible introduction to the institution.[63] Beardshear went on to lay out the buildings of his significant building program in what one observer considered "a pretentious way."[64] The Dinkey was an integral part of Beardshear's vision for ISC.

The grandeur of the campus Beardshear created left the impression he wished on many who experienced it, but within three years of his passing in 1902, forces aligned to significantly alter what he had created. By the spring of 1905, Beardshear's idea of the campus belonged to an earlier age, and it was clear to many college leaders that the overcrowded, single-track railway could not satisfy the needs of the existing campus, let alone the one the trustees and President Storms intended to build. The increasing number of accidents on the Motor Line, coupled with the increasing number of students walking on the railway's embankment, worried campus leaders and led them to propose repositioning the Dinkey's rails away from the campus's central core.[65]

At the March 1905 board of trustees meeting, Trustee William McElroy, who, in 1890, had served on the subcommittee that allowed the A&C to come to campus, asked his fellow trustees to form a committee charged with investigating the relationship between ISC and the A&C with "reference to each other and such changes in their relations and rights or in the location of the tracks of the said railway company as in the judgment of said committee should be made."[66]

The trustees' committee met with the A&C's directors several times during the late spring or summer of 1905. There are no records of what took place at those meetings, but it is clear that the trustees' committee considered it necessary to recast the relationship between the A&C and the college. Perhaps the most poignant example of how dramatically the relationship with the railroad had changed is that Professor Anson Marston, the col-

63. For a fuller discussion of this point, see Biggs, "Forging a Community," 223–25.

64. Velma Wallace-Rayness, *Campus Sketches of Iowa State College* (Ames, 1949), 14.

65. President's Report to the Trustees, 12/23/1904, folder 1/5, box 1, RS 2/6, Storms Papers.

66. Minutes, ISC Board of Trustees, Book C, July 1903–January 1907, 3/8/1905, p. 247.

lege engineer, rather than anyone employed by the A&C, spent a good deal of time in the summer of 1905 laying out and surveying a new route for the railroad.[67] Marston's survey demonstrated that the college's needs had changed, and it no longer needed to provide such a grand introduction to campus. The new route was practical and safe. From the point where the proposed electric tram car cleared the college farm, Marston ran the rails north to the fringe of campus, where the electrified line would be less of a threat to pedestrians on campus.[68]

In September 1905 McElroy's committee delivered its report. The committee asked the A&C to adopt "electricity, gasoline or some other motive power not accompanied by smoke" and to rebuild the on-campus portion of its line to conform to Marston's survey. The committee also demanded that the company maintain its roadbed in "a proper and sightly manner" and that the A&C keep the right-of-way clear of weeds and trash. The committee further recommended that the college continue to mandate that a fare between Ames and any point on campus never cost more than 5 cents. Last, and by no means least, the committee stated that it was "desirable that the changes herein recommended be made during the present year, in order that the grounds now occupied by railway tracks and depot may be placed in first-class condition before freezing weather."[69]

By the winter of 1905–6, the A&C's directors found themselves in possession of an organization at the end of its useful existence. Although the company was making more money than it ever had before, the trustees' committee had made it clear that the college no longer had any interest in continuing its relationship with a steam-powered railway, and the A&C did not have the resources necessary to electrify its line. Consequently, the A&C began to search for a buyer.

The Ames newspapers reported that two railroads entered into negotiations with the A&C in the autumn of 1905. The first

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67. Anson Marston had spent two-and-one-half years as a resident engineer on the Missouri Pacific Railroad before coming to ISC in 1892. Herbert Gilkey, *Anson Marston: ISU's First Dean of Engineering* (Ames, 1968), 13–14, 19, 91.

68. Minutes, ISC Board of Trustees, Book C, July 1903–January 1907, 9/29/1905, pp. 369–72.

69. Ibid.

was a locally owned railroad known as the Central of Iowa. This was little more than a paper railroad owned by an Ames city councilman, Dr. John Snyder. The newspaper reported that he had the survey of a route and articles of incorporation, but no investors and not much money.[70] Nonetheless, Snyder pushed ahead. In March 1906 he asked the city council to grant his railroad the right to run an electric train down the streets of Ames. The council referred his request to a committee, and it was never considered again.

The second railroad with an interest in the A&C that autumn was the Newton & Northwestern Railway. The N&NW had begun in 1893 as the Boone Valley Coal & Railway Company, a freight service hauling coal in the Des Moines valley. Through a series of mergers, buyouts, and name changes the N&NW owned a viable road between Newton and Rockwell City by 1904. Like the A&C, the N&NW made only enough profit to get by, and it needed to diversify its services and attract outside investors.[71] In 1905 Homer Loring from Boston and a number of East Coast investors bought out the railroad, providing the much needed capital.[72] The acquisition of the A&C promised to add robust passenger traffic to the N&NW's stable of services. In February 1906 the *ISC Student* reported that the A&C had been sold to the N&NW, which soon underwent another name change to the Fort Dodge, Des Moines & Southern. The *Intelligencer* noted that the N&NW purchased the A&C for $40,000.[73]

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70. *Ames Intelligencer,* 4/19/1906.

71. The N&NW's report to the railroad commission demonstrated that in fiscal year 1904–5 the railroad hauled 113,859 tons of bituminous coal, but generated only $9,532 in net profit. *Twenty-Eighth Annual Report of the Board of Railroad Commissioners of the State of Iowa for the Year Ending June 30, 1905* (Des Moines, 1905), 111, 116.

72. The influx of cash from the eastern investors greatly aided the N&NW's bottom line. In fiscal year 1905–6 the railroad reported a net profit of $26,303 to the railroad commissioners, and in fiscal year 1906–7 the railroad (still reporting as the N&NW) reported a net profit of $44,528. *Twenty-ninth Annual Report of the Board of Railroad Commissioners of the State of Iowa for the Year Ending June 30, 1906* (Des Moines, 1906), 110; *Thirtieth Annual Report of the Board of Railroad Commissioners of the State of Iowa for the Year Ending June 30, 1907* (Des Moines, 1907), 111.

73. *ISC Student,* 2/24/1906; *Ames Intelligencer,* 4/19/1906. The name officially changed on February 16, 1906. Frank Donovan, *Iowa Railroads: The Essays of Frank P. Donovan, Jr.,* ed. H. Roger Grant (Iowa City, 2000), 76–77.

The A&C officially changed hands on May 1, 1906, when Operations Manager Hank Wilkinson handed over the keys to the office.[74] The Dinkey continued to operate under new management while the FDDM&S built its electrified road. The FDDM&S made good on its promise, bringing in opulent 70-foot interurban cars with mahogany woodwork, rich leather seats, and clerestory windows that brought light and fresh air into the cars. Ames citizens were favorably impressed, and railroad historian Frank Donovan Jr. referred to the cars as "the pride of central Iowa."[75] At about 10:00 p.m. on the evening of Friday, September 6, 1907, the Dinkey made its final passenger run from Ames to the campus and back.[76] Electric interurban service began the next day.[77] Thus, the "pride of central Iowa" replaced the "pride of the community."

BETWEEN 1902 and 1907 the Ames & College Railway suffered an almost complete reversal of opinion among the people of the local Ames and ISC community. The little train that had done so much to unite and be an integral part of the community of Ames in the 1890s had, within 15 years, outlived its usefulness to that same community. An increasing number of breakdowns, accidents, and problems with overcrowding eroded the A&C's ability to serve its customer base effectively.[78] The little railroad did work to enhance its service in those years, but its efforts were not enough to be effective. The railroad's inability to raise sufficient capital to convert the line to electric power left it at the

74. *Ames Intelligencer,* 5/1/1906; *Ames Times,* 8/16/1906.

75. Donovan, *Iowa Railroads,* 77. For just a few of the instances of the local papers' reporting on the impressive nature of the FDDM&S ownership, employees, and, especially, the new cars, see *ISC Student*, 9/9/1907, and *Ames Intelligencer,* 3/1/1906, 3/29/1906, 9/13/1906, and 10/25/1906.

76. *ISC Student,* 9/9/1907. The A&C continued to operate under its original name until the end of the 1907–8 fiscal year, when it officially ceased to exist. Story County Recorder's Office, Miscellaneous Books, vol. 56, p. 41. Like the A&C, the N&NW continued to operate until the end of the 1907–8 fiscal year, when it too was subsumed by the FDDM&S. *Thirtieth Annual Report of the Board of Railroad Commissioners of the State of Iowa for the Year Ending June 30, 1907* (Des Moines, 1907), 234–41.

77. *Ames Intelligencer,* 9/12/1907.

78. *ISC Alumnus* 1 (April 1906), 139–40.

mercy of its largest, and really only, customer: Iowa State College. When the college's trustees and President Storms decided that they needed the train to serve as a transportation system rather than as the vehicle to introduce the campus to its visitors in a grand manner, they made demands on the A&C that the company could not afford, which left sale as the only option.

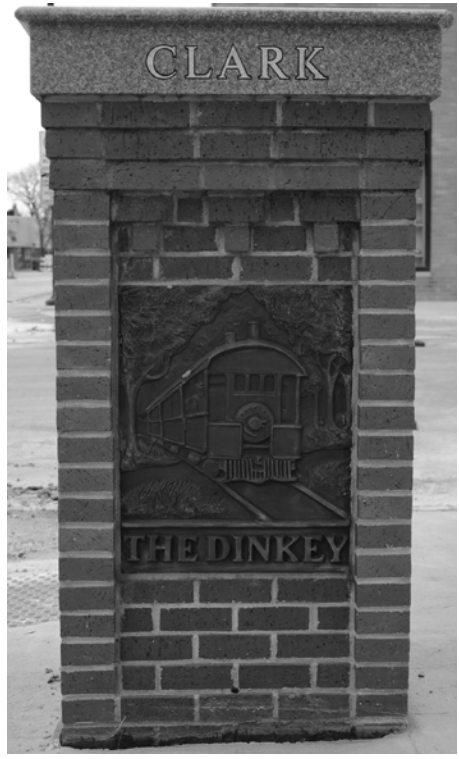
Yet, amid all of the abuse heaped on the Dinkey by contemporaries, and even as the A&C lumbered towards its end in the autumn of 1907, a strand of Dinkey nostalgia developed. One of the earliest threads of that nostalgia can be traced to August 1907, when the *Intelligencer* ran a story telling its readers that they would now need to buy watches, as they would no longer be able to tell the time of day by the Dinkey's steam whistles, for years the surest clock in the community because, of course, the train had always been on time.[79] Certainly, that claim was patently untrue, but a segment of the Ames community wished to believe it was true. The Dinkey's final passenger run in 1907 was a moment for the *Times* to wax nostalgic about the little train. The paper noted that many of the passengers that September evening "were loath to give up the old 'dinky' which had grown nearer and dearer to them throughout the years."[80]

In the decades that followed the A&C's demise, the nostalgia around the Dinkey gave way to myth, which, in turn, gave the little train a legendary status. The memory of the Dinkey has lived longer and become more powerful than any of the historical facts surrounding its operations. Even before Ames's centennial in 1964, collective community memory had made the Dinkey the most recognizable symbol of the city's history.[81] The Dinkey's place in the town's mythology became even more secure during the city's sesquicentennial celebration in 2014. A public mural featuring the Dinkey on the wall of a local business, stained-glass windows in the Gold Star Hall of the Iowa State University Memorial Union, terra cotta bas-reliefs on downtown Ames kiosks, public exhibits and lectures by the Ames Historical Society, printed acrylic Dinkey banners hanging from downtown

79. *Ames Intelligencer,* 8/9/1907.

80. *Ames Times,* 9/12/1907.

81. Meades, *Squaw and Skunk,* 36, 37, 86, 104, 140–43, 151.



Both the City of Ames and Iowa State University have commemorated the Dinkey in a variety of ways to keep the little train a significant component of community memory. This terra cotta bas-relief of the Dinkey stands at the intersection of 5th Avenue and Clark. Photo courtesy of Gloria Betcher.

light poles, and even a craft-brewed wheat beer from a local micro-brewery named for the Dinkey all demonstrate how the Dinkey has been adapted and repurposed to remain an ever present, ever new, and ever significant part of the collective community memory of Ames and Iowa State University.

Cultivating Healthy Personalities: Iowa and the Midcentury White House Conference on Children and Youth

JENNIFER ROBIN TERRY

ON DECEMBER 3, 1950, 67 Iowans joined nearly 6,000 other Americans at the National Guard Armory in Washington, D.C., to participate in the Midcentury White House Conference on Children and Youth.[1] The conference, the culmination of three years of preparations by Americans nationwide, was the largest child welfare and development conference that the nation had yet witnessed. Conference delegates (including such notables as Eleanor Roosevelt, Dr. Benjamin Spock, and Margaret Mead) gathered for what one reporter termed "a five day verbal marathon" of panels, workshops, and keynote speeches to discuss and debate the best methods for developing healthy personalities in America's children and youth.[2] Conference goers sought to devise a national plan that would instill in America's young "the

I am grateful to the State Historical Society of Iowa for the research grant that gave this project substance; to *Annals of Iowa* editor Marvin Bergman for his kind and thoughtful comments; and to the anonymous reviewers who encouraged and prodded this project along as only those cloaked behind the veil of anonymity can do. I also thank Paula S. Fass for reading drafts, Natalie Mendoza for great conversation, and Carolyn Merchant for introducing me to the concept of the conservation of childhood. Finally, I must acknowledge and thank Laura J. Ping, who helped me to find "where the tall corn grows."

1. This article will refer to the conference alternately as the Midcentury White House Conference on Children and Youth and the midcentury conference.

2. "Our Opinion: The Mid Century Youth Conference," *Chicago Defender*, 12/16/1950.

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mental, emotional and spiritual qualities essential to individual happiness and to responsible citizenship."[3] In so doing, delegates attempted to tackle what they believed to be the single greatest task of their time: to ensure a more peaceful global future through the cultivation of children who would have the potential to live with one another in mutual respect and cooperation.[4] It was an ambitious agenda, to be sure.

This article focuses on the pre-conference planning period and sets out to do three things. First, it seeks to reinforce the significance of the 1950 White House Conference on Children and Youth. The conference and its preparatory period marked a turning point in the nation's interest in children by drawing attention to issues surrounding child development and highlighting the perceived link between healthy personalities and good citizenship. Second, it adds to the limited existing literature on the White House Conferences. It is the first study to shift focus away from federal efforts and highlight the decentralized and democratic nature of the midcentury conference. It takes Iowa as its focus because the state was a leader in child development in the early twentieth century and an early adopter of the conference preparation process. Further, a discrete focus on an individual state's preparation reveals much about its residents' concerns about issues that stemmed from World War II. I contend that a state-specific study of the 1950 conference preparation period does much to inform us of the regional aftermath of the war and is as important for understanding the nation at midcentury as studies of federal activity. Finally, this essay argues that Iowans viewed the task at hand as a local, organic process designed to foster in children discrete identities and personal agency. The cultivation of the individual, Iowans believed, could be best achieved through grassroots

3. "Report of the Iowa Commission on Children and Youth," 7/17/1950, file: Correspondence 1950, box 1, Esther Immer Papers, State Historical Society of Iowa, Iowa City; *Children and Youth in Iowa at the Midcentury: Report of the Iowa Commission on Children and Youth* (Des Moines, 1951), 2; Melvin A. Glasser, "Midcentury White House Conference Gathers," *The Child,* December 1950, 78; Dean W. Roberts, "Highlights of the Midcentury White House Conference on Children and Youth," *American Journal of Public Health* 41 (January 1951), 98.

4. "Planning Conference for Children and Youth," Washington, D.C., 3/30/1948, 4–5, file: Iowa Commission on Children and Youth Memoranda, 1950–1960, box 2, Esther Immer Papers (hereafter cited as "Planning Conference").

efforts. Yet Cold War anxieties subsumed local solutions within federal programs that treated children en masse with the purpose of manufacturing a homogeneous citizenry that would defend the American way of life against Cold War threats. Ultimately, federal aspirations hijacked community vision. This article should be understood as a national story told through the lens of Iowans' efforts.

THE 1950 CONFERENCE was the fifth White House conference that dealt with childhood issues, but it differed significantly from its predecessors in scope and process. Prominent social welfare activists had come together for such conferences at roughly ten-year intervals since 1909, when President Theodore Roosevelt called the first White House Conference on the Care of Dependent Children. The early conferences were top-down affairs, sanctioned by the president, with agendas that viewed childhood through lenses of problems and despair associated with dependency, poverty, and poor health. Solutions targeted specific groups of children who were deemed unfortunate and in need of care, protection, and policing. Not until the 1940 Conference on Children in a Democracy did the emphasis begin to shift, as conference organizers grappled with how children could "best be helped to grow into the kind of citizens who will know how to preserve and perfect our democracy."[5]

The 1950 conference agenda built on the notion that children were future political actors but approached it from a perspective rooted in the latest advances in child development and psychological theory based on a "whole child" approach.[6] That is, rather than simply seeking to mitigate and ameliorate children's external and physical conditions (as had previous conferences), the 1950 conference grappled with finding ways to cultivate well-adjusted, self-actualized individuals who, once grown, would act in confidence and balance to lead the nation and the world to peace and

5. Franklin D. Roosevelt, "Address by the President of the United States," in *Proceedings of the White House Conference on Children in a Democracy* (Washington DC, 1950), 70.

6. "Iowa Commission on Children and Youth: Annual Meeting," file: Iowa Commission on Children and Youth Minutes, 1949–1956, box 2, Esther Immer Papers.

prosperity. This whole-child approach was couched in psychological terms and articulated in the conference theme: "A Fair Chance at a Healthy Personality."[7]

The first few White House conferences have received much attention from scholars who study Progressive Era child welfare movements. The earlier White House conferences are routinely credited for being the impetus for such notable accomplishments as the establishment of the U.S. Children's Bureau, the passage of the Sheppard-Towner Maternity Bill, and the conception of the Children's Charter.[8] Yet the Midcentury White House Conference on Children and Youth has received little scholarly attention even though its agenda was far more expansive and its outcomes far more transformative than those of its predecessors.[9]

Only recently has historian Marilyn Irvin Holt drawn this conference from the shadows in *Cold War Kids: Politics and Childhood in Postwar America, 1945–1960*. Holt's work spotlights both the 1950 and 1960 White House Conferences on Children and Youth and uses them as a framework to explain increased federal intervention in American children's lives during the early Cold War period.[10] She argues that Cold War anxieties animated efforts to build a better citizenry, though not through manipulation and fear tactics (as has become a common narrative of Cold War childhood history) but rather through empowerment and by providing quality education, health care, and enrichment opportunities. These were costly endeavors that many Americans felt necessitated and justified federal leadership and funding. Holt convincingly argues that most of the issues taken up by conferees did influence subsequent federal legislation and programs.

