
BOOK NOTES

Hell of a Vision: Regionalism and the Modern American West. By Robert L. Dorman. (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2012, xii + 256 pages, cloth \$50.00.)

"Regionalism in the West and elsewhere in the United States," observes Dorman, "might still be considered a 'soft' form of cultural nationalism" (p. 14). In this study, Dorman traces the variegated evolution of competing perceptions of western identity from the 1890s to the present. Drawing from literary sources, historians, and government publications, he examines how regionalism—that "sense of place" defined by "spatial conceptualization," "regional identity," and "self-identification" (p. 3)—has been manifested, reproduced, and celebrated in American society. He explores a variety of regional visions from the Turnerian nationalist West to the revisionist New West while highlighting many subregions as well. Dorman's work is clear enough for the novice yet rich enough for the seasoned western aficionado to enjoy.

Encyclopedia of Local History. Second Edition. Edited by Carol Kammen and Amy H. Wilson. (Lanham, Md.: AltaMira Press, 2012, x + 655 pages, cloth \$125.00.)

This second edition of the *Encyclopedia of Local History* (the first was published in 2000) continues to provide valuable information about and insights into a field of historical study that, in recent years, seems to have gained greater acceptance within the profession and remains as popular as ever with its local constituency but is, ironically perhaps, financially "strained" more than ever before. The *Encyclopedia* contains new "capsule historical biographies" of each state, Guam, and the Canadian provinces, as well as "brief sketches" of some other English-speaking countries. It also offers thematic essays or entries—most short, some relatively long—on such topics as "American exceptionalism" (p. 25), "environmental history" (p. 162), "historic preservation" (p. 249), the "underfunding of historical societies" (p. 265), "race and class, in a local history organization" (p. 479), "technology and local history" (p. 523), and "interpreting women's history at local history sites" (p. 579).

Soldiers and Statesmen: Reflections on Leadership. By John S. D. Eisenhower. (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2012, xix + 181 pages, cloth \$34.95.)

Here John S. D. Eisenhower describes not only his relationship with his father, Dwight D. Eisenhower, but also his father's relationships with instrumental military and political figures during World War II. In 1944, shortly after the Allied invasion of occupied Europe, the younger Eisenhower, a recent graduate of West Point, served directly under his father and was thus privy to some of the most important conversations of the war between General Eisenhower and, among others, Winston Churchill, John Foster Dulles, Harry S. Truman, Mark Wayne Clark, George S. Patton, Jr., Terry Allen, Theodore Roosevelt, Jr., Douglas MacArthur, Omar Bradley, and Matthew B. Ridgway. Eisenhower's personal reminisces, enriched by his knowledge of the military and his skills as a historian, provide new perspectives on U.S. leadership and foreign relations during World War II.

Bound Like Grass: A Memoir from the Western High Plains. By Ruth McLaughlin. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2010, xii + 184 pages, paper \$16.95.)

This account of a family's experiences on a Montana wheat farm over the past one hundred years is more than a memoir; it is a tale of environmental, familial, and emotional renewal. McLaughlin traces the generational differences between her paternal grandparents, who claimed the homestead; her parents, who clung feverishly to the land; and her siblings, who either fled the farm willingly or out of necessity. The author compares her family, metaphorically, to prairie grass: the family, like the grass, was bound to the land even as many of its members were displaced. The harsh plains environment combined with her parents' attempt to hold on to a Depression Era-like frugality led to a challenging childhood of isolation and impoverishment in the early 1970s. McLaughlin comes to terms with her parents' harsh lives, trapped as they were between their own parents' dreams of adventure in the West and the needs of their "discontented children," but she still feels unable to shrug off the weight of being poor.

Ledger Narratives: The Plains Indian Drawings of the Landsburgh Collection at Dartmouth College. Edited by Colin Calloway. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2012, xiii + 283 pages, cloth \$49.95, paper \$29.95.)

Following the Civil War, hundreds of Native men, many of them community leaders, were imprisoned as war criminals at Fort Marion in Florida. With little to do, these soldier-statesmen attempted to recall and maintain their tribal values by drawing on ledger paper with crayons and pencils. This oversized, beautifully designed volume of their work is a companion to the first two exhibitions of such "ledger art" in the Landsburgh Collection at Dartmouth—a collection many years in the making. What sets this effort apart is the focus on the drawings as cultural signifiers. Clear explanations of what was happening to the artists who created the art, as well as what they were trying to say, will greatly aid historians' use of these enigmatic images.

Thinking Like a Watershed: Voices from the West. Edited by Jack Loeffler and Celestia Loeffler. (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2012, xii + 266, paper \$24.95.)

Jack Loeffler, a Lore of the Land, Inc., board member, has been actively engaged in collecting thousands of hours of field recordings of people living in the American Southwest. His work has led him to the conclusion that addressing the serious water issues in the region requires a wholly different approach to governance and regulation, an approach based on grassroots governance from within a home watershed. *Thinking Like a Watershed* highlights this conclusion through its collection of nine essays, the majority of which were written by authors from the Tewa, Tohono O'odham, Hopi, and Navajo Indian nations as well as representatives of Hispano and Euro-American cultures. Loeffler hopes this volume will allow readers to "identify at least part of the array of collective human conduct . . . [that] threaten not only ourselves, and societies everywhere, but also our fellow biota and even geophysical characteristics that have made our tenure as the keystone species possible" (p. 3).