

BOOK REVIEWS

Women Trailblazers of California: Pioneers to the Present. By Gloria G. Harris and Hannah S. Cohen. Charleston, SC: The History Press, 2012. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, and index. 192 pp. \$19.99 paper.

Reviewed by Kristi Rutz-Robbins, Adjunct Lecturer, History Department, University of San Diego.

Women Trailblazers of California provides short and effective biographies of the lives of forty California women with a focus on how they influenced social, economic, and political change. Dr. Gloria Harris and Hannah S. Cohen are currently board members of the Women's Museum of California. Harris was a faculty member in the Department of Women's Studies at San Diego State. Cohen currently is chairperson of the museum's fund development committee. Together they have written a highly accessible multicultural collection of life stories that should be included in every college's California history class and by every teacher teaching fourth grade California history and social studies.

The book opens with a discussion of pioneer women in early California and includes the life of Mary Ellen Pleasant, a black civil rights crusader, who moved to California with the gold rush in 1852 and amassed a fortune. She financially supported significant legal challenges to California's versions of Jim Crow laws and she herself sued the North Beach and Mission Railroad Company in 1868 after she was ejected from a city street car. Her case set a precedent in the California Supreme Court for banning segregation in city public transportation systems in the state (pp. 22-23). Every other woman's vignette in this collection is as riveting and provides inspiring role models for women's advocacy.

The women's biographies included in the middle part of the book focus on how women fought for social causes from the middle of the nineteenth century to the present. For example, Ellen Clark Sargent advocated for women's suffrage and served as treasurer of the National American Woman Suffrage Association, and it was Sargent's senator husband who introduced the Susan B. Anthony amendment to Congress in 1878. Sargent filed a case in court to reclaim her property taxes in 1900 on the premise that "Taxation Without Representation is Tyranny" which then became the theme of the 1901 suffrage convention (p. 51). Another of the activists included is Dolores Huerta who co-founded the United Farm Workers of America and directed the Delano Grape strike. She led a consumer boycott in California that culminated in the passage of the California Agricultural Labor Relations Act of 1975, the first law of its kind in

the county that allowed farm workers to form unions and bargain for wages and working conditions (p. 73).

The remainder of the book centers on women who were first in their field in key professions such as medicine, law, education, architecture, and entertainment. For instance, Lucy Maria Feld Wanzer was the first woman to graduate from medical school in California. This section includes colorful anecdotes such as Lucy's retort to a male professor who told her that a woman who works in medicine "ought to have her ovaries removed." Lucy responded, "if that is true, the men students ought also to have their testicles removed." Such additions add humor and a down-to-earth sensibility that prevent the vignettes from sliding into encyclopedic entries and give insight into the prejudice and sexism women faced as they entered male-dominated professions. A number of other "women's firsts" highlight how working women changed California society and paved the way for women entering the professions behind them. Rose Bird, the first woman Chief Justice of the California Supreme Court, got her first break volunteering as the driver for gubernatorial candidate Jerry Brown. After winning the election Brown appointed her as Secretary of Agriculture and Services and thus she became the first woman cabinet member in California. In her new position she helped get the Agricultural Labor Relations Act passed. Marilyn Boxer is a welcome inclusion in this collection. She founded the women's studies program at San Diego State University in the 1970s, the first of its kind in the nation. For Boxer, women's history was "political history and fundamental to the major issues with which historians traditionally have been concerned" (p. 133).

This is a collection of biographies with purpose. Each vignette reads like a short and rich museum exhibit highlighting the outlines of each woman's life, including charming anecdotes that contextualize the society in which each woman lived and worked, and most importantly, each discusses key advocacy these women engaged in and the impact that advocacy had on our society. The women Harris and Cohen have selected played a key role in forming our society and culture and overcame obstacles of sexism, racism, and prejudice to open new opportunities for younger generations. Role models are powerful and these forty women will be inspirational for younger generations of men and women.

Divinely Guided: The California Work of the Women's National Indian Association. By Valerie Sherer Mathes. Lubbock, TX: Texas Tech University Press, 2012. Illustrations, maps, notes, bibliography, and index. xv + 392 pp. \$39.95 cloth.