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7. U.S. Children's Bureau, "The Midcentury White House Conference on Children and Youth: Why a conference? How will it work? What can it mean to you?" file: White House Conference on Children and Youth, box 3, Esther Immer Papers (hereafter cited as USCB, "Why a Conference").

8. Hamilton Cravens, *Before Head Start: The Iowa Station and America's Children* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1993); Kriste Lindenmeyer, *A Right to Childhood: The U.S. Children's Bureau and Child Welfare, 1912–1946* (Urbana and Champaign, IL, 1997); Judith Sealander, *The Failed Century of the Child: Governing America's Young in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge, 2003).

9. Roberts, "Highlights of the Midcentury White House Conference," 96–97.

10. Marilyn Irvin Holt, *Cold War Kids: Politics and Childhood in Postwar America, 1945–1960* (Lawrence, KS, 2014).

Conference delegates sought to ensure a more peaceful global future through the cultivation of children who would have the potential to live with one another in mutual respect and cooperation. Photo from A. M. Wettach Collection, State Historical Society of Iowa, Iowa City (SHSI-IC).

What she does not make explicit but should also be understood is that those catalyst issues were brought by state committees, prepared in advance, and presented to the National Committee on Children and Youth (NCCY). In this way, the 1950 conference differed in scope and process from the four preceding conferences. For the first time in the history of the conference series, a broad base of American citizens set the agenda through decentralized research and planning. Hence, the 1950 conference was celebrated as an exercise in democratic action—the purported hallmark of Cold War America.

FROM THE START, decentralized planning marked the 1950 conference as different from its predecessors. The NCCY was established to coordinate the efforts of federal agencies and state committees. It kicked off the process in 1947 by inviting American

states, territories, and possessions to begin "at the grassroots" to assemble facts, data, and impressions on the conditions and needs of their children.[11] The effort was touted as "a conference in progress"—a three-stage approach (assessment, conference, and follow-up) that would meet American children's needs in dynamic new ways.[12] The NCCY considered this a "reverse approach" since previous conferences had served as the starting point for state and local action. By involving states in the early planning stages, the 1950 conference was far more inclusive than any prior.

What had once been a federal and special interest endeavor became, for the first time in its history, a regional, lay, and youthful enterprise. Nearly 100,000 people nationwide sprang to action, producing reports that were informed by racial, class, religious, and age diversity.[13] A U.S. Children's Bureau pamphlet claimed that, "from its first stages to its last, the Midcentury White House Conference belongs to the people of the United States. It will be as dynamic as citizens everywhere make it."[14] The effort was celebrated as democracy in action. Conference chairman Oscar R. Ewing claimed that decentralized planning "represented a typically American approach to furthering one of our national ideals."[15] Americans across the nation answered the call to assess and document childhood in their local vicinity and took pride in the fruits of their grassroots efforts.

U.S. Children's Bureau chief Katherine Lenroot and NCCY chairman Leonard Mayo planned periodic forums where state representatives gathered to align goals and hone the 1950 conference agenda. State social welfare departments sent health and welfare representatives, state officials, and lay leaders to three-day planning conferences with themes such as "The Child in His Family and Community." Conference speakers emphasized local responsibility amid discussions that acknowledged children's significance to the national and global communities. At such mini-

11. Leonard W. Mayo and Katherine F. Lenroot to Mary Hunke, 11/3/1947, file: Correspondence 1948, box 1, Esther Immer Papers.

12. "Planning Conference," 2.

13. *Platform Recommendations and Pledge to Children* (Raleigh, NC, 1950), 13.

14. USCB, "Why a Conference," 2.

15. Edward A. Richards, ed., *Proceedings of the Midcentury White House Conference on Children and Youth* (Raleigh, NC, 1951), 2–3.

conferences, Lenroot and Mayo encouraged states to submit well-researched reports, from which they assembled the midcentury conference agenda.[16] Throughout the planning years, the national committee served as a conduit for information and sent updates, requests, and reminders designed to encourage and maintain uniformity of purpose. However, when state planning committees wrote requesting federal funds and assistance, the national committee replied that planners should "tap local resources for money to finance their programs since the primary concern of the State Committees is the children within their own borders." National leaders also suggested that "services in lieu of funds are just as helpful as money."[17] The NCCY made it clear that democratic action included providing funding and resources. Thus, the task set before state delegates was broad: ascertain the physical, psychological, and spiritual conditions and needs of every child within their community while relying on goodwill voluntarism and creative financing.

IOWA formally established its supervisory and coordinating arm, the Iowa Commission on Children and Youth (ICCY), in October 1948.[18] Three of the five delegates who had represented Iowa at the national planning conference—King Palmer, Ona May Breckenridge, and Esther Immer—were appointed to the ICCY Executive

16. "Planning Conference," 1–3. Iowa's five delegates were Mrs. H. C. (Ona May) Breckenridge, president of the Iowa Congress of Parents and Teachers; Dr. J. M. Hayek, director of Maternal and Child Health (State Department of Health); Esther Immer, Child Welfare Division (State Department of Social Welfare); King Palmer, Iowa Mental Hygiene Association, National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis of Iowa, and Iowa Welfare Association; and A. D. Wiese, president of the State Federation of Women's Clubs. "Iowa Commission on Children and Youth, 1949 Delegate Roster," file: Iowa Commission on Children and Youth Memoranda, 1950–1960, box 2, Esther Immer Papers; Des Moines Council of Social Agencies, "Case Work Division Meeting Minutes," 1/18/1950, file: Minutes 1949–1956, box 2, Esther Immer Papers (hereafter cited as "Case Work Division Meeting").

17. "Memo on State and Local Action," 4/25/1950, p. 2, file: Minutes 1949–1956, box 2, Esther Immer Papers.

18. "ICCY, Annual Meeting," 2; "Case Work Division Meeting," 2; "Iowa Commission Highlights: Needs of Children and Youth," 1/31/1950, p. 1, file: Iowa Commission on Youth Memoranda, box 2, Esther Immer Papers; *Children and Youth in Iowa at Midcentury*, 2.

Committee. As the first statewide effort on behalf of children since the short-lived 1924 Code Commission (which *followed* the 1919 White House conference), the ICCY represented both the state government and the people of Iowa. Although the ICCY served to coordinate and facilitate efforts, Esther Immer (ICCY executive director and primary documentarian) acknowledged the significance of grassroots efforts when she wrote, "What is done in the local community, where the children really live, will determine the success of the project."[19] ICCY officers selected additional executive committee members, appointed specialized committees (including one composed of youth), and charged those committees with "finding the factors of ideal home life and inquiring into the way they can be applied and realized in the child's community relationships."[20] For the ICCY, it was not enough to simply gather and analyze data. It sought workable solutions that would be implemented within children's communities, schools, and homes.

Across the nation, state participation and resource allocation ran a spectrum. For example, California, Maryland, and Oregon apportioned a significant amount of human and financial resources to the endeavor. They each produced highly professional reports that read much like the national proceedings. On the other hand, Hawaii produced a limited, six-page report devoted entirely to juvenile delinquency and noted that the state lacked the resources to enable it to conduct research. Iowa's resources fell somewhere in the middle, but the state was an early adopter of the project, had a proven track record on child welfare research, and was well organized. As such, representatives from several other states wrote to the ICCY as late as the spring of 1950 seeking advice on ways to organize committees and research efforts.[21]

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19. "Iowa Commission Highlights," 1/31/1950, p. 1; "Case Work Division Meeting," 2.

20. "Iowa Commission Highlights," 1/31/1950, p. 1; "ICCY, Annual Meeting,"1.

21. King Palmer to Thomas R. Flynn, 5/3/1950, file: Correspondence 1950, box 1, Esther Immer Papers; Thomas R. Flynn to Esther Immer, 4/26/1950, ibid.; Community Research Associates, *Mid-Century Study of Children and Youth in California* (Los Angeles, 1950); Maryland Commission for Youth, *Our Most Valuable Resource* (Baltimore, 1950); Oregon Governor's State Committee, "News Bulletin" (1949–1952); Hawaii Commission on Children and Youth, *Report* (1950).

Volunteers throughout Iowa, professionals and lay people alike, contributed labor and resources to the venture. Such efforts were instrumental to the commission's success as volunteers served on committees, conducted research, distributed questionnaires, held meetings and workshops, and publicized the ICCY and the midcentury conference in print and on radio broadcasts. Some state agencies contributed financially and even permitted the use of office equipment.[22] Esther Immer noted the project's broad appeal when she recorded that roughly 250 of the 1,000 Iowans who attended the quarterly Iowa Welfare Association meetings "were laymen not connected professionally with any children's organizations."[23] Neighborhood groups throughout the state held small discussion groups at schools, churches, and homes to determine local needs. Professional researchers provided guidance in evaluating questionnaire results in order to assess whether the "youth of Iowa get the constructive care and guidance which will help them grow up into happy, well adjusted citizens, able to 'live and let live' in their generation."[24]

Volunteers from the State Federation of Women's Clubs and University of Iowa graduate students distributed surveys to parents, teachers, and other adults, as well as children and teenagers in schools, correctional facilities, training schools, and youth organizations. Sometimes the response was overwhelming and "strained their facilities," as volunteers tabulated results by hand. Such was the case when 1,200 Fort Dodge residents responded.[25]

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22. "Case Work Division Meeting," 3–4; Esther Immer to Dr. Robert E. Jewett, 1/16/1950, file: Correspondence 1950, box 1, Esther Immer Papers; "Iowa Commission Highlights," 2; King Palmer to Committee Chairmen, 2/27/1950, file: Correspondence 1950, box 1, Esther Immer Papers; King Palmer to Governor William S. Beardsley, 11/29/1950, file: Correspondence 1950, box 1, Esther Immer Papers; "Iowa Commission on Children and Youth: Progress Report" (January 1951), 1, file: Iowa Commission on Youth Memoranda, box 2, Esther Immer Papers.

23. Immer to Jewett, 1/16/1950; Esther Immer, "Proposed Report of the Iowa Commission on Children and Youth" (sent to the governor), 7/17/1950, file: Correspondence 1950, box 1, Esther Immer Papers.

24. Immer, "Proposed Report."

25. "Case Work Division Meeting," 3; Ray Bryan, *Report of Committee on Employment of Youth* (Des Moines, 1950), 1; Esther Immer to Mrs. L. J. O'Brien, 11/7/1950, file: Correspondence 1950, box 1, Esther Immer Papers.

At other times, disagreements and misunderstandings arose. A number of people felt slighted when they were not selected for official seats on research committees (more than 1,000 people volunteered for a few hundred positions).[26] Immer commented that some people were "disappointed because they felt that their recommendations carried no weight," and threatened to take their concerns to the governor.[27]

Yet, on the whole, volunteers came together in unity for the common purpose of considering how best to cultivate healthy, happy children. Immer alluded to volunteers' sense of pride and accomplishment with references to the "tall-corn song," claiming Iowa was "the best state in the land." Confidence ran high that the land "where the tall corn grows" would present "a better-than-average level of achievement" at the national conference.[28]

THE FACULTY at the Iowa Child Welfare Research Station (ICWRS) provided "invaluable service" as consultants and lead researchers on a number of committees.[29] The state-sponsored ICWRS was uniquely suited to the task. Its long-established purpose was to investigate "by the best approved scientific methods the conservation and development of the normal child [and] to make the resulting information available."[30] Historians Hamilton Cravens and Alice Boardman Smuts credit the institution with founding the field of child development.[31]

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26. King Palmer to Committee Chairmen, 2/27/1950, file: Iowa Commission on Youth Memoranda, box 2, Esther Immer Papers; Intraoffice Communication, Esther Immer to Child Welfare Consultants, 3/3/1950, ibid.

27. Maude Broadfoot, "Field Report on the South East District Welfare Meeting and White House Conference Workshop," 3/13/1950, file: Iowa Commission on Youth Memoranda, box 2, Esther Immer Papers; Intraoffice Communication, Immer to Consultants, 3/3/1950.

28. "Iowa Commission Highlights," 1/31/1950, p. 1. Music and lyrics for the "tall-corn song": Ray W. Lockhard and George Hamilton, "Iowa Corn Song," (1921), at Iowa Digital Library, University of Iowa, http://digital.lib.uiowa.edu/cdm/ref/collection/sheetmusic/id/51.

29. Palmer to Flynn, 5/3/1950; "ICCY 1949 Delegate Roster."

30. Dorothy Bradbury, *Pioneering in Child Welfare: A History of the Iowa Child Welfare Research Station, 1917–1933* (Iowa City, 1933), 14.

31. Alice Boardman Smuts, *Science in the Service of Children, 1893–1935* (New Haven, CT, 2006), 117; Cravens, *Before Head Start*, x. Although both historians

The research station was established at the University of Iowa in 1917 after a nine-year indefatigable campaign by Des Moines resident and Iowa Congress of Mothers founder Cora Bussey Hillis. She argued that a state known for its prize-winning horticulture and animal husbandry should also "give the normal child the same scientific study by research methods that we give to crops and cattle."[32] At every opportunity, Hillis reminded both academics and congressmen that children were Iowa's most valuable crop.

Subsequently, the research station established benchmarks for gauging and understanding children's physical, mental, and psychological growth processes and set a model for child research programs across the nation. Establishing norms by studying healthy children was a novel undertaking in an era when research and child welfare efforts focused heavily on social ills (as demonstrated by the earlier White House Conference themes).[33]

World War II had disrupted child development research at the ICWRS when many professionals were mobilized for defense work. In the immediate postwar period, the ICWRS struggled to regain lost ground. Under the leadership of Robert R. Sears, the station restructured, cut less fruitful programs, and focused on the burgeoning field of child psychology.[34] ICWRS faculty (most notably Sears, Dr. Vincent Nowlis, Dr. Ralph Ojemann, Dr. Ruth Updegraff, and Dr. O. C. Irwin) worked on numerous projects that examined the intersection of children's actions, social constraints, and desire gratification as influenced by parenting, gender roles, and ordinal family positions.[35] Their work contributed to a larger body of psychoanalytic research by scholars such as pediatrician Dr. Benjamin Spock and social anthropologist Dr.

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chronicle the history of the ICWRS, neither mentions its significant role in the midcentury conference.

32. Cravens, *Before Head Start*, 7–9; Bradbury, *Pioneering in Child Welfare,* 5–7; Smuts, *Science in the Service of Children,* 121–32.

33. Smuts, *Science in the Service of Children,* 117; Bradbury, *Pioneering in Child Welfare,* 5.

34. Cravens, *Before Head Start,* 221, 226–29; Smuts, *Science in the Service of Children,* 252.

35. Robert R. Sears, "Personality Development in Contemporary Culture," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 92 (1949), 363–66, 369.

John Dollard who had claimed that authoritarian parenting was detrimental to children's personality development as it frustrated children and led to aggressive, antisocial behavior.[36] Thus, it is easy to see why ICWRS director Sears would seize the opportunity to contribute to the national conversation at the midcentury conference.

In November 1948, Sears wrote to Esther Immer, offering to establish a 15-member research committee for the purpose of advising other ICCY committees. The ICCY wholeheartedly accepted the offer and appointed Sears to a position on its executive committee.[37] Hamilton Cravens refers to Sears as a "thoroughly professional scientist with no particular political agenda."[38] Sears's actions in late 1948 and early 1949, however, appear to suggest political motives. By involving the ICWRS in the preconference planning, he brought attention and resources to a program that had been severely hampered by wartime measures. Further, within two months of installing ICWRS faculty on various ICCY committees, Sears took a faculty position at Harvard University and secured for himself a seat on the national conference's executive committee. That transition brought Sears into a direct working relationship with other top professionals (including Spock and Erik Erikson) on the national Technical Committee on Fact Finding and ensured that recent research conducted at the ICWRS would have an even greater voice in the national agenda through the midcentury conference.[39]

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36. Sears, "Personality Development," 363; Robert R. Sears, "Ordinal Position in the Family as a Psychological Variable," *American Sociological Review* 15 (1950), 397–401; William Graebner, "The Unstable World of Benjamin Spock: Social Engineering in a Democratic Culture, 1917–1950," *Journal of American History* 67 (1980), 614.

37. Robert Sears to Esther Immer, 11/2/1948, file: Correspondence 1948, box 1, Esther Immer Papers; Robert Sears to Esther Immer, 11/30/1948, ibid.; Esther Immer to Robert Sears, 12/23/1948, ibid.; Esther Immer to Robert Sears, 12/27/1948, ibid.

38. Cravens, *Before Head Start,* 226.

39. Ibid., 247; Robert Sears to Esther Immer, 1/3/1949, file: Correspondence 1949, box 1, Esther Immer Papers; Esther Immer to Robert Sears, 1/8/1949, ibid.; Palmer to Beardsley, 11/29/1950; "Iowa Commission Highlights"; "ICCY 1949 Delegates Roster." Vincent Nowlis assumed Sears's ICCY leadership position when Sears left the ICWRS for Harvard University, where he worked with Talcott Parsons on a general theory of action. Joel Isaac, "Theorist at Work: Talcott

THE MIDCENTURY CONFERENCE'S central theme, "A Fair Chance at a Healthy Personality," suggests Marilyn Irvin Holt, drew on Americans' growing interest in and awareness of mental health.[40] That may be true in part, but conference planners also viewed the development of healthy personalities as a way to propagate productive citizens for the sake of community and national prosperity. The national Technical Committee on Fact Finding reported that the midcentury agenda, "quite aside from the individual, humanitarian aspects of the matter," was intended to address the "serious consequences for a society that now more than ever stands in need of efficient workers, clear thinkers, loyal citizens, who are to protect its way of life."[41]

In fact, organizers did not actually consider personality to be an aspect of health or character. Rather, it encapsulated the whole person. The fact-finding committee asserted that "the human being does not *have* a personality; he *is* a personality."[42] As such, neglecting the personality and neglecting the person was one and the same. Waste resulting from such neglect, the committee argued, would be costly in terms of lost efficiencies, remediation expenses, and moral degradation.

