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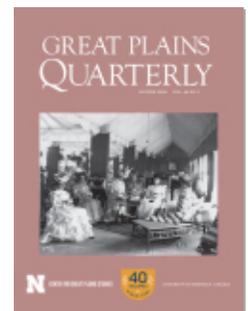
*Women in Texas History* by Angela Boswell (review)

Sara Egge

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conquered. To this end, these communities have begun to explore policies and practices that are expected to help humans to better live with the ebbs and flows of nature. In terms of the volume's contributions to our understandings of disaster events, the lesson derived from this well-researched book is that the adaptive behaviors emerging in northeast Nebraska will become increasingly relevant for communities around the world. This will especially be the case as communities start to confront the consequences of climate change and realize they need to rethink their relationship with the natural environment. Given the book's substantive content, those interested in disaster management, urban planning, ecology, and community resilience may find *Flood on the Tracks* to be a valuable resource.

THOMAS W. HAASE  
Department of Political Science  
Sam Houston State University

*Women in Texas History.*

By Angela Boswell. Foreword by Nancy Baker Jones and Cynthia J. Beeman. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2018. vii + 334 pp. Illustrations, maps, notes, bibliography, index. \$37.00, cloth.

Angela Boswell offers the first comprehensive narrative of Texas women's history with *Women in Texas History*. Her primary aim is to challenge the myth of Texas history that omits women and their experiences in favor of independence fighters, cowboys, and oil tycoons. Boswell synthesizes a large number of secondary sources to cover hundreds of years of history, focusing on four guidelines to frame the analysis. First, she concentrates on Texas specifically, eschewing a regional focus. Second, she selects topics relevant to women's

history, which allows her to revise the standard periodization. Third, she places her work into the field of women's history, using it to examine the ordinary ways women shaped their own lives and the lives of others. Finally, she strives to include as many women as possible and their racial, ethnic, religious, class, political, and sexual identities.

Boswell covers a lot of ground in ten chapters. From the Native American, Mexican, and Spanish women who created a racially and culturally diverse borderlands in chapter 1 to the activities and consequences of the 1960s and 1970s feminist movement in Texas in chapter 10, the book examines a wide range of women's experiences. Chapter 2 traces the influence of southern women in the Texas borderlands in the early nineteenth century while chapter 5 investigates how Native American, white, and Tejana women shaped West Texas and its ranching industry during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Chapters 6 and 7 delve into the period between the 1870s and the 1920s, assessing women's activism and women's work cultures, respectively. Within chapters, Boswell often bounces among identity groups to tell the story. For example, when examining women's activism from the 1870s to the 1920s in chapter 6, Boswell engages with religious groups, the Farmers' Alliance, white women's clubs, African American women's clubs, Tejana women's organizations, heritage societies, and suffrage associations. She ends with a brief discussion of post-suffrage activism and the rise of the New Woman. This approach allows for easy comparison while giving an expansive and inclusive assessment of women's activism of the time. But each group receives a short assessment, and the overall narrative is sometimes lost amid the subheadings.

*Women in Texas History* serves as an im-

portant model for writing the history of a Great Plains state. It contributes a broad narrative that describes often overlooked historical contexts and serves as a helpful general reference for Texas history.

SARA EGGE  
Department of History  
Centre College

*Left in the West: Literature, Culture, and Progressive Politics in the American West.*

Edited by Gioia Woods. Reno: University of Nevada Press, 2018. vii + 432 pp. Illustrations, contributors, index. \$34.95, paper.

This expansive and provocative collection of essays focuses on how Left politics took shape in western American literature from the Progressive Era to the present. As Gioia Woods notes in the volume's introduction, the literary Left is typically thought to be rooted in the urban centers of the East Coast, and while the leftist politics in the West shared many ideas and even writers with the East, "western leftists developed concerns unique to the region, elevating issues of industrialization and environmental degradation, Native American sovereignty, and immigrant communities' access to power" (3).

Woods's introduction usefully contextualizes the history of leftist activism and writing in the West, from figures like Kenneth Rexroth and Lawrence Ferlinghetti to the recent struggle over the Dakota Access Pipeline. This broad scope is a key contribution of this volume. On the one hand, essays in the book address well-known political texts, such as Charlotte Perkins

Gilman's *Herland*, Woody Guthrie's ballads, and John Steinbeck's *Grapes of Wrath*. Yet on the other hand, many essays address archives, figures, and texts that broaden and complicate what might count as leftist politics in the twentieth- and twenty-first-century West. From essays about peace activists in Utah, Ward Moore's speculative fiction, Mari Sandoz's fiction and autobiography, and the environmentalist thinking of Peter Berg, to accounts of poet Jack Spicer's revision of frontier tropes, Edward Weston and Tina Modotti's photographic engagement with bohemian spaces, Deborah Miranda's blend of the personal and the political, and Louise Thompson's unpublished memoirs, the collection arranges a broad array of ideas under the banner of "progressive politics."

The essays in the volume tend to be focused on particular archives or texts, and so the overarching connections between the variety and abundance of material in the volume can feel disconnected. Yet that is less of a problem with the volume than evidence of its success in expanding and revising our expectations about what fits under the rubric of leftist politics in western American literature. This edited volume adds to the already well-established scholarship on leftist politics in twentieth-century America, by drawing attention to the unique rapacity of political thinking and writing west of the Mississippi River.

DANIEL WORDEN  
School of Individualized Study and  
Department of English  
Rochester Institute of Technology