Reviewed by Kyle E. Ciani, Associate Professor, Department of History, Illinois State University.

By 1890 members of California's chapter of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) had embraced a full agenda of social purity reforms, including the regulation of vice, raising the age of consent, and abstinence from alcohol use. The corresponding secretary of the WCTU, Mrs. Dorcas J. Spencer, brought up an additional reform agendum when she learned of desperate circumstances on the remote Hoopa Reservation in Humboldt County. Most troubling were the sexual and physical assaults endured by Hupa women from white men connected with nearby Fort Gaston. Invited to the reservation by William E. Beckwith, a Christian Hupa, Spencer's visit to the isolated locale changed the direction of her activism from temperance to Indian reform. Like many women involved in the Women's National Indian Association (WNIA), Spencer's interactions with poverty-stricken Hupa women led her to feel "the force of all [she] saw so deeply, that [she] gladly promised to do the only thing a woman can, to talk for them and not to stop until a hearing shall be had" (p. 81). The connection between the WCTU and Indian reform is not unique to Spencer, and is a key element assessed by Valerie Sherer Mathes in her excellent study of the WNIA.

Mathes's research is an important addition to our understanding of the female reform network. The book provides a thoughtful overview of how middle-class white women of Protestant faiths moved into the public sphere of political advocacy through their connections with the WNIA. Mathes introduces us to little known women like the young, single missionaries Claudia J. White and Anna L. Boorman, whom the WNIA sponsored in 1884 to leave their East Coast lives and set up a mission for some of the region's poorest Indians in California's Round Valley. Mathes relates the story of Maggie Sowilleno Lafonso (Machoopda), who in 1907 was one of fifteen Indian delegates and the only woman to sign a petition penned for the president, Congress, and California state officials. We also learn of Dr. Anna Hayward Johnson who graduated from Vassar College and the Women's Medical College of Pennsylvania and became a government field matron for Cahuilla on the recommendation of the WNIA. Additionally, Mathes gives us the first comprehensive study of better-known WNIA leaders like Amelia Stone Quinton, Annie Bidwell, and Cornelia Taber.

Scholars of female reform in the American West will be familiar with Peggy

Pascoe's chapter on the WNIA in her *Relations of Rescue: The Search for Female Moral Authority in the American West 1874-1939*, and with Mathes's earlier work on author Helen Hunt Jackson, who took on the federal government's cruelty toward Indians by penning the research-based *Century of Dishonor* and a fictional account of Indian/white relations, *Ramona*. Pascoe revealed the ways the WNIA supported the formal education of Susan LaFlesche Picotte (Omaha), including her medical degree, and how they generated national support for their association. In *Divinely Guided* Mathes refines that analysis by showing how the association-sponsored missionaries performed the primary advocacy within reservation communities by establishing schools and churches on reservations. Readers will benefit from the book's index, which signals the many involvements of members with public officials in California and across the nation. WNIA missionaries and secular advocates were not afraid to challenge male authorities at the national, state, and local levels by reporting on abuses they either witnessed or learned from Indian councils. Not without fault, WNIA members advocated change from a middle-class, white cultural perspective; nevertheless, Mathes also finds women willing to alter their cultural view and accept the benefits of Indian traditions.

The title indicates the book is specific to California; the first two chapters, however, provide a detailed account of the association's national formation and its connection to the critical women's organizations in the Gilded Age such as the WCTU. Established in 1879, the WNIA operated like other female-directed reforms of the era by advocating for change at the state and local level, as well as emphasizing their maternal expertise because of their class and race privilege. These middle-class white women also embraced their Protestant faiths as directives for improving Indian lives across the country. Their reforms focused on bringing education, medical care, and Protestantism to the reservations by funding missionary ventures, and their communication strategies embraced the intellectual talents of their storied members. Chapters 3 through 6 outline these efforts in northern California by focusing on Round Valley, the Hoopa Reservation, and the Greenville Indian Industrial School in Plumas County. Chapters 7 through 10 focus on the advocacy of individual leaders and the strategies each employed to implement specialized projects, such as attempts by the medical missionary Dr. Rebecca C. Hallowell to establish a hospital on the Warner Ranch property in San Diego County.