Many believed that such neglect was already occurring. Leonard C. Murray, who chaired Iowa's Research Committee on Health, reported that "without question there has been waste of the potential strength and capacities of children in Iowa. This waste has cost us heavily through problems of delinquency, misfit jobs, inadequate care and opportunity for the mentally and physically ill and many others."[43] A U.S. Children's Bureau pamphlet on the midcentury conference claimed, "Our waste in children is

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Parsons and the Carnegie Project on Theory, 1949–1951," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 71 (2010), 301; Vincent Nowlis to Esther Immer, 6/1/1949, file: Correspondence 1949, box 1, Esther Immer Papers; Vincent Nowlis to Katherine Bain, 6/1/1949, ibid. For more on the conference's psychological platform as well as a list of the members of the Technical Committee on Fact Finding, see *For Every Child a Healthy Personality: A Digest of the Fact Finding Report to The Midcentury White House Conference on Children and Youth* (Washington, DC, 1950), ii.

40. Holt, *Cold War Kids,* 23.

41. *For Every Child a Healthy Personality*, 1.

42. Ibid., 3 (emphasis in original).

43. Leonard C. Murray, *Report from the Health Committee, Iowa Commission on Children and Youth* (Des Moines, 1950), 2.

great." It encouraged attention to the preparatory task at hand, claiming that "by acquiring new knowledge and putting that to work, we can stop much of this waste."[44] Conference planners operated from the premise that arresting waste was integral to fostering healthy children and communities.

INITIALLY, the ICCY viewed conference planning as an opportunity to revisit the deferred recommendations from the 1940 Conference on Children in a Democracy. Esther Immer recorded that such action might be needed since "many of its recommendations [had] been held in abeyance by war."[45] However, as investigations proceeded, it became apparent that the exigencies of war had altered communities to a degree that called for a substantial reevaluation of issues pertaining to children and youth. Indeed, as Iowa historian Dorothy Schwieder has noted, World War II was a "watershed" of change for the state.[46]

The ICCY decided that it would need to carefully consider changes brought about by wartime employment, military service, and relocations that had separated families, destabilized home life, and altered the patterns of daily living. Historian Lisa Ossian's study on children during World War II, drawn largely from Iowa sources, explains how the war affected children "in profound and often silent ways." Children were encouraged to demonstrate patriotism by collecting scrap, cleaning their plates, and donating their allowance to the war effort. Parenting magazines encouraged mothers to "make partners of their children" in order to decrease the stress and strain of wartime single parenthood. Through radio and print media, and even in schools, war and its images (both real and imagined) permeated children's lives. Ossian explains that for many young Iowans, "carrying on as little soldiers appeared to be the only accepted response."[47] The ICCY's

44. USCB, "Why a Conference?" 2.

45. "Planning Conference," 4.

46. Dorothy Schwieder, *Iowa: The Middle Land* (Ames, 1996), 279.

47. Lisa Ossian, *The Forgotten Generation: American Children and World War II* (Columbia, MO, 2011), 117, 44, 122. For more on how war losses affected children, see ibid., 116–31. On disruptions to family life, see Deborah Fink, "World War II and Rural Women," in *Iowa History Reader*, ed. Marvin Bergman (Iowa City, 2008), 347.

A display at the ICCY's Iowa White House Conference on Children and Youth in Des Moines, sponsored by the Iowa Department of Social Welfare, focused on the effects of divorce on Iowa children. Photo from SHSI-IC.

inquiry into children's lives in 1948 revealed wartime repercussions and highlighted new postwar concerns.

One of those concerns was family destabilization caused by divorce and wartime deaths. The Committee on the Protective Care of Children reported that divorce rates had increased 36 percent since the war. Its findings indicated that more than 5,000 Iowa children per year were touched by divorce.[48] Although the committee also noted rising birthrates as a point of change, it is clear that committee members did not yet comprehend the extent of the nascent baby boom. Rather, they appeared to find the rise in single motherhood most disconcerting. Research revealed that by early 1950, 2 percent of all Iowa children were born to unwed mothers.[49] Although the committee's report did not specify the

48. *Report of the Committee on Protective Care of Children* (Waverly, Iowa, 1950), 1. Dorothy Schwieder, *Iowa: The Middle Land*, 276, notes that of the 265,000 Iowans (men and women) who served during World War II, 8,400 were killed in action.

49. "Iowa Commission Highlights," 4.

degree to which this represented an increase over prewar figures, it is clear that committee members considered two-parent family units imperative for children's healthy development. On this, Iowans shared the national consensus that considered the two-parent nuclear family a bulwark against communism.[50] Based on its reports, the ICCY seemed ambivalent at best regarding the trajectory of Iowa family life. Yet it left no doubt that Iowans needed to devote significant attention and support to fostering healthy family life and home environments as the principal context within which children developed.

The youth labor force was another area of concern. Wartime demand for foodstuffs had brought prosperity to Iowa farmers, but it also dramatically increased demand for agricultural labor at a time when able-bodied farmhands were leaving farms for more lucrative urban-based defense jobs. As the labor force migrated from rural to urban environs, an additional 24,000 Iowans left the state for work elsewhere.[51] The exodus of adult workers left opportunities for younger Iowans to demonstrate their patriotic impulse while earning an income (often at the expense of their education). The University of Iowa's student newspaper, *The Daily Iowan*, reported that during the war, "many a lad and lass" had dropped out of high school "in favor of a lush war job."[52] However, postwar youth *un*employment became a considerable problem when returning GIs, postwar industry conversion, and back-to-school campaigns displaced young workers.

The Committee on the Employment of Youth explained that youth unemployment was problematic for a number of reasons. First, during the war, widespread youth employment had changed family provisioning dynamics as a number of families had be-

50. Holt, *Cold War Kids*, 9. For more on the family as a bulwark against communism, see Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era* (New York, 1988).

51. Fink, "World War II and Rural Women," 348–51, 356–61; Schwieder, *Iowa: The Middle Land*, 277–79, 288–89. By 1943, draft boards increasingly granted deferments, and the Food for Freedom program issued "Certificates of War Service" to farmers and hired hands in order to stem the loss of adult male laborers.

52. "Many Iowa Youths Leave Defense Jobs, Return to Schools," *Daily Iowan*, 9/2/1945. According to a wartime Iowa poll, 34 percent of men and 28 percent of women approved of older teenage boys taking as much as a half-year break from school in order to fill in on farms. Ossian, *The Forgotten Generation*, 36.

come dependent on adolescent family members' incomes. Further, many Iowans believed that it was important for youth to learn job skills before leaving high school. The latter point is significant here as the Committee on Education reported that some Iowa communities had experienced high school dropout rates as high as 54 percent by 1950. In its report, the Committee on the Employment of Youth expressed the widely held conviction that "the problem of getting young people started in the world of work is one of society's greatest obligations." The committee claimed that fewer children were learning labor skills at home. As a result, young people entered the labor pool unprepared. It was incumbent upon Iowans, therefore, to provide youth with employment that complemented and worked with educational opportunities so that the young may "become productive citizens." The committee advocated increased vocational training in high schools for those students who did not have an opportunity to work on a farm or in a family business (fewer than one-third of all Iowa high schools offered vocational training programs during the 1948–49 academic year).[53]

Fewer youngsters received workforce training at home partly because the tenor and pace of domestic living had changed as a result of urbanization and new farming methods—both resulted in fewer children raised with traditional rural skill sets. The number of Iowa farms had decreased from 213,318 in 1940 to 208,934 by 1945. While the number of farms decreased by 4,384, the total farmed acreage decreased by only 640 acres.[54] What this reveals is that thousands of smaller family farms were consolidated and absorbed by larger farms during the war, facilitating the trend toward large-scale, postwar agribusiness. Further, many of the remaining family farms mechanized after the war. Mechanization decreased demand for much of children's labor and, consequently, decreased their opportunities to learn those traditionally acquired skills.

To add injury to deprivation, the Committee on Handicapped and Exceptional Children reported a significant rise in

53. *Report of the Education Committee* (Des Moines, 1950), 2; "Iowa Commission Highlights," 4; Bryan, "Report of Committee on Employment," 1, 3.

54. Agricultural Division, *United States Census of Agriculture, 1950, Counties and State Economic Areas: Iowa* (Washington, DC, 1952), Section A, p. 3.

The sign below a mangled child's tricycle asks motorists, "Are you the cause of this sorrow?" Displays such as this sought to remind Iowans to drive cautiously around playing children. Such accidents were on the rise in the late 1940s. Photo from A. M. Wettach Collection, SHSI-IC.

children's injuries, amputations, and even deaths due to mechanized farm equipment and a postwar increase in automobile usage.[55] Such injuries, asserted the Committee on Health, along with communicable diseases like polio, plagued Iowa communities throughout the 1940s and threatened to weaken the nation. "In a democracy," asserted Leonard C. Murray, who chaired the Committee on Health, "good health is of vital importance to

55. J. L. Anderson, "'The Quickest Way Possible': Iowa Farm Families and Tractor-Drawn Combines, 1940–1960," *Agricultural History* 76 (2002), 681–82. On the modernization of Iowa's agricultural industry in the twentieth century, see Mark Friedberger, "The Modernization of Iowa's Agricultural Structure in the Twentieth Century," in *Iowa History Reader*, ed. Marvin Bergman (Iowa City, 2008), 375–96. For a detailed discussion of the dangers of farm mechanization, see Derek Oden, "Perils of Production: Farm Hazards, Family Farming, and the Mechanization of the Corn Belt, 1940–1980," *Annals of Iowa* 73 (2014), 238–68.

every individual, for the individual is unable to render a maximum service to society, unless he has good health." The committee pointed to the high number of wartime 4-F classifications to demonstrate the connection between children's and adults' health.[56] Many of the conditions that led to 4-F classifications stemmed from childhood injury, malnutrition, or disease. Committee members argued that preventable poor health was a significant cause of waste among the population.

World War II had also brought Iowa's educational system to a crisis point. The Education Committee's investigation revealed low educational standards and inadequate facilities, but the severe teacher shortage seemed to be the greatest concern. During the war thousands of teachers nationwide left education for military service or higher-paying defense jobs.[57] The problem continued well into the postwar years. The ICCY Education Committee predicted that Iowa would have a shortfall of 675 elementary school teachers for the 1950–51 academic year.[58] The committee recommended maximizing resources by consolidating schools. Low student-to-teacher ratios were considered a significant component for the successful cultivation of young minds. As such, the committee also recommended state support for university-led efforts to recruit and educate teachers.[59]

The ICCY considered juvenile delinquency to be a pressing issue. Drawing on 1947 data, the Committee on Care and Re-

56. Murray, *Report from the Health Committee,* 2. In late summer and autumn of 1950 Iowa saw a sharp rise in polio cases. The topic was much on the minds of Iowans as they met to discuss health issues. "Polio Cases Reach Record High of 38 as 10 More Enter," *Daily Iowan*, 8/30/1950; "Seventh Polio Death of Year Reported at SUI Hospital," *Daily Iowan*, 8/30/1950; "Six New Polio Cases Admitted; Total Set at 43," *Daily Iowan*, 8/31/1950; "Physical Therapy Aids Polio-Stricken Muscles," *Daily Iowan*, 9/3/1950. Army 4-F classifications were a national concern during both world wars. The September 17, 1944, issue of *Yank Magazine: The Army Weekly* reported 3,798,000 nationwide rejections for military duty as a result of 4-F classifications.

57. Ossian, *The Forgotten Generation*, 34. Nationwide, the 1943–44 academic year saw a teacher shortage of 75,000, and 2,000 rural school closures. Ossian also discusses how American schools adopted the "Education for Victory" curriculum that strayed from standard pedagogy to promote patriotism, nationalism, and democracy. Ibid., 22–39.

58. "Record Number Returns to Local Schools," *Daily Iowan*, 9/12/1950.

59. *Report of the Education Committee*, 3.

habilitation of Delinquent Youth reported that 2,223 minors between the ages of 3 and 18 years (the majority 15 to 16 years old) had been brought before the courts that year, resulting in 766 youths being committed to correctional facilities. The committee noted that urban juvenile court cases outnumbered rural cases by five to one and that male delinquency was four times likelier than female. Female delinquency, at least in terms of sexual transgression, seems to have been treated as a fringe of mental illness. The Committee on Handicapped and Exceptional Children reported 25 "emotionally disturbed youth" committed to state facilities, with only illegitimate births, early marriage, and divorce catalogued as the reasons for commitment. Perhaps some of these youth were committed to institutions for other mental health reasons, but the heart of the issue seemed to be their abortive or premature transition to adulthood. Chairman Murray reported that a number of such commitments could be prevented with timely mental health intervention. He claimed that at least 7,500 young Iowans were in need of comprehensive clinical assessments that were already available to adults. It would be "pennywise and pound foolish," he warned, to continue to deny services to children that the state provided to adults.[60]

The Committee on Care and Rehabilitation of Delinquent Youth also used surveys to attempt to determine the root causes of delinquency. Based on those questionnaires, the committee concluded that poor housing, broken homes, "poor quality movies, cheap literature, and sensuous radio programs," along with schools' inability to deal with the "needs of [the] sub-normal child of low intelligence" were but secondary factors in delinquency cases; such factors exacerbated but did not cause the problem. Rather, they reported, parental neglect and inadequate police presence were the primary causes and "an invitation to delinquency." In their defense, a number of police officers redirected blame toward pool hall proprietors and inattentive parents. They claimed that law enforcement was less effective when communities and parents tolerated bad behavior.[61]

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60. Walter Albin Lunden, *Delinquent Youth in Iowa: Report of the Committee on Care and Rehabilitation of Delinquent Children in Iowa* (Des Moines, 1950), 12, 6–7; "Mentally Sick Children Lack Help: Report," *Cedar Rapids Gazette*, 11/27/1950.

61. "Report . . . on Care and Rehabilitation," 30–31.

Youth themselves also had much to say on the topic. Claiming a dearth of recreational facilities, they cited churches and overly moralistic adults as obstacles to "youth centers, as [such adults] disapprove of dancing, bingo, cards and so many things." One youth complained that adults just didn't understand kids' desire for "good, clean fun." One teenager from Fort Madison asserted that class, race, and school rivalries created "a hotbed of many bad situations." Many youth also remarked that inadequate "attention to boy-girl relationships" resulted in promiscuity and teen pregnancy. In the absence of formal sex education, some claimed that their primary education came from observing animals. One young respondent from Clemons, Iowa, wrote that proper education could "make sex something more than animal excitation."[62]

Receptivity to such surveys demonstrated one of the significant ways that the 1950 conference differed from previous meetings. The extended preliminary planning period allowed for reports that incorporated input from the young. As conference planners and research committees strove for greater inclusion, they modeled a kind of democratic action intended to encourage young people while fostering their journey toward responsible citizenship.

In addition to expressing concern for the rates and causes of juvenile delinquency, the Committee on Care and Rehabilitation of Delinquent Youth also examined recidivism and the poor treatment of minor inmates. The committee found that incarceration facilities often served as incubators of crime when juvenile offenders were housed with the adult convict population (many of whom were reportedly lifelong offenders).[63] The committee asserted that "juvenile acts constitute a mirror in which society may see the adult world in miniature." Therefore, chronic juvenile recidivism, it reported, should be viewed as mimicry of a debased incarcerated adult world. Effective rehabilitation, it argued, required separating delinquent minors from hardened adult criminals and providing positive role models.[64] Misguided lead-

62. Ibid., 32–34; *Report of the Committee on Community Facilities and Recreation* (Cedar Rapids, 1950), 9–10.

63. "Report . . . on Care and Rehabilitation," 5–6. A survey of native-born incarcerated Iowa men from across the state revealed that 46 percent had committed their first offenses between the ages of 10 and 19.

64. Ibid., 5.

ership at many institutions compounded the problem by discontinuing educational programs during the war in order to use young inmate labor to fulfill war contracts.[65] Hence, the committee argued, youth correctional facilities had become morally degenerate environments that lacked opportunities for rehabilitation. Additionally, reports regarding the ill treatment of juvenile inmates had surfaced by the end of the war.

The 1945 Eldora riots brought this matter to Iowans' attention. On August 29 young inmates at the Eldora State Training School for Boys unleashed their frustration and anger after guards beat 17-year-old Ronald Miller to death. The boys ransacked the dining hall and nearly 200 escaped over the next few days. Conditions there were so riotous that the governor called out the State Guard to quell the unrest and capture and return escapees. Upon investigation, one newspaper reported that the Eldora reform school was a "Dickensian institution" complete with fences, barred windows, solitary confinement cells, and regular beatings.[66] Five years later, in September 1950, the ICCY Committee on Care and Rehabilitation of Delinquent Youth remarked that judges still hesitated to commit boys to Eldora until conditions improved.[67]

THROUGHOUT the summer and autumn of 1950, the ICCY worked tirelessly to publicize the upcoming midcentury conference, promote its work among the general population, and gather final contributions from communities. Members of the executive board traveled throughout the state giving talks and soliciting feedback at community and associational group meetings. There was a "Conference on Child Development and Parent Education"

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65. "Report of the Board of Control of State Institutions," 6, file: Iowa Commission on Children and Youth, box 2, Esther Immer Papers.

66. "Employe Says Eldora as Bad as Nazi Camps," *Daily Iowan*, 9/1/1945.

67. "Report on . . . Care and Rehabilitation," 19. Attempting to divert attention from his own culpability, Assistant Superintendent Darrel T. Brown claimed that there had "been a spirit of general unrest for some time." But witnesses claimed that Miller's death sparked the riot. An investigation revealed that Miller died when two guards beat him to death with a blackjack and leather straps. "150 Boys Escape from Eldora," *Daily Iowan*, 8/30/1945; "41 Escaped Boys from Eldora School Still Hiding Out," *Daily Iowan*, 8/31/1945; "Employe Says Eldora as Bad"; "44 More Escape from Eldora Despite Iowa State Guardsmen," *Daily Iowan*, 9/2/1945.

Volunteers staffed the ICCY booth at the Iowa State Fair, August 25–September 1, 1950. Photo from SHSI-IC.

at the University of Iowa's Child Welfare Research Station on June 20–21, 1950. Louis de Boer, the national conference director of State and Local Action, gave the keynote speech, and ICWRS faculty Ralph J. Ojemann and Ruth Updegraff disseminated information and solicited additional input in afternoon workshops.[68] From August 25 to September 1, volunteers from various recreational agencies, such as the YMCA, Boy Scouts, Jewish Community Center, and Salvation Army, staffed the ICCY booth at the Iowa State Fair, which displayed information and solicited input from Iowans.[69] The ICCY also staffed a booth at the 1950 Parent Teacher's Association Convention in Des Moines, which displayed posters intended to convey a number of points. The

68. "Judge Matthias to Attend Conference on Children," *Cedar Rapids Gazette*, 5/23/1950; "Child Personality Health Will Be Conference Theme," *Cedar Rapids Gazette*, 5/29/1950; "Child Welfare Conference to Open Tuesday," *Cedar Rapids Gazette*, 6/18/1950.

