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Coburn, Carol K.
Life at Four Corners: Religion, Gender, and Education in a German-Lutheran Community, 1868-1945.


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In *Life at Four Corners*, Carol Coburn analyzes the powerful combination of ethnic and religious institutions in the German-Lutheran community of Block, Kansas, that effectively resisted assimilation for nearly eighty years only to succumb to the influences of the outside world during the 1930s and 1940s. Emphasizing the formal and informal education provided by the church, school, and family, she examines the total process of how values, identities, and all aspects of culture were transmitted from generation to generation.

“This book is clearly and engagingly written. It opens a window on the inner life of an early rural settlement in Kansas and allows the reader to understand the values, fears, and beliefs of this important group of settlers. The author offers insight into the intersection of several variables, including gender, religion, and region.” —Glenda Riley, author of *The Female Frontier: A Comparative View of Women on the Prairie and the Plains*

“An excellent interdisciplinary study of the transmission of education and culture across four generations. It includes something for historians with a variety of interests: ethnicity, education, immigration and assimilation, gender roles, rural life, religion, family life and fertility rates, nativism, and more.” —*American Historical Review*

“Coburn has contributed to the field of German-American ethnic history, offering a point of comparison with other rural and urban studies, particularly regarding the family.” —*Great Plains Quarterly*

Carol Coburn is professor emerita of religious studies and women’s and gender studies at Avila College. She is coauthor of *Spirited Lives: How Nuns Shaped Catholic Culture and American Life, 1836–1920*.