WNIA members' letters and diary entries bring to life their ideas about Indian peoples and the new western landscapes that became their homes; appeals and petitions to public officials reveal the intensity of their beliefs; and the many publications from WNIA authors and their contemporaries show how they hoped to persuade the larger middle-class white audience to support their reforms.

Mathes's primary source research is a model for historians and shows the wealth that can be found in little known manuscript collections and limited-run pamphlet and magazine editions. Any scholar of women's history, reform movements in the American West, California in the Gilded Age, and Indian reform in general needs to read *Divinely Guided*. It is well written, well researched, and well connected with the critical themes regarding class identity, gendered politics, the power of maternalist arguments, and the entrenchment of racial stereotypes.

Alone With the Past: The Life and Photographic Art of Roland W. Reed. By Ernest R. Lawrence. Afton, MN: Afton Press, 2012. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, and index. 244 pp. \$45.00 cloth.

Reviewed by Paul V. Kroskirty, Professor of Anthropology and Chair of the American Indian Studies Program, University of California, Los Angeles.

Prior to this volume, Roland Reed (1864-1934) was a comparatively little known photographer in the "pictorialist" tradition. This school of photography, like the impressionist painters from whom they drew important influences, emphasized attributes of light, tint, focus, and perspective. One of the most famous practitioners of this school was Edward S. Curtis (1868-1952) whose portraits of Native American subjects are well known to a larger American public. Like Curtis, Reed grew up in Wisconsin in areas adjacent to Native American populations, and like his famous and prolific counterpart, Reed also treated images of the "vanishing Indian" as his main photographic subjects. This volume compiles hundreds of photos representing Reed's life's work. Many readers will find his photographs to be at least equal to those of the more acclaimed Curtis. A case can even be made for their superiority. Unlike Curtis's preference for comparatively inert portraits, Reed's photographs, though also staged and contrived, tended to give the appearance of an action shot within the context of a natural environment. The typical result is a well-composed action scene set against a natural backdrop of lakes, trees, mountains, and rock formations. Readers will find this a stunning collection of images taken by a photographer whose work deserves considerably more attention than it has received.

The author, Ernest Lawrence, is a former businessman and amateur historian who is currently an adjunct professor at the University of Wisconsin's Lubar School of Business. He has managed the task of compiling in one work the full range of Reed's career, including Reed's correspondence, text from photo exhibitions, and handwritten notes. These documents represent the photographer's perspective including his commentary on many of the individual photographs. This commentary

is valuable for at least two reasons. One, it allows the reader to understand Reed's romantic impulse to shun the reality of imposed Indian assimilation of the early twentieth century for the imagined "noble savage" of a pre-contact period. Reed delighted in capturing images of Indians in birch-bark canoes attempting to hunt game with bow and arrow or to catch fish with a traditional fishing spear. Like the salvage anthropology of the same era, Reed and other pictorialists elected to represent Native Americans as locked in a pre-contact past, as exotic others who could only authentically inhabit a pre-modern time. Though Lawrence does indeed provide us with a sense of the photographer's perspective by including so many of his own words, the author seems to lack an understanding of the larger context of Reed's work. More concerned with representing the photographer's perspective than those of his Native American subjects, Lawrence seems more capable of recognizing Reed's contribution to history by capturing images of vanishing lifeways and material culture than recognizing the problematic qualities of the photos. Images of Indians as culturally "other," as tethered to a traditional past, and as untouched by cultural and political contact with the dominant society and its institutions are precisely the kind of marginalizing and self-absolving images that members of a settler-colonial society could be expected to produce to naturalize their dominance. That such stereotypes of Indians have been damaging and continue to do harm have been amply demonstrated by many works in American Indian Studies including, for example, Vine Deloria's *Custer Died for Your Sins* or Philip Deloria's *Indians in Unexpected Places*. Lawrence thus seems more suited to lionizing Reed than to decolonizing his work.