69. "Agenda for Iowa State Fair," August 25–September 1, 1950, file: Iowa Commission on Youth Memoranda, box 2, Esther Immer Papers; "Children's Day as Iowa State Fair Opens," *Daily Iowan*, 8/26/1950.

Iowa Commission on Children and Youth display at the 50th Anniversary PTA Convention, Des Moines, Iowa. Photo from SHSI-IC.

posters summarized previous White House Conference themes, emphasized the preparatory work leading to the midcentury conference, informed the public of the ICCY's role in the forthcoming conference, and provided brief summaries of major issues.

On October 20 the ICCY held a statewide meeting called the Iowa White House Conference on Children and Youth at Drake University in Des Moines. The conference was open to the public and, according to ICCY executive director Esther Immer, was intended as one last effort to solicit input from concerned citizens throughout Iowa "on the subject closest to their hearts." In total, 430 Iowans attended the state conference, including 135 youth from high schools and colleges.[70] Immer noted that all of these efforts served to draw communities together. United in purpose,

70. Esther Immer to A. Whittier Day, 9/11/1950, file: Correspondence 1950, box 1, Esther Immer Papers; Letter of invitation, Governor William S. Beardsley to Iowa citizens (conference program attached), 10/5/1950, ibid.; "Iowa Conference on Youth Will be Held at Drake University," *Cedar Rapids Tribune*, 9/21/1950.

Attendees pack a room at the Iowa White House Conference on Children and Youth at Drake University in Des Moines in October 1950. Photo from SHSI-IC.

Iowans sought to prepare "their children for a happy life and fulfillment of the duties of citizenship in a world upset by fears and strife."[71]

THE OVERCAST SKY on the morning of December 3, 1950, did not dampen the spirits of the more than 6,000 delegates who gathered for the Midcentury White House Conference on Children and Youth at the National Guard Armory in Washington, D.C. Indeed, many a midwestern delegate must have found the moderate temperature and occasional light drizzle a welcome relief from the converging weather fronts that had brought freezing temperatures to Iowa and freak tornadoes to Illinois and Arkansas only the day before.[72]

71. Immer, "Proposed Report."

72. "The Weather," *Washington Post*, 12/3/1950; J. R. Fulks and Clarence D. Smith Jr., "A December Storm Accompanied by Tornados," *Monthly Weather Review* (December 1950), 220–25.

The diverse group of delegates represented every American state and territory. They came from cities and rural communities. They represented government agencies, community organizations, and a variety of professions. They were old and young and of different racial groups and religious affiliations. Yet all sought an opportunity to contribute to the conversation and influence the outcome of the much anticipated event.

The turnout was so great that the crowds nearly overwhelmed the national committee. Conference executive director Melvyn Glasser observed that delegates were "stacked up three deep" trying to get into workshops. Oscar R. Ewing, who chaired the national committee, worried that the sheer number of participants, the multitudinous perspectives, and the wide range of issues might hinder efforts toward consensus.[73] While it complicated logistics on the ground, the unprecedentedly high attendance testified to the success of preconference planning efforts. President Harry S. Truman declared it a "unique demonstration of our democracy's concern for children. . . . Proof that our American tradition of free exchange of fact and opinion is a living, working force."[74] Indeed, it was heartening for most to see so many who had taken their charge so seriously.

The protracted planning period had served to heighten expectations. At daily breakout sessions delegates eagerly debated topics such as education, religion, federal funding, segregation, war mobilization, and the atomic bomb. Impassioned discussion and lengthy debates delayed some resolutions, such as that on the role of religion in public schools, by as much as five hours.[75]

Ultimately, the majority passed a resolution that affirmed the separation of church and state by voting that religion should not be taught in public schools. Iowa Superintendent of Schools Clyde Parker spoke on behalf of the resolution. He acknowledged that

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73. Dorothea Andres, "Youth Needs Are Our Needs," *Washington Post*, 12/4/1950; Holt, *Cold War Kids*, 12; "Women's Club Members at Capitol Conference," *Cedar Rapids Gazette*, 12/5/1950; "Iowa in Washington," *Cedar Rapids Gazette*, 12/10/1950.

74. Richards, *Proceedings*, 2–3.

75. "Parley Advanced Youth-Adult Understanding, Delegates Say," *Washington Post*, 12/7/1950; Dorothea Andrews, "Youth Parley Votes 3 Major Resolutions," *Washington Post*, 12/8/1950; "Statements by Delegates Challenged," *Washington Post*, 12/7/1950.

religion was a "wonderful thing" for many people but expressed the conviction that "religious instruction must not be offered in a public, tax-supported school."[76]

Another major point of contention, and sign of the times, was the discussion of children and television. Many delegates felt that modern media negatively influenced young people's behavior and morals. However, Robert Saudak, father of four and a vice-president with the American Broadcasting Company, defended television and emphasized parental responsibility in monitoring children's viewing habits. Dean Bruce Mahan of the University of Iowa agreed with Saudak. Citing his own research, Mahan argued that when it came to television, "the good far outweighs the bad," and that it was parents' responsibility to direct their children toward positive options.[77]

Youth participation at the national conference was a priority for organizers. It was the first time that young people had been invited to participate in a national conference on children and youth. Organizers viewed it as an opportunity to initiate young Americans into responsible citizenship. Youth embraced the moment but held adults to high standards of leadership. Teen Iowa delegate Peggy Ann Leu expressed exasperation at the lengthy, heated debates, and claimed that she had picked up "only a few large gold nuggets panned from inspirational, but sometimes superfluous streams" of discussion.[78] Leu's critique appears to have been based on a spectator's perspective, but many newspapers reported youths' active involvement in a number of discussions, particularly on the topic of racism.

Some youth lambasted organizers for permitting segregated conference lodging. Five hundred young delegates took it upon themselves to model the change they hoped to see when they lodged together in racially integrated accommodations at nearby Fort Meyers. While many adults were taken aback by the youths'

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76. "Keep Schools Religion-Free, Parker Says," *Cedar Rapids Gazette*, 1/30/1951.

77. "Parent Must Censor Video, A Father Says," *Cedar Rapids Gazette*, 12/6/1950.

78. "Responsibility Asked by Youth," *Cedar Rapids Gazette*, 12/6/1950; "Report by Youth Delegate Peggy Ann Leu of the Iowa Commission to the Midcentury White House Conference on Children and Youth: Impressions and Repressions at Washington, D.C.," file: White House Conference on Children and Youth, box 3, Esther Immer Papers.

boldness, Chicagoan Dr. Allison Davis lent her support, arguing that, as a result of Jim Crow practices, most minority children and youth were "wasted in the schools, in the armed services, and in industry." "This Nation," she contended, "can no longer afford waste." Iowan Clyde Parker concurred, warning delegates that "unless something is done relative to racial discrimination, we are liable to end up on the rocks of democracy."[79] In the end, the conference consensus was that minority children did *not* have a "fair chance at developing a healthy personality" and that something must be done.

Delegates' exuberant participation on the issues of television, religion in schools, and racism, among others, clearly evidenced what national organizers had anticipated would be "a citizens' conference" that was "grounded in the principles of democratic action and fashioned by the best thinking and free discussion of representative citizens."[80] It was a fruitful start to what promised to be an ongoing national conversation.

THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE was deemed a grand success, but what was accomplished at the state and community level should be considered equally important. Through earnest hard work and community investment Iowans had taken the first steps toward conserving their children; that is, they set out to identify the causes of waste—wasted health, wasted potential, wasted personality—and began to devise ways to construct environments conducive to the positive growth and development of individual young Iowans.

During the planning stage Iowans drew on language and imagery (such as crops, yields, waste, and conservation) that were rooted in a Jeffersonian approach to agrarian nation building and notions that sprang from the early twentieth-century conservation movement. Such an approach had spoken to the still largely

79. "White House Youth Confab Smacks Jim Crow," *Chicago Defender*, 12/6/1950; "Negroes Play Big Roles at Mid-century Confab," *Chicago Defender*, 12/6/1950; Dorothea Andres, "U.S. Wastes Manpower, Parley Told," *Washington Post*, 12/6/1950; "U.S. Public Education System Not Democratic, Says Dr. Davis," *Washington Post*, 12/10/1950; "Keep Schools Religion-Free."

80. USCB, "Why a Conference," 2; *Platform Recommendations*, i. For a more expansive discussion of the conference, see Holt, *Cold War Kids*.

agrarian nation in 1909, when at the first National Conservation Conference Mrs. J. Ellen Foster compared growing children to saplings. She had argued that child labor wasted potentially useful future resources when children's strength and energy were expended before their prime. Subsequently, Theodore Roosevelt preached the "conservation of childhood" in support of anti–child labor campaigns. Child welfare reform activists of the Progressive Era applied the phrase to education, health care, illegitimacy, and parenting. The first head of the Iowa Child Welfare Research Station, Carl Seashore, claimed that "the problem of child conservation is quite analogous to the problem of the forest." He assured state legislators that the ICWRS would find solutions through child welfare research.[81]

The philosophy and practice fit with Iowa's extensive agricultural heritage and what historian Lewis Atherton describes as the Midwest's "cult of the immediately useful and practical."[82] Scholars have tended to interpret this regional attitude strictly in terms of financial gain, but it may be argued that Iowans' investment of time and resources in investigating child welfare reveals deeply held convictions that the careful cultivation of the next

81. Laura Lovett, *Conceiving the Future: Pronatalism, Reproduction, and the Family in the United States, 1890–1938* (Chapel Hill, NC, 2007), 110; Theodore Roosevelt, *The Conservation of Childhood*, National Child Labor Committee pamphlet no. 163 (New York, 1911); "Doings of the Women's Clubs: Lectures Before the Woman's Political League, an Alameda Teacher on the 'Conservation of Childhood,'" *San Francisco Chronicle*, 1/18/1912; Kate Waller Barrett, "Protection for the Innocents," *Washington Times*, 3/11/1914; "The Fight for School Nurses Is Taken Up," *Washington Herald*, 3/25/1914; "Maternity Insurance to Aid Child Welfare: Health Official Urges Conservation of Womanhood and Childhood," *Labor Journal*, 4/26/1918; Smuts, *Science in the Service of Children,* 128; Carolyn Merchant, "Women of the Progressive Conservation Movement: 1900–1916," *Environmental Review* 8 (1984), 75.

82. Lewis Atherton, *Main Street on the Middle Border* (Bloomington, IN, 1984), 111–15. According to Dorothy Schwieder, Iowans judged activity according to the "cult of the immediately useful and practical," that is, whether it had "immediate, practical utilitarianism" and could be justified financially. This, she explains, also had a gendered component in that men's actions were judged accordingly more often than those of women or children. Nonetheless, I contend that such beliefs so thoroughly permeated society by the mid-twentieth century that they should be considered a motivating factor writ large: Schwieder, "Iowa: The Middle Land," in *Iowa History Reader*, ed. Marvin Bergman (Iowa City, 2008), 7. See also William Barillas, *The Midwestern Pastoral: Place and Landscape in Literature of the American Heartland* (Athens, OH, 2006), 34.

generation would yield abundantly. To a considerable extent, Iowans preferred to find solutions and manage their affairs directly rather than rely on federal direction.[83] ICCY's preconference investigations resulted in a number of remedial efforts at the state and community levels even prior to the midcentury conference: Iowans reassessed laws pertaining to children and held a conference on youth recreation, and many individuals voluntarily committed their time and talents to community youth outreach.

An enormous advance on the issue of juvenile corrections came immediately following the conference when Hollis Miles assumed leadership as the superintendent of the Eldora juvenile correctional facility. He took an individualized, psychology-based approach to the problem of delinquency and implemented tactics in line with the conference position. Drawing on the language of conference delegates, Miles claimed that the "delinquent child was an unhappy child" who grew into a "lopsided" personality. By 1951, through a program that fostered troubled adolescents' individual personal growth and self-awareness, Miles decreased the once notorious reformatory's population from 600 to 200 with only a 15 percent recidivism rate.[84] State Superintendent of Public Schools Clyde Parker reported that he, too, had come to realize that more should be done to bring "youth into the planning of community activities and community programs." Consequently, he conferred with high school students "regarding problems and wants" on a monthly basis.[85] It is clear that the preparatory period brought Iowans to a concerted and communal focus on their children.

Post-conference action at the state level differed in tone and purpose from that at the federal level. In evaluating the significance and outcomes of the Midcentury White House Conference on Children and Youth, one should not lose sight of additional

83. *Report of Committee on Community Facilities*, 6; "Summary of Recommendation Approved by Citizens Attending," 10/20/1950, p. 2, file: Minutes 1949–1956, box 2, Esther Immer Papers.

84. "Good Parents Can Learn a Lesson from Bad Boys," *St. Petersberg Times*, 7/29/1951.

85. "Youth Affairs and Salaries Discussed by School Board," *Cedar Rapids Gazette*, 12/19/1950; "Social Planning Group to Hear Clyde Parker," *Cedar Rapids Gazette*, 1/21/1951; "Dr. Ojemann and Clyde Parker in Education Report," *Cedar Rapids Gazette*, 1/28/1951.

concerns that occupied the minds of the nation's politicians and strategists. Cold War concerns motivated a federal response that disregarded attention to the individual in favor of programs intended to foster the mass production of a homogenous American citizenry. Just as materiel production gave the Allies an edge during World War II, the production of loyal citizens, it was believed, would trump Cold War communism.

Historian Dorothy Schwieder claims that the Korean conflict "seemed to have only minimal impact on [Iowa] as a whole," but the international struggle was actually foremost in the minds of most Americans that first week of December 1950. In the days preceding the conference, newspaper headlines announced that the Chinese People's Volunteer Army had routed a United Nations military offensive along the Ch'ongch'on River in North Korea, driving troops (largely South Korean and American) in a southward retreat across the 38th Parallel.[86] The surprise Communist counteroffensive crippled American military morale, repelled General MacArthur's "Home-by-Christmas" offensive, and heightened conference goers' awareness that a protracted police action could result in the draft of many of the youth they hoped to preserve.[87]

President Truman substantiated their concerns when he informed delegates that the nation was in the throes of a life-and-death struggle. The Communist military threat, he asserted,

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86. Schwieder, *Iowa: The Middle Land,* 286; David Halberstam, *The Coldest Winter: America and the Korean War* (New York, 2007), 389; "Allies Lose Ground All Along Front: Mac Calls Generals in Field to Tokyo for Urgent Meeting," *Cedar Rapids Gazette*, 11/28/1950; "The Korean War: Communists Drive Americans and South Koreans Back in the Northwest," *New York Times,* 11/28/1950; "The Korean War: Communists in Intensified Attacks Continue Driving Back U.N. Forces in Korea," *New York Times*, 11/29/1950; "Two Big Questions in Korea Debacle Confront War Strategists," *Los Angeles Times*, 12/1/1950; "U.S. Isolated and Alone in Midst of Korean Crisis," *Los Angeles Times*, 12/2/1950.

87. General MacArthur had confidently proclaimed that his Home-for-Christmas offensive "should for all practical purposes end the war, restore peace and unity to Korea, enable prompt withdrawal of United Nations military forces, and permit the complete assumption by Korea of full sovereignty and international equality." Quoted from "The Nation," *Time*, 12/4/1950, 22. See also Halberstam, *The Coldest Winter*, 389; and "Korean Victory before Christmas Foreseen in MacArthur's Offensive," *Los Angeles Times*, 11/25/1950. By December 1, the defense department called for 50,000 draftees in February 1951. "February Draft of 50,000 Asked," *Cedar Rapids Gazette*, 12/1/1950.

necessitated full support for the United Nations' agenda and required immediately strengthening U.S. military defenses. "This will change the lives of our young people," he warned. "A great many of them will have to devote some part of their lives to service in our Armed Forces or other defense activities. In no other way can we insure our survival as a nation."[88]

Delegates who gathered at the conference intent on devising peace through well-balanced, psychologically healthy children felt at odds with the idea that they were on the verge of World War III. While NCCY Executive Director Oscar Ewing fervently asserted that the conference was "a platform of action and of hope," Truman advised that "nothing this conference can do will have greater effect on the world struggle against communism than spelling out the ways in which our young people can better understand . . . why we must fight when necessary to defend our democratic institutions."[89] As historian Marilyn Irvin Holt contends, federal policy had less to do with concern for children and more with building a bulwark against "the threat of Soviet superiority."[90] As such, post-conference federal initiatives on children's health, education, and well-being aimed to mobilize youngsters en masse to face down communism. That goal superseded the careful cultivation of healthy individual personalities.

BEGINNING IN 1947, Americans nationwide brought their grassroots efforts to bear on preparing for the Midcentury White House Conference on Children and Youth. Their success stemmed largely from what Iowa conference delegate R. Kent Martin called the "realization . . . by adults as a whole, not parents alone . . . that all children are the responsibility of all adults."[91] What many grassroots activists sought at the midcentury conference

88. Harry S. Truman, "Address before the Midcentury White House Conference on Children and Youth," 12/5/1950, online at the Harry S. Truman Library, Public Papers of the Presidents: Harry S. Truman, 1945–1953, www.trumanlibrary.org/publicpapers/index.php?pid=989; "Truman Says Country Must Support U.N.," *Cedar Rapids Gazette*, 12/5/1950.

89. *Platform Recommendations,* i; Truman, "Address Before the Midcentury White House Conference."

90. Holt, *Cold War Kids,* 80.

91. Andres, "Youth Needs Are Our Needs."

was a like-minded group of Americans who had pledged to make children a priority within their own communities. That goal was realized to a large degree. Further, Iowans' efforts to raise awareness within their own state led to many local initiatives focused on building community through healthy children. Delegates' warnings that illiteracy, poor health, delinquency, and racism threatened to waste the nation's youngest human resources hit a national security nerve amid heightened Cold War tensions. Many solutions that stemmed from conference recommendations opened the door to federal intervention in American children's lives on an unprecedented scale.[92] As the federal government increasingly intervened in American children's lives through funding, legislation, and nationwide programs and initiatives, it began to incubate what it hoped would become the arsenal of democracy against Cold War threats.

