

Landscapes, including "The City as Artifact," "The New England Presence on the Midwest Landscape," "Chautauqua," "City Planning as Progressive Reform," and "The Material Universe of American World Expositions"; and *Museums as Artifacts*, including "The History behind, within and outside the History Museum," "Pioneers of Material Culture," the revolutionary "It Wasn't That Simple," "Causing Conflict, Doing Violence," and a recent theoretical and methodological essay on "History Museums and Material Culture."

The last essay may be where some readers, such as teachers in graduate programs in American studies, history, and museology may choose to begin, because it is more than a comprehensive survey of the field of material culture studies; Schlereth has worked out two paradigmatic charts, one that classifies and compares the historical emphases of this fairly recent branch of study and the other doing the same for current trends in research. These paradigms incorporate brief lists of published works that represent the subject matter and methods of each category. In short, this chapter encapsulates the history and current state of the study of material culture as done in the academy and in museums.

Most readers, though, will prefer to start at the beginning, drawn into each essay by Schlereth's frankly personal forewords, his engagingly clear style, and by sheer curiosity about how the author will give meaning to the many illustrations drawn from family albums, advertisements, certificates, maps and historic paintings, engravings and photographs. Each essay illuminates these by showing how to read simple visual and material data and how to understand them in the broader contexts of significant human values and concerns.

For Schlereth's encyclopedic bibliographic references alone, this book should be in every historical society and on every American history scholar's desk, but even more it is worth returning to for guidance in researching, interpreting, and appreciating the material things of the natural and cultural environments.

FRED E. H. SCHROEDER teaches humanities at the University of Minnesota, Duluth.

Sweetwater, Storms, and Spirits: Stories of the Great Lakes. Selected and edited by Victoria Brehm. (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, in cooperation with the Historical Society of Michigan, 1990. Pp. x, 340. Illustrations, map, notes, bibliography. \$32.50.)

Victoria Brehm, who holds a Master's License for Great Lakes and Inland Waters, has assembled and edited a marvelous collection of tales about the Great Lakes, ranging from Native American stories to twentieth-century fiction. Most of her selections repre-

sent pieces of larger works. What binds this collection together is a continuing effort to make sense of place—to examine, to explain, to understand the interplay between people and the lakes that make up a freshwater sea in the midst of a continent.

Brehm argues in her introduction that the literature of the Great Lakes is unique and not merely an imitation of the more popular and widely read stories of the saltwater seas. Place has been a key variable in shaping the tales of the lakes, many of which were “inspired by the paradox of sailing a sea in the midst of a continent, where a seven-hundred-foot ship loaded with wheat from the tranquil farms nearby can be ripped apart by a gale worthy of the North Atlantic” (p. 3). According to Brehm, stories of storms, shipwrecks, and disasters ran counter to American and Canadian beliefs in the conquest and control of the continent. As a result, much of the fiction about the lakes ended up in obscure publications.

Victoria Brehm has divided *Sweetwater, Storms, and Spirits* into five thematic sections: “Masters and Men,” “St. Elmo’s Fire,” “Fishermen,” “Lighthouses and Lockkeepers,” and “White Squall.” The twenty selections that comprise these sections include collected Ojibwa and Menomini myths and tales, anonymous stories, and signed articles. Many of Brehm’s selections address the challenges of navigation on the lakes—in wooden three-masted schooners in the nineteenth century and in steel, propeller-driven, bulk carriers in the twentieth. Not surprisingly, most of the author’s and characters are male, but Brehm has added depth by including a few stories by and about women.

The selections in *Sweetwater, Storms, and Spirits* are interesting, and they add a useful dimension to what is known about the history of the Great Lakes. History, fiction, and myth are not necessarily mutually exclusive. The stories in this volume contain some historical information, but more importantly, like “objective” history they forge connections between past and present. They help the reader understand how people in the past struggled to come to terms with their relationship with the lakes, and they assist in understanding that relationship in the present. Some readers might wish for an index, but that aside, the collection offered by Brehm is satisfying indeed.

PHILIP V. SCARPINO is associate professor and director of public history at Indiana University–Purdue University at Indianapolis. He is researching an environmental history of the Great Lakes that compares the Canadian and American perspectives.