But even the most critical reader will find the volume clearly organized and richly illustrated. The book consists of five chapters and an introduction that explains the history of the book project. Lawrence devotes his first chapter to the biographical details of Reed's early life. Chapter 2, "The People of the Woodlands," contains photos of Ojibwa and other Indians of the Great Lakes area. Chapters 3 and 4 treat "The People of the Plains" (e.g. Blackfeet, Cheyenne) and "The People of the Southwest" (e.g. Hopi, Navajo). The fifth and final chapter covers "Reed's Later Life and Work," including exhibitions of his work in San Francisco and San Diego. This is a book that is ultimately much stronger on compiling images and the photographer's commentary than in offering a deeper social or historical analysis. But while this volume lacks the sophistication that characterizes *Picturing Indians: Photographic Encounters and Tourist Fantasies in H. H. Bennett's Wisconsin Dells* by Stephen D. Hoelscher wherein the author relates both the goal of producing romantic images and the attempt to engage an emerging tourist economy, it nevertheless provides the reader with a valuable introduction to a remarkable yet rather unknown photographer of the turn of the twentieth century.

States of Delinquency: Race and Science in the Making of California's Juvenile Justice System. By Miroslava Chávez-García. Berkeley, CA: University of California, 2012. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, and index. iv + 290 pp. \$65.00 cloth. \$27.95 paper.

Reviewed by Stephen Cox, Professor, Department of Literature, University of California, San Diego.

The history of the American penal system is very largely the history of attempts to reform it, which means that the problems recognized in one era can be largely attributed to the reform movements of the preceding one. The work of Miroslava Chávez-García adds significantly to our understanding of how this happened in California.

The history of reform movements is not her topic. Her principal interest is the use of “scientific” testing and investigation of young people at the Whittier State [Reform] School during the second and third decades of the twentieth century. The testing involved the application of IQ tests that, regrettably but predictably, tended to classify young people of Northern European lineage as higher in intelligence than those of Eastern and Southern European, Mexican, or African American lineage. The investigation involved the construction of elaborate dossiers compiled by people snooping around the subjects’ neighborhoods, invading the homes of relatives, listening to tales from anyone who would tell them, and aligning the assembled data with contemporary ethnic and gender stereotypes. If the young people were regarded as feeble minded, they could be shipped off to the Sonoma State Hospital, where they had a good chance of being sterilized under the provisions of California’s eugenics law. While the administration of such programs seems to have included the foreseeable number of cranks and bullies, the programs were motivated in large part by popular reformist ideas of social planning, the assignment of appropriate social roles, and the use of penal institutions not to punish young people but to educate them according to their capacity. That’s the irony, and the tragedy.

Chávez-García’s book has its limitations. It is really two books – one about pseudo-science at Whittier, the other about California’s youth institutions in general from the late 1850s until the early 1940s. The second is as interesting as the first, although it turns out to have relatively little bearing on “race and science.” Of particular interest is the crisis of public confidence that followed the deaths of two Mexican American boys at Whittier in 1939 and 1940, events that led to the next great wave of reform. That wave created the powerful California Youth Authority (which is, unfortunately, beyond the scope of Chávez-García’s book).

While moving back and forth between her two subjects, the author provides

a quantity of raw information but does not succeed in recreating the lives of institutional leaders and their human subjects. The pictures of how most of the institutions were run most of the time, the important elements of the inmates' daily lives, and the backgrounds and motives of the major officials all remain tantalizingly hazy. Attempts to tell a story sometimes succeed when the author pursues them, but she seldom pursues them far.

There are larger editorial problems. A great proportion of the book is packaging –introductions to what the author is about to do, summaries of what she has done, generalized and predictable reviews of historical backgrounds, and frequent and heavy restatements of the author's basic ideas. In addition, Chávez-García is often taken prisoner by a narrow, insufficiently examined critical vocabulary. Introducing the Progressive era of reform, she says that its leaders wanted to bring about "Americanization or the whitening of ethnics and racial minorities," so that they "would accommodate themselves to industrial and agricultural capitalism's insatiable demand for labor" (p. 51). This may or may not be true; the friendliness of Progressives toward capitalism's insatiable desires does not seem as obvious as the author assumes. But what were the Progressives' concrete proposals? A list immediately follows: "educational reforms for children, including compulsory public schooling, home economics classes, and kindergartens . . . evening English-language and citizenship courses for adults . . . the rethinking of reform schools . . . an end to harsh punishments . . ." (p. 51). There's a lot of distance between the great, grim generalizations and the cheerful particulars. Is "whitening" all we should see in this?