The Midcentury White House Conference on Children and Youth was significant as it was the first time that Americans acknowledged, on a grand scale, children's importance as future citizens—the producers, consumers, and defenders of the nation. As scholars such as those from the ICWRS argued from a psychological, sociological, and anthropological standpoint that children's environmental conditions significantly shaped children *as* personalities, the science of child development gained new import in relation to the Cold War struggle. The conference increased the visibility of issues surrounding childhood and linked them to national politics in such a way that state and federal action resulted—no small feat as such issues were largely absent from the national agenda through the 1930s and 1940s.[93]

Viewing the midcentury conference through the lens of an individual state's pre-conference planning activities also highlights the decentralized and democratic nature of the 1950 conference. It was the first time that the national conference welcomed such grassroots contributions. Iowa approached healthy childhood per-

92. For an in-depth discussion of Cold War federal policies and legislation pertaining to American children, see Holt, *Cold War Kids.*

93. For a discussion of the absence of children and youth in national policies in the 1930s and 1940s, see Leroy Ashby, "Partial Promises and Semi-visible Youths: The Depression and World War II," in *American Childhood: A Research Guide and Historical Handbook,* ed. J. M. Hawes and N. R. Hiner (Westport, CT, 1985), 489–531.

sonality development from a perspective rooted in an agrarian philosophy—a philosophy widely embraced until Cold War concerns forced a more industrial, mass-production approach. Many Cold War policy makers came to advocate standardized, streamlined, and large-scale application of programs and initiatives that articulated a specific type of patriotic citizen who would produce, consume, and fight for the American way of life. Consequently, delegates' pacific agenda, which advocated individual personality cultivation for the purpose of peaceful global leadership, was largely subsumed within the industrialized exigencies of a bellicose period.

Book Reviews and Notices

The Archaeological Guide to Iowa, by William E. Whittaker, Lynn M. Alex, and Mary C. de la Garza. Iowa and the Midwest Experience Series. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2015. xv, 271 pp. Maps, illustrations, bibliographical suggestions, index. $29.95 paperback.

Reviewer Colin Betts is professor of anthropology at Luther College. His work focuses on the topics of archaeology, ceramics, and ethnoarchaeology.

The Archaeological Guide to Iowa is fundamentally intended to provide an overview of Iowa's archaeological heritage "for those that want to experience archaeological places firsthand" (1). Underlying this goal is the premise that Iowa's archaeological heritage is best appreciated first-hand. In pursuit of that general goal, the authors have selected a sample of 68 archaeological sites located throughout the state that provide readers with the opportunity to visit locales associated with the various periods in Iowa's prehistoric and historic past. These sites include "must-see" examples of Iowa's rich cultural legacy as well as others whose value lies less in their aesthetic appeal than in their ability to elucidate broader trends in Iowa's past.

The introductory chapter outlines the structure and purpose of the book and provides a basic summary of the fundamental temporal periods of Iowa's cultural legacy. The remainder of the book consists of individual summaries that specify the sites' cultural and temporal contexts and situate them within the larger issues associated with the history and practice of archaeology in Iowa. The sites are organized according to the major river systems along which they are located, proceeding west to east and following the general flow of rivers from north to south. Within each drainage system the sites are presented chronologically. Each section concludes with details on how to visit the site or related locales as well as a short bibliography for further reading. It is not possible to visit all of the sites in the book because some have been destroyed or are located on private property or their locations have been kept confidential to prevent damage or looting. In those cases directions are provided to geographically comparable locations or to facilities where it is possible to view the materials recovered from those sites.

The Archaeological Guide to Iowa provides a concise overview of Iowa's past and facilitates visits to the places where the vestiges of that past can be experienced directly. The authors effectively achieve their stated goal of emphasizing the importance of archaeology as a study of landscapes and locations of human activity as much as it is of objects and artifacts. By encouraging firsthand appreciation for these locales, they provide a rich sense of the complex palimpsest of the human experience in the state. As such, the book serves admirably as a stand-alone introduction to the archaeology of Iowa or as a companion to Lynn Alex's comprehensive *Iowa's Archeological Past* (2000).

The structure of the book works well for the sites associated with Native American occupations. As the authors note, river valleys represented primary modes of transportation for indigenous groups. This structure also facilitates the exploration of developmental trends within culturally similar regions. The organization is a little less effective with respect to the historic Euro-American sites included in the book, however. Nonetheless, the book's extensive cross-referencing provides ample opportunities to draw connections among the sites and to highlight the larger issues that cross-cut Iowa's prehistoric and historic past—both in terms of what happened and of our efforts to understand and preserve that heritage.

The sites that the book covers were selected as much for their value for providing a representative cross-section of Iowa's archaeological heritage as for their ability to illuminate broader issues associated with the presentation, preservation, and conduct of archaeology. These issues span the gamut from the rise and fall of the Moundbuilder myth to the development of cultural resource management and the changing relationships between archaeologists and descendant communities. Some readers may be disappointed that it is not possible to visit many of the sites included in the book and may question their inclusion in the guide. However, their inclusion is invaluable: the reasons behind their inaccessibility serve to highlight the challenges involved in the stewardship of historical and archaeological heritage. Those challenges are not specific to the state and touch on elements common to historic preservation in general. In this vein, the final site presented in the book, Fort Madison, represents a fitting epilogue for highlighting the value of archaeology for understanding the prehistoric and historic past as well as the ongoing threats to the physical locales associated with Iowa's cultural heritage and the challenges associated with their preservation.

Brigham Young: Sovereign in America, by David Vaughn Mason. Routledge Historical Americans Series. New York and London: Routledge, 2015. xiii, 184 pp. Timeline, notes, documents, bibliography, index. $155.00 hardcover, $34.95 paperback.

Reviewer Richard E. Bennett is head of the Department of Church History and Doctrine at Brigham Young University. He is the author of *Mormons at the Missouri, 1846–1852* (1987).

Colorfully written, fast-paced, and boldly assertive, David V. Mason's *Brigham Young: Sovereign in America,* is a brief, highly critical, tightly drawn biography of one of America's most dominant religious personalities. Although only seven chapters long, the book covers well Young's early life and conversion to Mormonism in 1832; his abiding loyalty to Joseph Smith Jr., the founder of the Latter-day Saint movement; his leadership of the Mormon exodus across Iowa in 1846 and then to the Rocky Mountains in 1847; his successful colonization of the inter-mountain West; and his ardent determination to eliminate poverty and inequality among the Latter-day Saints. Mason is also conversant with much of the current secondary literature on such debatable topics as the "principle" or practice of plural marriage, the handcart disasters of 1856, the Utah War of 1857, the Mountain Meadows Massacre of the same year, and the place of temple ordinances among the Saints. Unlike some other earlier critical biographies, Mason's work does not give in to an overly critical, highly simplistic portrayal of Brigham Young as a lecherous, immoral scoundrel driven by vengeance and violence, essentially a liar and a religious renegade.

Nevertheless, his thesis is clear and consistent as stated on the first page: Brigham Young was "the treasonous reprobate and scourge of American democracy" (1); he was authoritarian by nature and disposition; and, because of the trials he faced during Missouri's persecution of the Mormons, he became a law unto himself, an untrammeled "sovereign" and "a king endowed by God" (81). One senses from the get-go that Young is in for a rough ride.

Its strengths notwithstanding, the fundamental weakness of the book is its lack of original research. Young is a highly complex figure who demands much more comprehensive treatment than the publisher and author were willing to give. Leonard J. Arrington and John G. Turner both found that out in their massive, contrasting biographies of the man. Young's available papers run into the hundreds of thousands of items, an archival avalanche, few of which are used here. Sorely missing are more of Young's own voice and writings, as well as the comments of his contemporaries and colleagues. The sad result is that Mason relies heavily on very negative interpretations of the man. He tries hard to

make Young into another James Strang, the "King of Beaver Island," an egotistical, unfettered dictator and selfish demagogue to be defined more by his rhetoric and his critics than by the archival records. It is, therefore, a one-dimensional, simplistic, and imbalanced portrayal of a highly complex individual.

This lack of primary materials leads Mason to make several assertions that do not correspond to the archival reality, only three of which can be discussed here. First, he calls the Mormons' trek across Iowa in 1846, their tortuous stay at Winter Quarters, Nebraska, and their subsequent exodus to the Rocky Mountains in 1847 "a perfect dream to Brigham Young," his "playground," a "new wide-open liberty" and "joyful" endeavor (70), and argues that this undertaking, essentially a selfish enterprise, was "for the sake of all, himself" (62). The reality was that Young found himself at the head of a despised and persecuted religion, that he had not sought his senior position as a member of the Twelve Apostles, that Sidney Rigdon, James Strang, and others had disgraced and disqualified themselves in the eyes of their followers, and that 10,000 Latter-day Saints had to either abandon Nauvoo or be destroyed in an open civil war. It was hardly an "adventure" of his own seeking, and to call it all a selfish exercise when thousands were crowding around him for deliverance grotesquely misses the mark. At least one thousand Mormons died in the Iowa and Nebraska wilderness in 1846 and 1847, but under Young's leadership, only a small percentage of his followers either quit or rebelled. He may have had an imperious nature and authoritarian bearing, but he loved and served his people and they ever honored him because of it.

Second, Mason is correct in saying that Mormonism "almost from the beginning was not merely a Christian church but a temple religion" (45), but to argue that Young made use of the temple "to secure his authority over the community" (60) misrepresents the situation. The truth is that the Saints begged for temple ordinances and looked to Young as their apostolic leader to authorize them. It was their faith and demands, not Young's machinations, that led him and his fellow apostles to perform over 12,000 baptisms for the dead, 5,500 living endowments, and hundreds of temple marriages, or "sealings," in Nauvoo. It was their demands, not his calculations, that led him to postpone the exodus long enough to offer such blessings to his people. The record shows that this was a people who were "wont" to be led as much as Young wanted to lead them. Their voices of appreciation are missing in the narrative.

Finally, the author argues that Young's succession to the presidency in Kanesville, Iowa, in December 1847 was a power grab and evidence of his becoming a monarch among his people. If so, his people failed

to see it in that light. It surely wasn't his fault that in 1835 he had been appointed a member of the Twelve, that he had led a most successful apostolic mission to Great Britain from 1838 to 1841, and that he was by 1847 in the most senior position to succeed Joseph Smith as president. Running the church by committee or by quorum when their own revelations made clear that the Twelve were to go into all the world was hardly a defensible proposition. And Orson Pratt knew it. While Mason is correct in showing that Young and Pratt were often at odds theologically and in terms of personality, it is significant that it was Pratt who presented Young's name for a sustaining vote as the next president. Pratt's action was not a capitulation to Brigham's right to succeed but a recognition of it.

While Mason's book is a good read—lively, informative, and entertaining—it lacks substance and the authority and credibility of in-depth scholarly research.

The Great Medicine Road, Part 2, *Narratives of the Oregon, California, and Mormon Trails, 1849*, edited by Michael L. Tate, with Will Bagley and Richard Rieck. American Trails Series 24. Norman: Arthur H. Clark Company, an imprint of the University of Oklahoma Press, 2015. 328 pp. Illustrations, maps, notes, bibliography, index. $39.95 hardcover.

Reviewer J. T. Murphy is professor of history at Indiana University South Bend. His research and writing have focused on the military history of the nineteenth-century U.S. West, the Oregon Trail, and frontier settlement, among other topics.

Writing in 1917, Henry Ferguson recalled his family's move in 1849 from their farm in Jasper County, Iowa, to the gold fields of California. He was 11 years old when his parents and six siblings crossed the Missouri River at Kanesville (today's Council Bluffs), where they joined the "Iowa Company" of 42 wagons and "about three hundred souls." They were "all determined in purpose," Ferguson remembered, "yet seemingly almost making a leap in the dark—none having any personal knowledge of what lay before them" (120).

When the Argonauts of 1849 left for the West, there were guidebooks aplenty on how and where to travel, trails and cutoffs were well marked, ferries awaited at many river crossings, and the American army maintained a presence along the way. Each day's routine, however, might be altered by injury or disease, a real or imagined fear of Indians waiting to steal oxen, or the inability to find grass and water. Decisions had to be made, resolve maintained. "There is no back out now," Sherman Hawley reported to the *Kalamazoo Gazette*. "The gold diggings are ahead, and we are bound to be there" (185).

The letters, journals, and memoirs of trail migrants demonstrate both the commonalities and uniqueness of their experiences. Amid the sameness of miles gained and landmarks noted, they left a fascinating and informative record of what they saw and the choices they faced. In this second of a proposed four-volume series about going west along the Overland Trail, editor Michael L. Tate (assisted by Will Bagley and Richard Rieck) focuses on '49ers bound for California. This volume continues to satisfy the project's initial goal of finding documents "truly representative of the great migrations" (15). In *A Treatise, Showing the Best Way to California*, Sidney Roberts, a Mormon from Iowa City and early promoter of Kanesville as a jumping-off point, argued against sea travel in favor of the land route passing through Salt Lake City, and he assured his readers that Mormons could provide assistance anywhere along the way. The remaining narratives, like those by Ferguson and Hawley, describe trail life and provide insights into their authors' attitudes and character. Benjamin Robert Biddle, for example, paid eastbound travelers to carry his mail to Springfield, Illinois, where his journal entries appeared in the *Daily Illinois State Journal*. He lamented being far from home and family, but, he said, "*As the world is, there is a necessity for gold*" (101). Because of this, many on the trail had "adopted a coarseness of manners and language," yet he hoped that "all may learn lessons of wisdom by the study of themselves" (102).

This volume, like its predecessor (and presumably those to follow), will prove helpful for researchers and excite readers interested in the lives of gold-seeking pioneers. The editors provide four maps reprinted from studies such as Merrill Mattes's *Platte River Road Narratives*, photographs and illustrations, a lengthy bibliography, and explanatory introductions and footnotes. It is an impressive effort and an important addition to trail studies.

An Agrarian Republic: Farming, Antislavery Politics, and Nature Parks in the Civil War Era, by Adam Wesley Dean. Civil War America Series. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015. x, 230 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. $29.95 paperback.

Reviewer Tim Lehman is professor of history at Rocky Mountain College, Billings, Montana. He is the author of *Public Values, Private Lands: Farmland Preservation Policy, 1933–1985* (1995).

An Agrarian Republic reminds us that most mid–nineteenth-century Americans lived in a world of small, self-sufficient farms, not yet dominated by the industrial juggernaut looming on the horizon by century's end. That agrarian world generated a system of values, beliefs, and fears

that affirmed the northern and midwestern small–farm society even as it disapproved of southern plantation society. According to this ideal, only small, family-owned farms could produce virtuous citizens, wise land-use patterns, stable multigenerational communities, and a strong Union. Plantation slavery, in contrast, yielded, in this view, an inefficient system of agriculture that wasted soils, degraded both white and black labor, and raised up an artificial aristocracy of slaveowners whose illegitimate power threatened the Union.

Land laws that dated to the early republic—the Land Ordinance of 1785 and the Northwest Ordinance of 1787—intended to promote small-scale farming, education, local autonomy, and a virtuous citizenry but by the 1850s were threatened by the corrupt "Slave Power" that wanted to monopolize the public domain lands of the West. Adam Wesley Dean brings to this familiar story a refreshing emphasis on wise use of the soil as a key element enabling multigenerational community stability in the Midwest. If good soil made good citizens in these regions, the soil-exhausting practices of slave plantations left behind a degraded natural environment and required a constant search for new land in order for the unnatural oligarchy of slaveowners to maintain their unjust power over land and society alike.

During the Civil War, the Republican-dominated Congress was able to spread this model republic across the continent by enshrining these agrarian ideals into a series of familiar laws: the Homestead Act, the Land Grant College Act, and the Pacific Railway Act. Even federal subsidies for the transcontinental railroad, Dean contends, were motivated not primarily by a view to industrialization but by the need to tie the small farming communities of the West to their midwestern and eastern markets. Along with establishing the Department of Agriculture, these policies would ensure the orderly development of farms, churches, and schools that would "civilize" the West, defeat the "barbarism" of plantation agriculture, and promote a permanent, unified agrarian republic (80).

In the most intriguing chapters of this fine book, Dean follows this agrarian ideology into the unfamiliar territory of nature parks and Reconstruction in the West, areas that exposed fissures and failures in this agrarian ideology. The creation of a public park in the magnificent Yosemite Valley of California pitted those who held to the ideal of privately owned small farms against others who believed that areas of spectacular natural beauty "would improve the mind and spirit," hasten California's transformation from "barbarism" to "civilization," and demonstrate to the world that a republican government was capable of grand accomplishments.

Reconstruction Republicans demonstrated their "environmental view of citizenship" in their treatment of southern freedpeople and western Indians. Both groups, Dean's agrarians held, should learn to "farm the soil in soil-enhancing ways" and follow the agricultural path that would transform them into civilized Victorian Christians. This civilizing project stalled in the South because the "violent opposition" of southern whites blocked land redistribution and failed in the West because the Indians preferred "to maintain a hunting-and-gathering lifestyle" rather than take up farming (136). In Dean's view, Reconstruction ended not with the withdrawal of federal troops from the South in 1877 but with the 1887 Dawes Act, a kind of Indian homestead act that allotted reservation land into private ownership in order to coerce native peoples into habits of cultivation.

The strength of this book is that it brings together several subfields of history—environmental, agricultural, and the history of the Civil War and of native peoples—all understood through the lens of agrarian fundamentalism. While some specialists in each subfield may quibble with details, this approach generates fascinating insights and should spark new lines of inquiry. Dean's sources are almost all national in scope; how would this analysis look at the local level? If republicanism led to nature parks on a grand scale, did it also contribute to the appreciation of nature in cities and towns? How did the project of civilizing southern freedpeople and western natives play out in the sermons and newspapers of midwestern communities where those republican farmers already lived? To what extent did race play a role in defining the paired opposites of "barbarism" and "civilization?" Overall, *An Agrarian Republic* is a well-written, important book for specialists and general readers alike and should spark renewed interest in nineteenth-century midwestern agrarian values and practices.

Lincoln and the Immigrant, by Jason H. Silverman. Concise Lincoln Library. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2015. 159 pp. Illustrations, notes, index. $24.95 hardcover.

Reviewer Bruce Bigelow is professor of geography at Butler University. He is the author of "Who Voted for Lincoln in Indiana? The Voting Behavior of Ethno-Religious Groups in the Presidential Elections of 1860 and 1864" (*Journal of the Indiana Academy of Social Sciences,* 2005).

Jason Silverman has provided a succinct overview of Abraham Lincoln's views and relationships with immigrants from his years as a young adult in Springfield to his term as president. Historiographically, Silverman has not actually broken new ground so much as he has gath-

ered into one book threads of arguments that can be found in other books on Lincoln that focus on matters other than immigration. Eric Foner's study of Lincoln and emancipation, for example, touches a bit on these issues, as do nearly all the major biographies, such as those by David Donald and Michael Burlingame. This is no criticism of Silverman, for he has done exactly what the editors of the Concise Lincoln Library series want from their authors: brief, accessible overviews of subjects related to Lincoln that give general readers solidly researched information on topics related to Lincoln. No other book focuses exclusively on Lincoln and immigration.

