The three hundred illustrations include useful maps and some artwork, but photographs predominate. Luebke's major source was the large photographic collection at the Nebraska State Historical Society, Lincoln, but he found some materials elsewhere as well. Distinguishing this offering from a more conventional picture book was the author's insistence on selecting illustrations based on their relevance to the themes and topics he selected rather than on a photograph's intrinsic appeal or curiosity. Another good feature is the author's preference for relatively lengthy captions that enable him fully to discuss the context as well as the subject matter of his illustrations.

This book reinforces the author's reputation as a well-informed historian and painstaking craftsman. The quality of both its text and illustrations are a reflection of his career-long study of the subject. Students of Nebraska history will welcome it; Hoosiers can find much to enjoy and learn about a distant neighbor in mid-America.

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Delia Webster and the Underground Railroad. By Randolph Paul Runyon. (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1996. Pp. x, 259. Illustrations, map, notes, bibliography, index. $29.95.)

The title of this book is misleading. On the surface it appears as though Randolph Paul Runyon's study were a biography of Delia Webster, a white middle-class teacher from Vergennes, Vermont, who became infamous for her work on the Underground Railroad. The work is, however, less about Webster than about the local political culture surrounding the debates about antislavery and "slave stealing" in small southern towns. Webster serves as a vehicle for exploring the antislavery networks that operated in Kentucky and extended northward and the fragile line that separated antislavery and proslavery forces in the South. As Runyon demonstrates in his discussion of Webster's relationship with her jailor, Newton Craig and his family, for example, such lines could easily blur.

In this narrative Webster, for several reasons, remains a shadowy figure. First, the author has expanded the purview of the study beyond a narrow chronology of Webster's life, an approach that often results in extensive discussions of other people: escaped slaves such as Lewis and Harriet Hayden and William and Ellen Craft; more prominent antislavery activists such as Levi Coffin and Calvin Fairbank; and the Craig family. It is always a difficult task for historians to locate their biographical subjects within a larger social, political, and economic context without losing their focus. Unfortunately, in this book Webster disappears from Runyon's narrative, partly because

Webster herself often disappeared from view, particularly after her release from prison in 1845. Second, Runyon and his research collaborator, William Albert Davis, encountered a problem that women's historians typically face. The documentary evidence on women who are not connected to famous public men is often fragmentary and scattered. Runyon does a remarkable job of piecing together available evidence, such as letters written by and about Webster, court records, deeds of sale, and newspaper articles, to construct the world within which Webster lived and worked.

The story of Webster's work on the Underground Railroad and, particularly, her interactions with escaped slaves, abolitionists, and local proslavery officials in Kentucky reveal a number of interrelated themes that deserve further analysis. Runyon's description of the subterfuge that often took place in order to help slaves escape raises intriguing questions about the phenomenon of "passing" and the ways in which abolitionists and light-skinned slaves consciously subverted the very categories of race, class, and gender identity that were used to subordinate women and blacks to facilitate their escapes. The two cases that Runyon discusses, the Hayden escape and the well-known case of William and Ellen Craft, are prime examples. But Runyon's study also reveals that white abolitionists also used societal assumptions of race, gender, and class as a way of "passing." He provides the reader with tantalizing bits of information about the ways in which Webster and many of her cohorts literally masked themselves in order to assist fugitive slaves to the northern free states and Canada. Webster often exploited her position as a white, middle-class woman in order to escape the scrutiny of slave catchers. Her identity also made a difference in how she was treated by proslavery officials.

Runyon misses numerous opportunities to explore in greater depth Webster's place in the movement. He only hints at such possibilities. His chapter titles, "On account of her sex," "The error of a woman's heart," and "A very bold and defiant kind of woman," taken from documents about Webster, reveal certain assumptions about race, class, and gender in Webster's time that shaped the way her contemporaries viewed her. People who knew Webster held varying opinions of her character. While some described her as "a bundle of deceit" (p. 180), others staunchly defended her as a woman of high character who was "a good but persecuted woman" (p. 178). To what extent were these comments bound by nineteenth-century middle-class expectations of women's proper behavior? Did some people chastize her for defying middle-class standards of female decorum? Did others defend her on this very same basis? To what extent were assessments of her character based upon the antislavery or proslavery sentiments of the observer who went out of the way to comment on her character? One might never know the answers to these ques-

tions, given the limitations of the evidence, but they are worth raising and exploring because they provide opportunities to understand in greater depth the complexity of Webster's activities.

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Women of the Far Right: The Mothers' Movement and World War II. By Glen Jeansonne. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996. Pp. xix, 264. Notes, illustrations, bibliographical essay, index. $29.95.)

Women of the Far Right is the first study of the "mothers' movement" that opposed United States intervention in World War II. Composed of groups such as the National Legion of Mothers of America, the Mothers of Sons Forum, and the National Blue Star Mothers, the mothers' movement was led by extreme right-wing women whose militant message mixed maternalism with fundamentalist Christianity, anticommunism, and antisemitism. Glen Jeansonne persuasively argues that although the mothers' movement was unlike organizations typically linked to women's antiwar activism, its leaders, goals, and efforts merit attention.

The mothers' movement began in California in the fall of 1939 and grew into a decentralized confederation of some one hundred groups on both coasts and in the Midwest. Jeansonne cites combined membership figures as high as five million. Members published books, pamphlets, and newsletters; testified before Congress to oppose conscription and Lend-Lease; picketed the White House; collected petitions; and participated in political campaigns. Unlike other isolationist groups such as the America First Committee, the mothers' movement remained active after 1941, resisting the war effort and campaigning for a negotiated peace.

Jeansonne challenges the accepted understanding of women's political commitments. Led by self-avowed fascists and Nazi sympathizers whose rhetoric was suffused with hate and who endorsed violence, the mothers' movement confounds the common assumption that women naturally abhor war and belligerence. Maternalism here prompted a defense of sons' lives not because wars are bad but because the United States favored the wrong side. Jeansonne rightly observes that scholars of women and politics prefer to study those of a left or a liberal persuasion and in so doing distort the subject. Greater consideration of right-wing women would complicate and deepen the understanding of women's relationship to politics.

Jeansonne himself might have pursued this problem further. The mothers' movement, he asserts, was neither conservative nor feminist, and, for the most part, Jeansonne does examine reactionary extremists who also defended patriarchy and male dominance. A few of the leaders in the mothers' movement, however, seem to have been