Despite its limitations, however, Chávez-García's book makes substantial contributions. It describes in considerable detail a side of Progressivism that was indeed grim – a strain that was always intrusive, often racist, and seldom truly scientific in its use of science and scientific institutions, including California's universities, to implement its schemes of betterment. *States of Delinquency* adds to the small but growing library of useful books on the history of California's penal institutions. It provides, in its notes, a large array of sources concerning the state's reformatory and children's institutions, and it makes available, in the text itself, important archival resources developed by the author's research. Those are real accomplishments.

Emma Goldman: A Documentary History of the American Years, Volume 3: Light and Shadows, 1910-1916. Edited by Candace Falk. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2012. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, and index. xx + 858 pp. \$65.00 cloth.

Reviewed by Denise Lynn, Assistant Professor, History, University of Southern Indiana.

In this third volume of the Emma Goldman Papers Project from the University of California at Berkeley, the series editors provide an extensive collection of Emma Goldman's letters, speeches, newspaper articles, and other publications chronicling her years in America from 1910 to 1916. Accompanied by an extensive and detailed introduction, the collection represents the enormous project of cataloguing the life of an extraordinary individual. The editors claim that these seven short years were some of the most productive and celebrated years of Goldman's life in the United States. They were also frustrating years as she struggled to spread the anarchist message at a time when reform politics went mainstream and the war in Europe led to the erosion of civil liberties in the United States.

As Candace Falk notes in the extensive introduction, Goldman's writings and speeches make clear that while her interests were eclectic, she chafed against the gradualism and reform offered up by Progressive Era activists. She believed that their proposed reforms were short-term solutions for long-term issues. And as a political independent, she argued that organizations' and unions' bureaucratic structures and hierarchies resembled corporate models and therefore limited personal and political transformation. As a result, Goldman had a strained relationship with unions and Progressives, rejecting their often single-issue politics. Despite that, the activist ferment of the era made others open to her ideas and she became a popular and sought-after speaker.

Her most popular ideas centered on the revolution in women's roles – contained within this volume are a number of her speeches and articles addressing the need for birth control, her rejection of marriage as legal prostitution, the need for sexual expression including same-sex relationships, and her dismissal of women's suffrage as a powerless reform that could not emancipate women. Though Goldman's anarchism often put some people off, what made her threatening was her challenge to the "holy trinity of God, the family and the state" (p. 12). Her belief in the absolute freedom of the individual included the right to birth control, sexual expression, and sex education. Women especially were drawn to her critiques of marriage and her advocacy of birth control, though they were often oblivious to her attacks on capitalism as a primary culprit in women's oppression.

Much of Goldman's political work was to dispel fears about anarchism. It was

during this period that Goldman published her collection *Anarchism and Other Essays*. As evidenced by the readings excerpted in this volume, Goldman had the ability to transcend her time and place because she addressed “basic universal issues” like “freedom, autonomy, and cooperation” (p. 48). Her eclecticism did often lead to accusations that she offered no specific programs for change. But above all she argued for the importance of individual emancipation from institutions and control. She especially rankled against organized religion, believing that religion, along with capitalism and government, were powerful forces that kept people in bondage. She spoke of religion as another form of “domination and control” and rejected popular evangelical religious figures such as Billy Sunday as “howling hucksters” (p. 84).

Goldman also believed that art could facilitate a political message. She was part of the avant-garde movement centered in Greenwich Village, New York, and she tried to convince middle-class and working people that drama could portray a political aesthetic. Her text *The Social Significance of Modern Drama*, published in 1914, was another collection of her speeches. Though she believed that drama could transcend class, her talks on art were usually poorly attended, and she did recognize that “the shop floor was rarely a place for high art” (p. 51).

Above all, this collection demonstrates that Goldman struggled with her own convictions. Her correspondence with friends and acquaintances demonstrates the challenge of living up to her own principles. This is especially true of her relationship to Ben Reitman. As she spoke about free love and railed against marriage, she longed for Reitman to settle down and devote himself to her. Goldman also frequently articulated the inequalities inherent in capitalism but failed to address racial inequality or racist violence.