Lincoln came to Springfield in 1837 and remained there until he was president-elect in 1861. In 1860 Springfield's population was 50 percent foreign born, with Germans and Irish each constituting about 20 percent of the population, along with smaller communities of Swedes, Portuguese, and Jews. Lincoln was especially close to Germans in Springfield and the state of Illinois while serving in the state legislature and the U.S. House of Representatives as well as while running for senator and president. He took German-language lessons and bought a German-language newspaper. He also had close personal and political links to Swedes, Portuguese, and Jews. The *New York Herald*, a national Democratic paper, claimed that "in Ohio, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa and Wisconsin [Lincoln's] victory [in 1860] was due to the large accessions he received from the Germans" (84).

Lincoln's relations with Irish Catholics were quite the opposite. They were staunch Democrats, and Lincoln feared that they voted fraudulently. However, unlike a number of other Republican former Whigs, he categorically rejected the nativist Know Nothings. The issue of nativism was a problem for Republicans, including those in all of the midwestern states because of the region's significant minority population of foreign-born residents.

As president, Lincoln rewarded the immigrant communities who supported him, especially the Germans. Franz Sigel and Carl Schurz became "political generals," and 12 other German leaders became diplomats in foreign consulates. Lincoln even befriended the Irish archbishop of New York, John Hughes, by appointing him emissary to the Vatican, France, and England so that they would not support the Confederacy. He also appointed the first Jewish chaplain of the U.S. Army and rescinded General U. S. Grant's banning of Jewish merchants from access to the army because they were "war profiteers."

Silverman concludes that Lincoln believed in equality of opportunity for all residents of the United States because of his devotion to the Declaration of Independence as the nation's foundational text.

Agent of Mercy: The Untold Story of Dr. Archibald S. Maxwell, Civil War Surgeon and Iowa State Sanitary Agent, by George C. Maxwell. Create Space, 2015. 193 pp. Illustrations, maps, notes, appendix, index. $12.99 paperback.

Reviewer Kenneth L. Lyftogt recently retired as an instructor of history at the University of Northern Iowa. He is the author of several books on Iowa and the Civil War, including *From Blue Mills to Columbia: Cedar Falls and the Civil War* (2007).

Family history is often an inspiration for scholarship, especially among people who want to know about their Civil War ancestors. George Maxwell became acquainted with his great-great-great-grandfather, Dr. Archibald S. Maxwell, through an 1884 obituary that he read at a family reunion in Scott County, Iowa. The obituary provided the inspiration, and George Maxwell provided the scholarship for this book. Family stories of the Civil War are often too narrow, lacking context or insight, to interest any but family members. This book, however, is an exception. George Maxwell is a descendant who wants to recognize and honor his ancestor, but he is also a scholar of the war who deftly uses his family story to say something of value.

The book has two themes. The first concerns logistics. The Civil War was a monumental undertaking, a continental conflict fought by a nation that had never seen war on such a scale. Successful logistics resulted in huge armies fighting and campaigning across hundreds and even thousands of miles. Efficient systems were quickly developed to shelter, supply, train, transport, and march the troops to the war's battlefronts and garrison posts. The second theme concerns the often callous treatment of Civil War soldiers, specifically the treatment of the sick and wounded, an often neglected aspect of Civil War studies.

Maxwell's book is thus both triumphant and bitter. The triumph of the Civil War is its place as the last of the country's great volunteer wars. Every hometown celebrated sending its soldiers to war. The bitterness comes from the recognition that the hometown volunteers were let down by those who called them to war. The great logisticians of the war, those who successfully planned for every military need on the battlefield, failed to anticipate the vast numbers of wounded that such huge battles would inevitably produce. They should have known better, and they should have been better prepared. The hundreds of wounded from the Battle of Wilson's Creek, the first of the great battles in the West, were brought to military hospitals in St. Louis that were not ready to receive them. "The new army hospital had no beds, . . . no food, and no nurses. In short, nothing was prepared" (7).

The triumphant aspect of the book is that volunteers stepped in to care for the suffering soldiers. The wounded from Wilson's Creek were cared for, but not by a well-prepared government. "The starving soldiers were fed on the night of their arrival, but not by the Army. The people of St. Louis fed the wounded" (7). That volunteer spirit became a lifeline for the soldiers. Volunteers visited the military camps, bringing food, medicine, supplies, mail, and cheer from home. Volunteers established an efficient system of pooled resources to ship tons of hometown donations to camps across many states. Annie Turner Wittenmyer of Keokuk came to personify Iowa's volunteers. Dr. Archibald S. Maxwell, a close acquaintance of Annie Wittenmyer, was another of Iowa's remarkable volunteers.

When the war began, Maxwell was 45 years old, an established Davenport physician, a husband and father, and in poor health, all reasons to stay home and leave the war to others. Maxwell, a leading citizen of Davenport, Iowa, became convinced, however, that "the U.S. Army could not be trusted to take care of the thousands of citizens who had recently volunteered to save the Union" (7). Maxwell's service took him to sites of many of the war's greatest battles, but he saw nothing of the excitement or glamour of the battlefield; his work lay in the bloody aftermath.

Each of his many experiences in the field is a tragic and heroic Civil War story in its own right. For example, the Second Iowa Infantry won fame for its attack on Fort Donelson, where it lost 40 dead and 160 wounded. After the battle, the Iowa wounded were scattered across Northern hospitals, with their loved ones back home having no idea where or how they were. Dr. Maxwell was part of the Davenport Relief Committee sent to find the Iowa wounded. What the committee members found along the way does much to undermine Civil War romanticism. Every hospital was a charnel-house horror with wounded, sick, all-but-forgotten men suffering terribly in filth and disease.

The Civil War was a political war on every front. Every officer was a politician, from the hometown captain who aspired to higher rank to the generals who aspired to even higher positions. Every military promotion or failure to achieve promotion was a story of political intrigue and influence. It is not surprising that the care of the sick and wounded would also be sullied by political battles. The role of government was one source of difficulty. Many believed that the care of the sick and wounded should be organized on the state and national level, just as the army itself was. Many Iowans didn't buy that idea. As far as they were concerned, both state and federal governments had let them down. Community volunteers had to organize on their own, and

they did so very effectively. Much of the book concerns the conflict between those who supported efforts to centralize and professionalize the relief systems and those who saw this as usurping local volunteers who were already doing the job. The political battles, inevitably, turned personal, with vicious attacks on Annie Wittenmyer and those who supported the community-based relief organizations. Dr. Maxwell, a supporter of Wittenmyer, was in the thick of the struggle.

There is no glamour in petty Iowa politics, but it is a central part of the story of Iowa and the war, and author George Maxwell has done well to bring the issue to light. *Agent of Mercy* is well written and well documented and will be a valuable part of anyone's Civil War library, especially for those who study Iowa's role in the Civil War.

Surveillance and Spies in the Civil War: Exposing Confederate Conspiracies in America's Heartland, by Stephen E. Towne. Ohio University Press Series on Law, Society, and Politics in the Midwest. Athens: Ohio University Press, 2015. xi, 430 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. $90.00 hardcover, $34.95 paperback.

Reviewer Donald C. Elder III is professor of history at Eastern New Mexico University. He is the editor of *Love Amid the 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 first year of the Spanish Civil War, a journalist questioned Nationalist General Emilio Mola about his campaign to capture Madrid. In his response, Mola noted that he had four columns approaching the city but also asserted that he had a "fifth column" of supporters inside the Spanish capital that would be aiding his effort. Since then, the term *fifth column* has been used to describe subversive activities designed to undermine the efforts of a political entity to achieve military success.

Although the term *fifth column* dates from a twentieth-century internal conflict, the concept would have been easily understood by those who were caught up in a nineteenth-century civil war—the one that involved the United States of America. As that contest raged, many residents of the Northern states became increasingly convinced that a number of their fellow citizens were actively engaged in efforts to undermine the Union war effort. To those individuals, General Mola's assertion regarding the efficacy of *sub rosa* activities would have therefore struck a responsive chord.

While widespread, the belief that a substantial number of Northerners engaged in subversive activity (often through memberships in

groups like The Knights of the Golden Circle) has not been shared universally. Most notably, Frank Klement, for years the foremost authority on the subject of disloyalty in the North, maintained that the accusations of subversive activity were overblown or completely fabricated. For him, the fact that very few overt acts of subversion occurred served as *a priori* evidence that Northern disloyalty was usually simply verbal in nature.

Recently, however, that interpretation has come under increased scrutiny. Providing the most compelling argument to date along these lines is Stephen E. Towne. In *Surveillance and Spies in the Civil War*, Towne examines Union efforts to combat disloyal activities in Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Michigan. The book demonstrates persuasively why the conspiracy theorists were correct all along.

Towne is well qualified to examine the question of disloyal behavior in the Old Northwest. An Indiana archivist, Towne had access to materials that were either unknown to or overlooked by other investigators. While acknowledging that some records have apparently vanished, Towne asserts that what remains from that time period is sufficient to prove that conspiracies not only occurred—on a number of occasions, they actually came remarkably close to fruition.

Towne begins his book with an overview of how Union military intelligence-gathering efforts have been depicted over time and then turns his attention to how Union authorities developed and implemented strategies to deal with subversive activities in the Old Northwest. In his telling, law enforcement officers recognized early on during the conflict that there were Northern citizens who were attempting to provide aid and comfort to the Southern cause. Seeking to quell these activities, however, they found their efforts stymied by a number of factors. U.S. Attorney-General Edward Bates, for example, did not provide legal opinions to support their endeavors, and local courts often failed to convict the conspirators who were actually brought to trial.

These judicial failures proved especially frustrating for the governors of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Michigan, who all felt that disloyal citizens in their midst represented a grave threat to the success of the Union's effort to suppress the rebellion. Obviously, this state of affairs also proved problematic for Union military authorities. Seeing no other alternative, they began a cooperative effort to deal with subversion outside of normal legal channels.

To accomplish this task, a small but effective group of operatives was authorized to infiltrate suspected disloyal groups. A mixture of soldiers and civilians, these individuals proved remarkably successful. Efforts to liberate Confederate prisoner-of-war camps, for example,

never reached the operational phase, and thousands of weapons that were intended to arm disloyal citizens never arrived at their intended destinations. Counterintelligence forces in the region therefore deserve credit for helping the federal government maintain its authority throughout the war.

Clearly, Towne has validated the assertion that disloyal elements were active in Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Michigan during the American Civil War. This, of course, raises a question: Did similar subversive behavior take place elsewhere, or did unique conditions in that region make it a phenomenon confined to those particular states? Did Iowa, for example, have its own internal struggle? One may hope that some enterprising historian will one day grace us with as thorough an examination of fifth-column activities in the Hawkeye State and elsewhere as Towne has done for the Old Northwest.

A Peculiar Imbalance: The Fall and Rise of Racial Equality in Minnesota, 1837–1869, by William D. Green. A Fesler-Lampert Minnesota Heritage Book. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007. xiii, 220 pp. Notes, index. $22.95 paperback.

Degrees of Freedom: The Origins of Civil Rights in Minnesota, 1865–1912, by William D. Green. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2015. xx, 367 pp. Illustrations, notes, index. $32.95 hardcover.

Reviewer John W. McKerley is oral historian with the Iowa Labor History Oral Project at the University of Iowa Labor Center and adjunct assistant professor of history at the University of Iowa. His dissertation (University of Iowa, 2008) was "Citizens and Strangers: The Politics of Race in Missouri from Slavery to the Era of Jim Crow."

We are in the midst of a renaissance of scholarship on the history of race and African American life in the nineteenth-century Midwest. Over the past decade, a growing number of scholars have expanded and revised a handful of classic texts to reveal an increasingly complex narrative of racial formation and agency on behalf of the region's people of African descent.

William D. Green makes a useful, if complicated, contribution to this scholarly flowering in his two books on African Americans in Minnesota: *A Peculiar Imbalance* (*PI*) and *Degrees of Freedom* (*DoF*). Two aspects of the books deserve to be emphasized at the outset. First, like many state studies, the two books (and *DoF* in particular) focus less on the state as a whole than on a particular locale, in this case St. Paul, in Green's words, "the capital of black Minnesota as well as the center of white bigotry" (*DoF*, 155). Less conventional is the relationship between

the two books. While at first glance *DoF* might appear to be a sequel to *PI*, *DoF* is as much a reframing and retelling of the earlier book as an extension of it.

Peculiar Imbalance is, as its subtitle suggests, a narrative of antebellum, wartime, and early Reconstruction Minnesota, with race and African Americans at its center. It casts the story of early black Minnesota as a transition from a bifurcated frontier of slavery and relative freedom to one of a racialized "civilization" in which African Americans struggled to take advantage of emancipation's opportunities in the midst of a persistent culture of white supremacy.

Punctuating this transition narrative are chapters focused on related stories, especially those of Native peoples and the tension between Protestants and Catholics, particularly in regards to the racial nativism experienced by working-class Irish immigrants. For Green, the drama of the narrative comes from the "peculiar imbalance" of uncontested whiteness created by Protestant Anglo-American Minnesotans, who could accept despised working-class Irish Catholics and "civilized" Indians as voters while persistently denying such acceptance to black men.

Degrees of Freedom, despite the dates in the subtitles, does not pick up where the first book left off. Instead, Green devotes the first part of *DoF* to recasting the story of *PI* toward the goal of connecting it to the theme of the 2015 book: the rise and political evolution of Minnesota's first three generations of "race men." One hundred pages into *DoF*, a book ostensibly regarding the period from 1865 to 1912, we find ourselves having once again moved from the 1840s to the early 1870s. Here, though, the story has shifted from one of placing the history of race and early black Minnesotans in comparative context to detailing the interplay between early civil rights activists ("the Barbers") and the state's ascendant Republican Party.

In parts two and three of *DoF*, Green charts new ground, taking the story from the aftermath of enfranchisement to the founding of the state's first chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). Taking a more pessimistic tack than he did in *PI*, he focuses particular attention on the ways putatively race-neutral laws (for which Minnesota would become well known after the Civil War) could still fail black people in the hands of hostile or unsympathetic whites. As he writes, "The problem that African Americans continued to face after emancipation, after enfranchisement, after school integration, came from the prejudice of white men acting in defiance of the law, not the law itself" (95).

In part two of *DoF*, Green details the rise of the state's first distinctly postwar black leadership class while also returning to a theme from *PI* – the relationship between perceived civilization and civil rights. Although most black Minnesotans were laborers, especially in various forms of domestic and service work, Green focuses on a group of leaders he terms "The Entrepreneurs," a handful of very active members of the black professional class (the figures who produced the many newspaper articles and court cases that make up his evidence base). These men, like newspaper editor John Quincy Adams, struggled to prove black people's credentials as "civilized" Americans in the face of racial violence and largely symbolic and ineffective civil rights laws that failed to protect black people from various forms of discrimination and daily humiliations at the hands of whites.

While figures like Adams defy easy generalizations regarding "accommodation" and "assertiveness" in black approaches to race politics during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, the growing tension between the two, represented at the national level by Booker T. Washington and (especially) W. E. B. Du Bois, nonetheless shaped (and was shaped by) the experience of black Minnesotans. Green explores this theme in the third and final part of *DoF*, "The Radicals," in which he details the complicated political and personal conflicts that led to splits within the state's civil rights movement. He focuses particular attention on the movement for political independence among members of the black professional class, who, like Du Bois at the national level, increasingly felt betrayed by a Republican Party that offered little more than symbolic measures and appeals for votes at election time.

On the whole, Green's two books provide a rich narrative of race and black popular politics in Minnesota during the long nineteenth century. At the same time, however, Green's reframing of the story in *DoF* around the rise of the state's black (male) political leadership class comes at the cost of some of the complex comparative relationships he develops in *PI*. Indeed, one wonders what insights Green might have found from writing a true sequel to *PI* in which he placed the rise of black political leaders more fully within the context of the racial, class, cultural, and gendered dynamics that shaped postwar Minnesota. Still, both books make a significant contribution to nineteenth-century Minnesota and midwestern history, with *PI* being particularly suitable for the undergraduate classroom.

George Washington Carver: A Life, by Christina Vella. Southern Biography Series. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2015. ix, 456 pp. Illustrations, appendixes, notes, bibliography, index. $38.00 hardcover.

Reviewer Hal S. Chase is emeritus professor of history at DMACC–Urban Campus. His most notable contribution is his collaboration with 37 others to produce the 600-page, 20-chapter, richly illustrated and documented *Outside In: African-American History in Iowa, 1838–2000* (2001).

George Washington Carver: A Life by Christina Vella is the first scholarly biography of Carver since Linda McMurray's *George Washington Carver: Scientist and Symbol* in 1981. Both are indebted to Rackham Holt's *George Washington Carver: An American Biography* (1943; rev. ed., 1963). Vella's contribution is a narrative that strives to reveal the man inside the legendary, heroic, mystic, humble, non-materialistic, extraordinary scientist. Her quest for Carver's inner self reveals more than a little that is new, and her abundant quoting from Carver's letters provides insight into his thought. Vella's story follows the same chronological path as Holt and McMurray pursued, and her cast of characters is largely the same, but her perspective is new and goes far below the surface.

The significant others in Carver's life include Moses Carver, George's owner and father figure; the Milhollands of Winterset, Iowa, who steered Carver to Simpson College; Etta Budd, his art instructor there who pushed him to pursue a more practical career in botany at Iowa State; and James Wilson, his major professor there (and later U.S. secretary of agriculture), who encouraged Carver to accept Booker T. Washington's offer to teach at Tuskegee. Holt included Mrs. Warren Logan, the wife of Tuskegee's chief financial officer, in her cast, but McMurray did not. Vella makes her a major figure, if not the leading lady, in Carver's life. Neither Holt nor McMurray included Birdie Johnson Howard, but Vella says that her effusive letters to Carver "took a form he should have understood quite well—a covert and possibly unconscious sexual passion disguising itself as religious zeal, . . . the same character as his fervid attraction to [Jim] Hardwick" (254). Hardwick was a charismatic, athletic, young YMCA worker who did not appear in Holt's biography and who played only a cameo role in McMurray's. In Vella's *Life*, however, Carver "fell in love—there is no other word for it—with one special man who became in his letters, My Very Own, Handsome, Marvelous, Spiritual, Boy" (211). These words certainly document Carver's ardor, but his description of seeing Hardwick in the audience at the YMCA Conference in Blue Ridge, North Carolina, focuses on "the Christ in you, of course." Vella interprets such rhetoric as "a raging devotional fever," and Carver as writing "palpitating" letters to Hardwick with "twitching excitement." Yet she

concedes that "it is delicate and easily contorted, this question of whether Carver's love for Hardwick was an erotic attachment" (213), and she notes subsequently, "Not a syllable in Carver's letters suggests that the old professor put his hands anywhere but on Hardwick's head" (218).

