

amined" and has ignored "changes through time, distinctions between urban and rural households, and other variations in the general patterns set forth here" (p. 8). The result is a sort of monolithic nineteenth-century American family, basically unchanged from 1820 to 1920 and unaffected by regional or class differences, war, industrialization, urbanization, higher education for women, the temperance movement, or women's clubs. And all white native-born Protestants were characterized by the same system, whether they were Lutheran or Baptist, Presbyterian or Quaker. (While Motz cautions in her introduction against assuming that these thirty families represent all of America or even Michigan, in fact she continually generalizes about Michigan and American women on the basis of her study.)

Motz describes a world in which women were almost entirely confined to the family sphere and basically were satisfied to be there. As part of an intense network of female kin, a woman, according to Motz, had no yearnings for autonomy: "Since she derived security and satisfaction from her familial relationships, she failed to imagine an independent existence except in terms of loneliness and powerlessness" (p. 7). Along with her female kin, a woman "formed the backbone of the family in the nineteenth century" (p. 128). The nuclear family, by contrast with sisterhood, was a weak association: "Marriage constituted only a part, in fact a relatively unstable part, of the nineteenth-century family" (p. 130). Although Motz alternately stresses women's power and vulnerability in this system, she clearly rejects Carl Degler's conclusion that women were at odds with the family. Motz argues that Degler misunderstood what "the family" meant to nineteenth-century women: the family meant their female kin, and they were not at odds with their sisters—only with their husbands. The family (i.e., the female kin) actually enabled women to develop increasing autonomy within marriage, Motz reasons (pp. 4-5). Motz never recognizes that women sometimes resented the relentless claims of female kin and a claustrophobic system of family ties.

While *True Sisterhood* pioneers in using collections of family papers to study kinship networks and makes some interesting claims about women's roles in nineteenth-century families, Motz fails to marshal her evidence convincingly.

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*Missionaries and Muckrakers: The First Hundred Years of Knox College.* By Hermann R. Muelder. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1984. Pp. 382. Notes, illustrations, bibliography, index. \$19.95.)

Knox College in Galesburg, Illinois, possesses a distinguished history as one of the most social reform-minded and intellectually

elite trans-Appalachian colleges. Hermann R. Muelder—Knox alumnus, historian, dean, and acting president—has written what in many ways is a very competent history of the institution. Unfortunately, however, he omitted the period of his professional involvement because of a fear that he would bias the account; thus, he chose to end his narrative with the centennial year 1937. Perhaps he was following the example of the preceding Knox historian, Earnest Elmo Calkins, who, writing in 1937, limited his narrative of Knox and the surrounding Galesburg, Illinois, community (*They Broke the Prairie*) to the nineteenth century. One wishes that Muelder had followed the pattern of several historian-administrators (e.g., Wilson Lyon of Pomona and Payson Wild of Northwestern) who have written objective and comprehensive institutional histories.

Muelder's volume especially emphasizes: 1) students in general; 2) the careers of well-known literary alumni such as Eugene Field, Edgar Lee Masters, magazine publisher and editor Samuel McClure, and New York *Times* editor John Finley; 3) leading faculty personalities (e.g., astronomy instructor "Professor Moon" of Master's *Spoon River Anthology*); and 4) the relationship of the college to the larger society (e.g., the involvement of the college in abolitionism, the role of its alumni in stimulating Progressive Era reforms, and the influence of the students in introducing and developing the popular intercollegiate oratorical competition). By contrast, the author shows less concern with the details of institutional administration and finance and curricular development and classroom activities; also he largely ignores educational philosophy and the secularization process.

There is much about this book to commend. Muelder's research is thorough, he writes with an engaging style, he often relates the necessary factual details dynamically through the lives of leading characters in the story, and he avoids the parochial orientation of many college histories. *Missionaries and Muckrakers* now stands as the single best source on the history of Knox, but for the total story it needs to be combined with the aforementioned Calkins book on the important town-college relations, the fine study by Thomas Askew on the changing intellectual history of the college ("The Liberal Arts College Encounters Intellectual Change: A Comparative Study of Education at Knox and Wheaton Colleges, 1837-1925," Ph.D. dissertation, Department of History, Northwestern University, 1969), and Muelder's own forthcoming memoirs on the modern period.

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