As a research tool this volume is unparalleled in its offerings, detailing Goldman’s personal and political triumphs between 1910 and 1916 and including a timeline, biographical, periodical and organizational directories, and an appendix listing Goldman’s publications and the publications distributed by her Mother Earth Press. The lengthy introduction offers a critique of Goldman’s most important ideas and her shortcomings. The text, however, is disjointed, introducing ideas and then only offering detail much later. In addition, the introduction is not for Goldman newcomers as it fails to offer context to many events that the editors must assume readers already know; especially if the reader has not had access to the earlier two volumes. The introduction might offer more confusion than clarity. Nevertheless, the volume, like Goldman herself, is largely accessible, and it is a useful resource for researchers and teachers alike.

BOOK NOTES

California Women and Politics: From the Gold Rush to the Great Depression. Edited by Robert W. Cherny, Mary Ann Irwin, and Ann Marie Wilson. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2011. Illustrations, notes, and index. xviii + 404 pp. \$40 paper. *California Women and Politics* features fourteen essays from leading scholars. The collection explores the political activities of a range of California women, including *Californianas* who critiqued the American conquest, advocates of women's suffrage, supporters of conservation, and union leaders.

Frémont's First Impressions: The Original Report of His Exploring Expeditions of 1842–1844. By John C. Frémont. Introduction by Anne F. Hyde. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2012. Map, tables, and notes. xxvi + 366 pp. \$28.95 paper. Frémont's *Reports* of his first two expeditions into the North American West were combined and published in 1845. His detailed accounts of the land, flora, and fauna along with accurate maps were the first of their kind available en masse to the public and were an important guidebook for migrants heading west on what became the Oregon Trail. The *Reports*, penned with considerable help from his wife Jessie Benton Frémont, also launched Frémont to national prominence as the Great Pathfinder.

The Golden State in the Civil War: Thomas Starr King, the Republican Party, and the Birth of Modern California. By Glenna Matthews. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012. Illustrations, maps, and index. xii + 272 pp. \$95 cloth. \$25.99 paper. This book argues that while California may have been far from the main theaters of military action, the Civil War was nevertheless a critical time in the state's development as part of the American nation. Central to this process was the role played by Thomas Starr King, the Unitarian minister who tirelessly advocated the Union cause and helped make California a leading financial supporter of the United States Sanitary Commission.

The Gold Rush Letters of E. Allen Gosh and Hosea B. Gosh. Wilbur S. Shepperson Series in Nevada History. Edited by Ronald M. James and Robert E. Stewart. Reno: University of Nevada Press, 2012. Illustrations, map, notes, index. xv + 244 pp. \$29.95 cloth. The Gosh brothers left Pennsylvania in 1849 for the placer mines of California. They spent the better part of the next decade searching for wealth, eventually moving to Nevada in advance of the discovery of the Comstock Lode. Historians Ronald James and Robert Stewart provide explanatory notes and an introductory essay.

How Local Politics Shape Federal Policy: Business, Power, and the Environment in Twentieth-Century Los Angeles. Luther H. Hodges Jr. and Luther H. Hodges Sr.

Series on Business, Society, and the State. By Sarah S. Elkind. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011. Illustrations, maps, notes, bibliography, index. xiii + 267 pp. \$45.00 cloth. Sarah Elkind, associate professor of history at San Diego State University, examines how local business interests shaped environmental policy in areas like flood control, air pollution, oil resources, and electric power. Groups like the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce not only influenced planning at the city and county levels, their recommendations often reached the ears of national officials as well.

They Saved the Crops: Labor, Landscape, and the Struggle over Industrial Farming in Bracero-Era California. Geographies of Justice and Social Transformation Series. By Don Mitchell. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2012. Illustrations, maps, charts, tables, notes, bibliography, and index. xvi + 529 pp. \$79.95 cloth. \$26.95 paper. Geographer Don Mitchell examines the origins, development, and eventual demise of the Bracero Program in California. *They Saved the Crops* suggests that the program—formulated primarily by agribusiness leaders and government officials—helped create an agricultural system featuring a mobile, cheap labor force that continues to characterize American farming to this day.



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