Vella stands on firm ground when she describes Carver as full of fun and someone who had a bad stammer (except while singing), a high-pitched feminine voice, the ability "to play any instrument someone handed him" (116), and a belief in dreams and in a mystical, pantheistic God, with which he influenced Henry A. Wallace. She also describes his research and his relationships with people, plants, and every living thing as popularized by Glen Clark's 1935 pamphlet, "The Man Who Talks with the Flowers," which sold 200,000 copies.

Vella's chapters on Carver's relationship with Booker T. Washington are also strong and reinforce Louis Harlan's memorable capsulation of "The Wizard of Tuskegee" as a masterful manipulator with "an elaborate private life in which he changed roles with the skill of a magician" to acquire and maintain control, for "power was his game." Washington played his game with Carver, repeatedly breaking promises of a research laboratory and ultimately stripping Carver of three of his four responsibilities. Yet Vella characterizes Carver's response to Washington's death in 1915 as "the grief of a son who lost a demanding father without ever having succeeded in satisfying him" (157). Adella Logan's suicide several days before Washington's memorial service suggests that Carver's grief was for his dear friend and confidante rather than for the bane of his existence at Tuskegee.

Vella's claim in the epilogue that Carver was "an individual born with no advantages" (326) belies her repeated, quoted professions of Carver's faith in God and God's gifts. Moreover, she does not penetrate Carver's heart or mind about the pervasive, insidious, omnipresent, and corrosive force of white racism he experienced. Perhaps he was a saint who could only see God or Christ in his fellow humans as he did in Jim Hardwick. Perhaps he was a prophet who heard God speaking in the plants and flowers, especially his beloved amaryllis. Perhaps he was "nothing but a man," a human being, with a full range of human feelings, the greatest of which was "love," erotic and platonic.

Death and Dying in the Working Class, 1865–1920, by Michael K. Rosenow. The Working Class in American History Series. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2015. xii, 223 pp. Map, tables, illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. $95.00 hardcover, $30.00 paperback.

Reviewer Thomas F. Jorsch is assistant professor of history at Bethany College, Lindsborg, Kansas. His research and writing have focused on American socialists during the Progressive Era.

Through examination of rituals and practices about death and dying in Chicago, southern Illinois coal country, and western Pennsylvania steel towns, Michael Rosenow argues that between the Civil War and World War I working-class Americans sought to maintain basic human dignity in death as an industrializing economy increasingly turned them into disposable commodities. Rosenow explores the culture of death not only surrounding large-scale events like Haymarket, Diamond, and Homestead but also localized incidents such as dying from an accident in an Illinois coal vein or miscommunication in a Pittsburgh steel mill. In facing death, workers sought to restore their humanity and give meaning to their lives but also revealed the ethnic, racial, gender, and especially class tensions of the time.

Rosenow begins by establishing an "industrial accident crisis" in the United States, where workers were injured and died at rates far exceeding those of other industrialized nations. Workers' bodies became contested territory among those defending the new industrial order, seeking to reform it, and living it. Corporate leaders saw workers as expendable while reformers tried to impose protective legislation. Workers viewed both groups as controlling them when what they desired most was the independence they had lost over the decades. Even in death workers faced class marginalization as grisly incidents claimed workers' lives, funerals were expensive, and cemeteries were segregated by class. Despite these obstacles, workers sought to retain their humanity by claiming agency surrounding death.

Rosenow is at his best when analyzing how workers defined death on their own terms in a working world where they held little control. In the Illinois coalfields—a chapter Iowa readers will find interesting for its connection to working-class life in Iowa as treated by Dorothy Schwieder—employers defined death as the fault of individual miners and part of the risk of work. Miners, alternatively, staged elaborate rituals to mourn the dead, ease the sorrow of the living, instigate reform, and preserve "the good death." Much like the Civil War soldiers studied by Drew Gilpin Faust in *This Republic of Suffering* (2008), the working class often lived truncated lives and died in horrendous ways, thus not allowing for a typical "good death" scenario. Illinois coal

miners banded together through fledgling unions to provide death benefits in a communal effort to maintain human dignity in death, paving the way for the creation of the United Mine Workers of America, one of the most powerful unions in the nation. In western Pennsylvania, steel workers provided mutual aid through churches and fraternal organizations, although these were often segregated by ethnicity after steel unions were crushed in the wake of Homestead.

Much of the book features a labor-versus-capital narrative that oversimplifies the fluid nature of class, casting doubt on the explanatory power of its case studies. Whether at Homestead or Haymarket or in southern Illinois, Rosenow draws fairly strict battle lines between capitalist owners and exploited workers. One wonders, however, how much the rituals of death hold up when class lines break down. In Iowa coal country, for example, class lines could be obvious when miners lived in coal camps while managers and owners lived elsewhere. The lines were not so obvious in places like Boone and Madrid, where miners often lived in the same town as managers, attended the same churches, played on the same baseball teams, and joined the same lodges. Both groups mingled with farmers and the town's middle class. Catastrophes in the mines affected the whole community, sometimes leading to cross-class reform movements. When miners died, they were buried in the same cemeteries as teachers, artisans, and politicians, often irrespective of ethnicity, unlike the examples of Chicago and Union Miners Cemetery in Illinois. This is not to question the validity of the author's case studies but to wonder how much of a "barometer" (98) they are for the larger working-class experience with death, especially in the Midwest.

The author offers a tantalizing and well-researched glimpse into the rituals of death for workers whose lives held little value outside their own communities in industrializing America. How suggestive they are for the broader working-class experience remains to be seen.

St. Louis and Empire: 250 Years of Imperial Quest and Urban Crisis, by Henry W. Berger. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2015. xi, 353 pp. Maps, illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. $39.50 hardcover.

Reviewer Thomas J. Gubbels is associate professor of history at Lincoln University. His research and writing focus on Missouri history and the history of transportation.

Students of American foreign policy often ignore the Midwest, assuming that the region has played no role in establishing the nation's international goals. Henry Berger's *St. Louis and Empire,* however, places

St. Louis at the forefront of America's historic quest to establish itself as the heart of a global economic empire. Berger, professor emeritus of history at Washington University in St. Louis, applies his expertise in foreign policy history to his own local community.

Drawing heavily on the work of William Appleman Williams and other "New Left" historians, Berger argues that St. Louis has been an outward-looking city since its founding. Early leaders such as Jean Pierre Chouteau and Thomas Hart Benton saw St. Louis as the potential site of an international trade and commercial network that would facilitate the shipment of Missouri-made products throughout the world. Later in the nineteenth century businessmen such as John Cahill and Henry Clay Pierce worked to improve the industrial infrastructure of St. Louis and looked to foreign nations as both potential markets and investment opportunities. As the twentieth century approached, St. Louis businessmen actively supported the Spanish-American War and sought to tap into growing markets, such as those in Asia and Latin America, making them some of the first practitioners of dollar diplomacy. After World War II, St. Louis's civic and business elites fully embraced the Cold War and sought to establish the city as one of the economic hubs of the military-industrial complex. While this international economic focus shaped America's foreign policy and allowed many St. Louis businessmen to establish great personal fortunes, it also led to an unstated policy of benign neglect of domestic issues. Critical social issues such as labor unrest, racial tensions, and urban decay seemed less important than potential economic profit abroad, and many St. Louis leaders believed that building an international economic empire would inevitably lead to civic growth and local prosperity. However, as recent events in Ferguson, Missouri, show, St. Louis's outward focus has failed to produce widespread domestic prosperity and has left the city in a state of urban decay and decline.

Intellectually, Berger borrows heavily from an established "New Left" school of thought that sees the central goal of American foreign policy as establishing an economic empire abroad while either ignoring critical domestic social issues or assuming that they will be resolved via the growth of international trade and commerce. Berger supports this position throughout his work, deftly weaving together biographies of St. Louis's civic and business leaders while simultaneously tracing the international growth of several famous St. Louis companies, such as McDonnell Aircraft, Mallinckrodt Chemical, and Emerson Electric. However, Berger fails to draw a clear connection between the international focus held by the city's economic elites and the community's seemingly ceaseless domestic calamities. He mentions several urban

problems that St. Louis faced over the years, such as the city-county divide and the post–World War II problems of segregation and white flight, but his focus is primarily on the "imperial quest" part of St. Louis history, while the "urban crisis" story receives much less attention. Perhaps future work will more clearly illustrate exactly how an international economic focus, especially during the Cold War era, led to a willful abdication of civic responsibilities by the city's elites.

Nonetheless, Berger's book offers an insightful reinterpretation of St. Louis's history and clearly shows that the city deserves a spot at the table when discussing the historical evolution of American foreign policy. One may hope that it will serve as a catalyst for additional studies to see if similar historical patterns can be found in other midwestern cities, such as Des Moines, Omaha, Chicago, or Kansas City. Civic leaders in those communities likely shared a common outlook with their historic St. Louis contemporaries, and those cities no doubt also played a role in the growth of America's international economic empire.

The Wisconsin Historical Society: Collecting, Preserving, and Sharing Stories since 1846, by John Zimm. Madison: Wisconsin Historical Society Press, 2015. vi, 152 pp. Maps, illustrations, notes, index. $25.00 hardcover.

Reviewer John D. Krugler is professor emeritus of history at Marquette University. His most recent book is *Creating Old World Wisconsin: The Struggle to Build an Outdoor Museum of Ethnic Architecture* (2013).

Writing history that is readily accessible to general audiences is not easy. To succeed, the author must be an accomplished storyteller, someone who does not get bogged down in endless detail. John Zimm, an associate editor at the Wisconsin Historical Society Press, the publisher of this book, has produced a very readable, condensed account of the creation and development of the Wisconsin Historical Society (WHS). The book, a revision of an article Zimm published in the *State of Wisconsin Blue Book* for the Wisconsin Legislative Reference Bureau, will appeal to readers who know little about the society.

In many ways, this is a remarkable book. At 169 years old, the WHS has a rich and fascinating history that does not lend itself to a 123-page text. Zimm makes no pretense to offer an in-depth critical analysis of the society. Rather, he shares a number of stories from the society's long past. He does not have a thesis. Not surprisingly, he presents the society in very positive terms. Nasty battles over budgets, the complicated relationship with the state, and the financial battles over the growth of historic sites, for example, are given short shrift.

The author alludes to many important developments. The society's early leaders held contesting visions, with one group favoring a restricted membership that conferred social status and recognized cultural attainment, while others advocated a more democratic society with an open, dues-paying membership. The latter concept won the day. That, in turn, led to the issue of state funding. The first directors, Lyman Draper and Reuben Gold Thwaites, disagreed: Draper wanted the society to be self-sustaining; Thwaites looked to the state for funding. Thwaites's triumph helped to make the WHS different from "its older more conservative sisters in the Eastern States" (22). Another relationship established by Thwaites also contributed to the society's distinctiveness. Recognizing that most of the users of the library were University of Wisconsin students and faculty, he chose to "hitch the Society's star" (23) to the rapidly growing university. That was mutually beneficial, as the WHS library became the university's American history library.

In time, as its rich library and archival resources increased, the WHS focused on serving the needs of scholars. The founding idea of serving as the people's society faded but never disappeared. Beginning with the tenures of the post–World War II directors—Kenneth Alexander, Clifford Lord, and Leslie H. Fishel Jr.—the WHS reconnected with this important aspect of its past. These leaders committed to making the WHS more accessible to the state's residents. Historic preservation, a new *Wisconsin Magazine of History*, greater involvement with local historical societies and communities, and, above all, the development of an extensive historic sites program, brought the society closer to its roots: the general public. The library and archives significantly bolstered the society's public presence by catering to genealogists and history buffs. The WHS has again embraced both its scholarly and public roles.

The Two-Wheeled World of George B. Thayer, by Kevin J. Hayes. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2015. xv, 257 pp. Illustrations, notes, index. $28.95 hardcover.

Reviewer James Whiteside is a retired history professor and the author of *Old Blue's Road: A Historian's Motorcycle Journeys in the American West*.

In his 2002 book, *An American Cycling Odyssey, 1887*, Kevin Hayes chronicled the cross-country bicycle adventure of newspaperman George Nellis. In *The Two-Wheeled World of George B. Thayer*, Hayes follows with the biography of a very different, and more prolific, bicy-

cling tourist who also crossed the United States and then followed up with tours of eastern Canada and Europe.

Born in 1853, George Thayer was the son of a Connecticut textile mill owner. Thayer had several careers—as a grocer, a journalist, and, eventually, a lawyer—but his lifelong avocation was adventure touring. Too young to serve in the Civil War, Thayer thought of tourism, especially on a bicycle, as his moral equivalent of the challenge and excitement of going to war. (In his middle and senior years, actual military service during the Spanish-American War and as a civilian volunteer in post–World War I Europe disabused him of that notion.) Thayer also was a lifelong devotee of physical fitness. Bicycling combined his passions for touring and fitness in a single activity.

Thayer acquired his first "wheel," a velocipede, in 1870. He used his "boneshaker," with its steel-rimmed wooden wheels, for three years to deliver groceries and for short day tours, but then quit riding for ten years. Thayer's bicycle touring career began in 1883, when he bought a high-wheeled "ordinary" bicycle. His rides around Connecticut expanded into neighboring New England states. By 1886, he had set his mind on a cross-country adventure.

Thayer left his Connecticut home in April 1886, bound for San Francisco. Unlike George Nellis, whose 1887 cross-country tour aimed for a speed record, Thayer took his time, reaching San Francisco in August (almost two months longer than Nellis's journey) and arriving back home in October. Unlike Nellis, who was determined to cross the country entirely by bicycle, Thayer often dismounted and rode trains when the terrain was not to his liking or to meet some self-imposed deadline. Like Nellis, Thayer paid for his trip in part by writing dispatches to his hometown newspaper. (When he ran low on funds, he stopped in Des Moines, Iowa, and peddled peanuts on the street.)

Hayes uses Thayer's accounts to describe the thrills and perils of nineteenth-century bicycle touring. Dogs, skittish horses, hills, and muddy roads were banes of the cyclist's life but were made up for by long downhill stretches and the kindness and camaraderie of farmers, hoteliers, and fellow cyclists encountered along the way. Where Thayer's own narrative proves to be too sketchy, Hayes supplements it with accounts by other contemporary cyclists. Thayer's and other cyclists' accounts are the real heart of the book, enabling Hayes to analyze late nineteenth-century cycling more successfully than in his previous book.

Thayer's adventures are well contextualized in an American (and European) culture undergoing rapid transformation from a rural to an urban society. Social and cultural themes of class, gender, and the im-

pact of technological change, among others, are illuminated through the lens of cycling and cycling culture. Lively writing and thorough research in original sources make *The Two-Wheeled World of George B. Thayer* a worthwhile addition to the literatures of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century sports and cultural history.

Moments of Impact: Injury, Racialized Memory, and Reconciliation in College Football, by Jaime Schultz. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2016. xiii, 198 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. $40.00 hardcover.

Reviewer S Zebulon Baker is associate director of the University Honors Program at Miami University in Ohio. He received the State Historical Society of Iowa's Throne-Aldrich Award in 2014 for his article, "'This affair is about something bigger than John Bright': Iowans Confront the Jim Crow South, 1946–1951," published in the *Annals of Iowa* (Spring 2013).

Jaime Schultz's *Moments of Impact* is, at its center, a study of the processes through which historical memory is generated and subsequently put to use. She focuses her critical gaze primarily on the latter—particularly how the racialized violence visited upon three African American football players at Iowa universities in the first half of the twentieth century was later appropriated by those institutions to commemorate notions of progress beyond those outrages and to absolve the present of its own sins. Warning her readers against "utopian visions that posit some post-racist, post-racial society," Schultz scrapes away the patina of myth and legend that encrusts the historical memories of the three athletes in question—Jack Trice, Ozzie Simmons, and John Bright—to understand how and why Iowans have chosen to remember—and forget—them and their injuries, as well as what those choices reveal about the ways Iowans engage with their racial history (146).

Like many other athletes of color in the early twentieth century, Trice, Simmons, and Bright fell victim to injuries that revealed a deliberate attempt by their white opponents to target them, or treat them roughly, because of their race. On October 6, 1923, in a game at the University of Minnesota, Trice sustained a broken clavicle in the first half, and then was cleated in the abdomen in the second, causing severe internal bleeding. After an excruciating train ride back from Minneapolis to Ames, he was checked into the student infirmary at Iowa State, where he eventually died. Eleven years later, Minnesota was again the perpetrator of so-called "rough tactics," this time against Simmons in their game at Iowa City, which so infuriated Hawkeye supporters that threats of retaliation against the Gopher team and its fans were made

before Iowa and Minnesota squared off again the following season. To pacify "the simmering antagonism" caused by Simmons's brutal treatment, the governors of Iowa and Minnesota, Clyde Herring and Floyd B. Olson, made a good-humored wager before the game of a prize hog, the forebear to the Floyd of Rosedale trophy that is still awarded to the winner of this annual rivalry (89). Far from the distraction caused by the governors, a series of pictures taken by *Des Moines Register* photographers during Drake's contest at Oklahoma A&M in 1951 focused worldwide attention on an attack that Bright, Drake's star player, endured on its first drive. Repeated hits with hard, heavy blows to the face by A&M lineman Wilbanks Smith shattered Bright's jaw and knocked him out of the game. Rather than connecting these assaults to the broader pattern of racial violence in football at the time, Schultz notes, "most journalists represented them as discrete phenomena, as exceptional occurrences" (2).

The dimensions of exceptionalism cling to this trio because "they are all associated with some form of material culture" (2). Trice and Bright are namesakes to the football stadiums at their respective institutions; Floyd of Rosedale originated in Simmons's battering. The central questions of Schultz's study, by her account, "concern why, when, and how these memorials came about" (2). She explores the frustrating, decades-long fight at Iowa State to rename its stadium in Trice's honor, which sprung not from a contemporaneous effort by his classmates to remember him, but from the forge of Black Power protests in the 1970s, which racialized the narrative of his legend. The eventual decision by Iowa State administrators to rename the stadium in 1997 was a conciliatory gesture that sought to make up for the insensitive naming of a hall for Carrie Chapman Catt, whose pioneering feminism was peppered with xenophobia and racism. Drake's rededication of its football field in 2006 was framed as a "formal closure" to Bright's attack, complete with an apology from Oklahoma State (*née* A&M) (131). These memorials, Schultz warns, are tricky endeavors that can lead to "unintended but nevertheless dangerous" outcomes (132). "My primary concern," she argues, "is that symbolic acts, such as naming Jack Trice Stadium and Johnny Bright Field, become icons of racial progress. They simultaneously remind us of past racial injustice and stand as testaments to the end of an era" (144).

