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A Concise History of Kentucky (review)

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accounts, preferred not to accept public assistance during the Great Depression, though a few people participated in the CCC or WPA. Many of the accounts give testimony to what Finns call *sisu*, a Finnish term expressing the inner strength of their people.

However, many of the accounts are bathed in nostalgia, and one wonders whether the church/socialist division that affected other Finnish communities resonated at all in Ashtabula County. Finns also became divided by the alcohol issue. There is mention of temperance efforts but no indication of the impact alcohol may have had on the community. The lack of an overall, interpretative introductory essay leaves these and other questions unanswered. Someone who picks up this book and knows nothing about Finnish immigrant life will get the impression that there were no problems or divisions in the community.

The book also would have been enhanced by a map of Finland showing the major emigration districts and a brief bibliography to guide readers to other sources. This volume, though, does much to add to our knowledge of a region which, from the earliest Connecticut settlers to present-day Mexican immigrants, has an unusually vivid and colorful history.

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A Concise History of Kentucky. By James C. Klotter and Freda C. Klotter. (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2008. xii, 238 pp. Cloth \$30.00, ISBN 978-0-8131-2498-8; paper \$19.95, ISBN 978-0-8131-9192-8.)

This introduction to Kentucky history is a collaboration between the state's leading historian, James C. Klotter, and educational consultant Freda C. Klotter. In five compact chapters, they outline major influences and developments of the frontier, statehood, Civil War, industrial, and modern periods. Seven other chapters are thematic, focusing on Kentucky government, regions and regionalism, agricultural and material culture, commercial transformation, literature and music, and demography. Occasional sidebars document the lives of well-known and anonymous Kentuckians to illustrate economic, social, and cultural themes. *A Concise History of Kentucky* will be useful to many readers new to the state.

Concision has advantages. A concise history is short and free of rhetorical excess. As the author's preface points out, a concise history is readable and affordable. Concision also requires that the authors limit subtext in the pursuit of brevity. This is unavoidable, but some important omissions from this work reflect not only the inherent drawbacks of brevity but also a larger difficulty. These omissions relate to matters of historical "agency."

One omission comes early, in a descriptive survey of Kentucky's "cultural

or human regions" (44-52). Of the seven summaries, only that of Appalachian (eastern) Kentucky does not highlight that region's colleges and universities. To casual readers this could suggest that education is undervalued in the mountains, even though Morehead and Eastern Kentucky University are listed later in the book.

A larger omission is cumulative: great social movements—abolitionism, black rights, the women's movement—are summarized here, but their "grass-roots" bases are minimized. Instead, individual courage and achievement are emphasized as the dominant engines of progress. Of course, remarkable individuals do shape history, but in this concise history heroic individuals seem to *create* collective reform and resistance rather than *emerge from* them. Eijah Marrs leads black troops into battle for the Union and later speaks for black rights (121). But the populist black "Union Leagues" in which he participated after the war to resist widespread white-on-black violence of Redemption-era Kentucky are missing. Coal miner Sam Hawkins struggles to provide for his family in Depression-era Letcher County (133), but there is no reference to the formative class and unionization struggles in 1930s eastern Kentucky coalfields. Muhammad Ali (178-79) refuses induction into the army, is vindicated by the Supreme Court, and regains his heavyweight title. But the context of the anti-Vietnam war movement and black resistance is omitted; here, Ali's historical significance rests more on his reconciliation with his native Louisville rather than his contributions to the black power movement. Commercially successful country or mountain singers merit praise (155-58), but there is no mention of influential "message" singers such as Molly Jackson, Sarah Ogan Gunning, or Florence Reece. Wendell Berry, justifiably called "the greatest living Kentucky writer," appears as a lone oracle imploring Kentuckians to protect their environment from industrial plunder (150). But Berry's environmental advocacy is rooted in a broadly based grassroots citizens' movement that gets no mention.

This book is a useful guide in a convenient and well-written format. The absence of some defining collective voices, however, arguably keeps it from being a completely satisfying introduction to the key dynamics of the Kentucky story, notwithstanding the structural limits of concision.

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Rookwood and the American Indian: Masterpieces of American Art Pottery from the James J. Gardner Collection. By Anita J. Ellis and Susan Labry Meyn. (Athens: Cincinnati Art Museum and the Ohio University Press, 2007. 312 pp. Paper \$30.00, ISBN 978-8214-1740-9.)

The image of the Native American has a strong and complex place in the