The most satisfying—and effective—chapter of the book is Schultz's study of Floyd of Rosedale, which is destined to become mandatory reading for anyone interested in the black athlete experience in the Big Ten. Here, Schultz makes her most convincing case for how racialized memory determines the ways the past is remembered via a detailed

look at the contemporaneous processes by which it is also forgotten. "Rather than facilitating memories of Simmons," she explains, "Floyd of Rosedale was designed to make people forget" (73). The welter of anger that resulted from how Simmons was treated in that 1934 game disappeared as Governors Herring and Olsen redirected the public's attention from a serious confrontation with racial issues to a porcine absurdity. "Political intervention not only calmed interstate anxieties," Schultz observes, "it also glossed over and de-racialized any controversy concerning Simmons's place on the gridiron" (89). This was a fate to which Simmons resigned himself once his playing days were done. "Football's a racket," he said. "I play it because I love it. I know I'll be forgotten in two or three years" (98). Floyd of Rosedale is thus a talisman for how forgetting shapes remembering, indelibly fostering narratives that obscure as much as they crystallize popular historical memory. Schultz, in turn, challenges her readers to remember Simmons, Trice, and Bright, rather than "allowing their legacies to drift into the ether of neglect" (146). Yet, in that act of remembrance, "the racialized memories of these three men and the injuries and insults they sustained while playing college football best serve contemporary society by reminding us that coming to terms with the past must also include efforts to engage with the present" (146).

Inherit the Holy Mountain: Religion and the Rise of American Environmentalism, by Mark R. Stoll. New York: Oxford University Press, 2015. xiii, 406 pp. Illustrations, appendix, notes, bibliography, index. $39.95 hardcover.

Reviewer Bill R. Douglas is an independent historian—and Presbyterian—based in Des Moines. His work focuses on Iowa's religious history.

Environmentalists were Presbyterians. That's the short summary of this long, engaging, and partially persuasive book. The longer summary is that Congregationalists in the nineteenth century, with their ordered commons, and Presbyterians in the early twentieth century, with their call for stewardship of the vast lands left for federal management, formed and dominated the American environmental movement. To be precise, Stoll argues that environmental leaders of the first half of the twentieth century had grown up Presbyterian, though they were often lapsed. The book's most important and provocative contribution is in recovering denominationalism as an essential category in American thought and practice.

This is a quirky book. The entire first part is a description of American nineteenth-century landscape artists. Patient readers may admire the full-color plates. Impatient readers may wonder about their relevance.

Rest assured that the artists whose work is depicted had Congregationalist connections and environmentalist convictions.

Stoll is at his best in tracing the political nature of Presbyterianism from its Scottish roots to American adaptations. Its representative polity made it more attuned to a national perspective than its Congregationalist cousins. With this wider social vantage point, God as manifested by nature needed to be protected from the depredations of a fallen humanity. Presbyterianism's strong preaching tradition reinforced the moral certitude with which prophets like John Muir attacked environmental degradation.

Iowans Stoll lists include United Presbyterians Henry Wallace and James Wilson. Stoll's reliance on minimal biographical information is not always sufficient. It is true that Henry A. Wallace was deeply influenced by his grandfather Henry Wallace, but his religious proclivities veered much wider, as an article by Mark Kleinman in this journal in 1994 and the most comprehensive biography (by John Culver and John Hyde) have explored, but which Stoll does not cite.

More troubling for Stoll's thesis are three non-Presbyterian environmentalists from Iowa that Stoll does include: cartoonist Jay N. "Ding" Darling, the son of a Methodist minister; Aldo Leopold, of German Lutheran background; and William Temple Holladay, who helped save the bison from extinction and who grew up Seventh-Day Adventist. Stoll brackets them as defenders of wildlife, but it is not clear why that subcategory of environmentalism should exempt its proponents. Leopold, at least, cannot be so easily pigeonholed, but Stoll argues that he was most influential posthumously.

It would be intriguing to chart a denominational study of Progressivism. There must have been considerable overlap with the environmentalists Stoll lists. How much of Presbyterians' influence on environmentalism was simply a result of their proximity to power in the Progressive era?

One aspect of Stoll's edifice that merits further study is his use of the "lapsed" category as stand-ins for actual active Presbyterians. Certainly the most noted category in contemporary American religious surveys is the emergence of the "nones." Closer examination has suggested that this is a very diverse group. I believe it was Martin Marty who proposed that there are no generic atheists—it is always a particular God and set of religious beliefs that they deny. Stoll's insights on lapsed Presbyterians suggest that a revival of the category of denominationalism should not be restricted to card-carrying members.

Stoll's knowledgeable summary of late twentieth-century environmentalism indicates that he is pessimistic about the chances of saving

the planet. I am less pessimistic and less willing to admit the virtues of history as a predictor.

Sometimes a book can be better at being provocative than being right. *Inherit the Holy Mountain* can be useful to both environmental and religious historians—to the former in tracing religious roots of environmentalism and to the latter in suggesting that there may be many connections between denominations and American culture that are not yet fully explored.

A Complex Fate: William L. Shirer and the American Century, by Ken Cuthbertson. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2015. xxviii, 548 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. $34.95 hardcover.

Reviewer Jeff Nichols is a doctoral candidate in history at the University of Illinois at Chicago. His research has included investigating the role of newspapers in wartime Chicago.

Just weeks after graduating from Coe College in 1925, William L. Shirer left his family home in Cedar Rapids, eventually working as a deckhand to pay for passage to Europe. By the time he returned for his fiftieth class reunion, he had been a print journalist who had sat with Charles Lindbergh, Mahatma Gandhi, and Hermann Göring; a pioneering broadcaster who managed to scoop the Nazis in reporting the surrender of France; a blacklisted novelist who could not afford to fix his furnace; and the author of *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich*, possibly the best-selling historical work written in modern times. Shirer's courageous reporting from Berlin, which included a remarkable partnership with Edward R. Murrow, guarantees his place among the greats of American journalism.

Canadian journalist Ken Cuthbertson is not the first to write a biography of Shirer, although Steve Wick's *The Long Night* (2011) is mostly set in the 1930s. Cuthbertson begins by exploring the deep Iowa roots of the Shirer family. In 1913, when Shirer was just 9 years old, his father, an assistant U.S. attorney, died from peritonitis, and his mother made the unhappy decision to move to her hometown of Cedar Rapids.

Shirer was an inconsistent student who could pass as an adult, and his adolescence was defined by work. At 15, he worked as a civilian clerk at Camp Funston in Kansas. Abetted by his mother, Shirer again lied about his age to tour the Midwest on the Chautauqua circuit, an experience that deepened his sense of wanderlust. Through Ethel Outland, his journalism mentor at Coe, Shirer won a job in the newsroom at the *Cedar Rapids Republican,* earning his first exclusive by barging into Jack Dempsey's private Pullman car and waking the sleeping boxer.

In contrast to Edmund White's nuanced portrait of Cedar Rapids in his recent biography of Carl van Vechten, Cuthbertson's depiction of Shirer's hometown can be exasperating. A few pages after recounting Shirer's memories of female coworkers at National Oats offering the bashful teenager the opportunity for "a drink and a roll" in Daniels Park, Cuthbertson somehow concludes that Iowans "as always" remained "hard working, down-to-earth, deeply spiritual, and conservative" (29). Cuthbertson does, however, do a very good job of portraying student life at Coe, while establishing the traits that would serve Shirer well as a reporter and badly as an employee.

The chapters on Iowa supplement Shirer's memoirs with correspondence, diaries, and newspapers deposited at Coe, but subsequent chapters frequently place too much weight on Shirer's memory. For instance, Cuthbertson treats the *Chicago Tribune* with the same contempt found in Shirer's memoirs, published four decades after he was clumsily sacked from the paper. Its owner, Robert R. McCormick, was "petulant, myopic, paranoid, and as authoritarian as any of the dictators who were on the march in Europe" (104). Cuthbertson does not make use of the critical biography of McCormick by Richard Norton Smith, who effectively challenges a number of Shirer's recollections of his seven-year tenure at the paper. Whereas the account of Shirer's tenure at the *Tribune* is offered as a cautionary tale of the corporate dissemination of the news, Cuthbertson glosses over the reactionary politics and questionable practices of the Hearst press, which rescued the unemployed Shirer.

Ultimately, the narrowness of Cuthbertson's source base undermines his worthwhile goal of demonstrating Shirer's accomplishments. Like most of his reporting, Shirer's historic broadcast of the German-French Armistice is recounted through his published recollections, leaving the reader to wonder what Shirer told Americans or how they reacted to the news. A biographer might be forgiven for not spending weeks at the National Archives sifting through State Department dispatches and captured German records to find new insights into the constraints American journalists faced in Nazi Germany, but it is difficult to justify the unwillingness to use digitized newspapers to show what impact Shirer had on national discussions of National Socialism and Communism. Cuthbertson argues that Shirer was blacklisted because of his liberalism, but he does not really pin down his politics, beyond pointing out his continued distrust of Germany and his opposition to the Truman Doctrine. Despite these shortcomings in contextualizing Shirer within "the American Century," *A Complex Fate* is an enjoyable read about a remarkable life.

The Land of Milk and Uncle Honey: Memories from the Farm of My Youth, by Alan Guebert with Mary Grace Foxwell. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2015. xiii, 152 pp. Photographs. $17.95 paperback.

Reviewer Pamela Riney-Kehrberg is professor of history at Iowa State University. She is the author of *The Nature of Childhood: An Environmental History of Growing Up in America since 1865* (2014) and *Childhood on the Farm: Work, Play, and Coming of Age in the Midwest* (2005).

Alan Guebert's *The Land of Milk and Uncle Honey: Memories from the Farm of My Youth* takes readers on a meandering walk through the seasons on his family's dairy farm in southern Illinois. Guebert grew up there in the 1950s, '60s, and '70s, and graduated from the University of Illinois in 1980. He is the author of the syndicated column "The Farm and Food File" and has drawn his material from that column. His family was a relatively prosperous one, and the farm was large. With the help of three full-time and three part-time hired men, the family farmed more than 700 acres of Mississippi River bottomland. Only as the family's boys matured did the family dispense with its hired labor. Once the sons were grown, their father replaced their labor with machines. The book is named for Guebert's great-uncle Honey, who, though sweet-tempered, managed to destroy every machine he laid his hands upon.

This book is fun and lightly written, well suited for the casual reader. There are no great revelations or deep secrets here. Instead, it is a loving examination of a place and time that have disappeared in the past half-century. The author reflects on hard work, a beloved family, and the often oppressive weather of America's heartland. This is a good book for a rainy (or snowy) day.

Educating Milwaukee: How One City's History of Segregation and Struggle Shaped Its Schools, by James K. Nelsen. Madison: Wisconsin Historical Society Press, 2015. 287 pp. Maps, tables, illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. $24.95 paperback.

Reviewer Kathryn Schumaker is assistant professor of classics and letters at the University of Oklahoma. She is the author of "The Politics of Youth: Civil Rights Reform in the Waterloo Public Schools" (*Annals of Iowa,* 2013).

James K. Nelsen's *Educating Milwaukee* is a careful examination of the history of school reform in Milwaukee. That city, like many others in the Midwest and Northeast, suffered from the loss of manufacturing jobs, increasing poverty, and white flight to the suburbs during the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. At the same time, the Milwaukee Public Schools were at the forefront of emerging trends in American education. Nelsen employs newspaper accounts, school board

records, and oral histories in addition to social science research on schools and student learning to demonstrate how these ideas surfaced and were put into action in Milwaukee. The result is a study that delves deeply into politics and policy in the city schools while revealing how modern trends in American education have roots in early efforts at school desegregation.

Nelsen's book focuses on three periods in the recent history of Milwaukee schools, which he labels the eras of "no choice (prior to 1976), forced choice (1976–1995), and school choice (after 1987)" (2). The language of "choice," Nelsen notes, is imbued with a positive notion of individual liberty. But as *Educating Milwaukee* demonstrates, choice was at odds with meaningful desegregation, since racial segregation in the schools was a consequence of longstanding residential segregation. The forces that created economic disparities in cities like Milwaukee also opened the suburbs to middle-class whites while excluding many African Americans. What had to be sacrificed in the name of desegregation—the ability of a child to go to school close to home, remain with siblings, and have access to extracurricular activities—is a prominent theme.

The first chapter sets the stage for battles over racial reform in the city's schools, detailing how Milwaukee came to be one of the most racially segregated cities in the United States. The book then turns to the initiation of school reform in the late 1960s, including the establishment of the city's first magnet schools. Nelsen documents how Milwaukee created magnet schools as a way to stem the tide of white students out of the system and into private and suburban schools. Magnet programs allowed students to attend a French immersion school or concentrate in the performing arts, among other options. Schools also turned to innovative pedagogical methods to lure white students. Nelsen then goes inside the schools, giving the perspective of students and their own experiences with desegregation, and providing context for what was happening outside the schools, including the economically devastating loss of manufacturing jobs, the struggle to retain teachers and create positive school cultures, and the rise of gang violence. The final chapter details the state's initiation of voucher programs and charter schools, bringing the book into the modern era by documenting the influence of the conservative Bradley Foundation in engineering the school voucher program in Milwaukee that allowed students to attend private schools.

Some of this covers ground that is familiar from Jack Dougherty's *More than One Struggle: The Evolution of Black School Reform in Milwaukee* (2004), which examined the long history of racial reform in the Mil-

waukee Public Schools. By taking a microscope to the process and legacy of school desegregation in the late twentieth century, *Educating Milwaukee* charts the emergence of modern American education, with its collection of magnet and charter schools along with voucher programs and the persistence of the achievement gap between black and white students. It is clear that efforts to achieve racial reform changed the way the American educational system operated as it abandoned racially segregated neighborhood schooling.

For black parents in Milwaukee, "school choice" meant asking students to accept separate and inferior neighborhood schools or pay the price for desegregation. Despite constant efforts to reform the schools, Nelsen notes that the quality of education in Milwaukee declined nonetheless during the period surveyed. Investments in magnet schools and voucher programs drained funds from neighborhood schools, and the system was beset by social problems such as poverty and teenage pregnancy that required more support for students. While *Educating Milwaukee* does not account completely for the contemporary problems of urban public education, it contributes toward a fuller understanding of race and schooling in the present day.

Announcement

THE IOWA HISTORY CENTER at Simpson College seeks nominations for its award for the outstanding master's thesis in Iowa history for 2016. Selection will be based on contribution to the knowledge of Iowa history; originality of the subject matter or methodology; use of sources; and written expression. Nominees must have completed their master's degree between July 1, 2015, and June 30, 2016.

The winner will be announced in the fall of 2016 and receive a $1,000 cash prize and an award plaque. Three copies of the thesis and a brief letter of nomination from the thesis advisor, which includes contact information for the nominee, should be submitted to Bill Friedricks, Director, Iowa History Center, Simpson College, 701 North C Street, Indianola, IA 50125. Application deadline is June 30, 2016.

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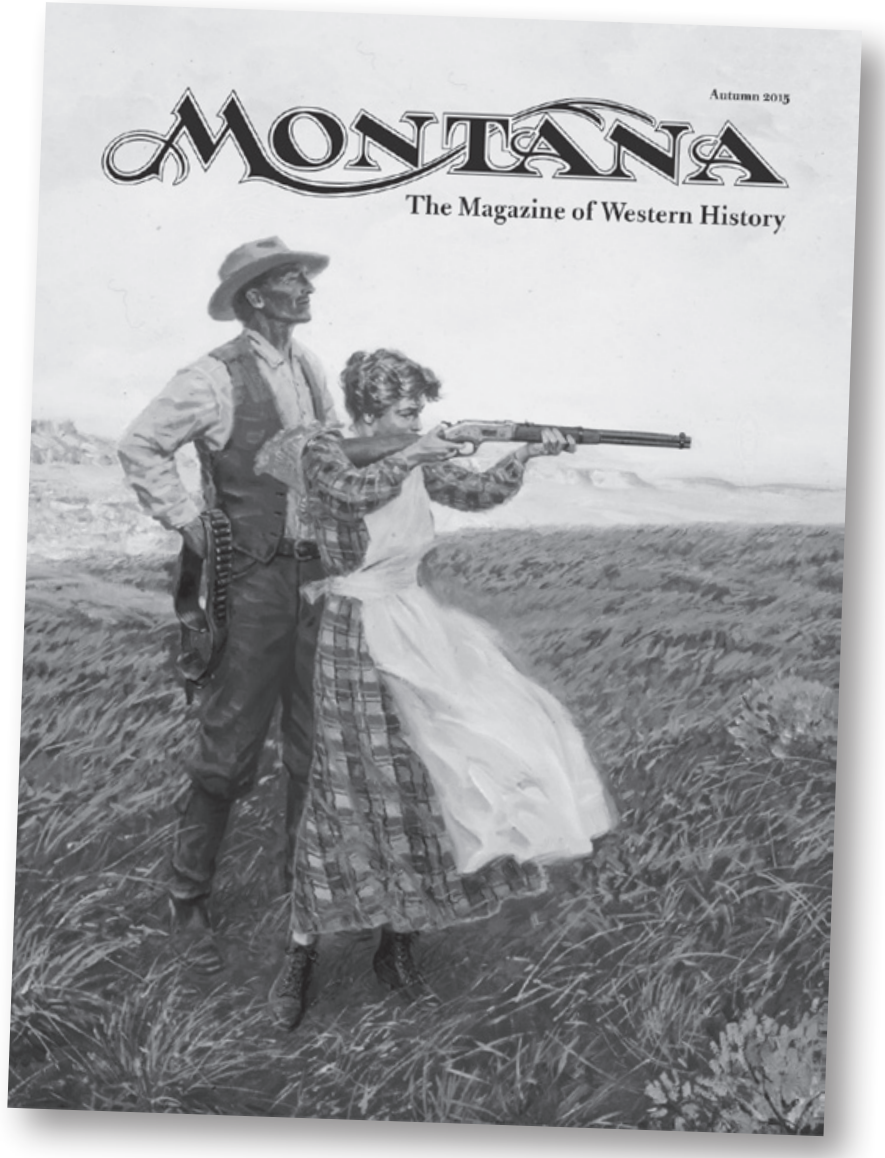

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