

eradication of “what actually happened.” So Marshall, unlike Hunt, does not validate the accounts she explores—instead, she repeatedly reveals how “Civil War Memory” does not square with the facts. And, ironically, she wants her readers to remember what the actors in her narrative forgot.

The most significant common feature of these two books is not, however, their consideration of memory versus facts. More strikingly, both authors discover racism as the prevalent motivation in the alterations that Civil War “memory” performs on history. The Cumberland soldiers claimed the moral victory of emancipation without facing the failure of Reconstruction or the position of freed slaves in postwar America;

because the system of slavery was destroyed by it, Kentuckians, by and large, rejected the Union cause that they had formerly supported. Both Hunt and Marshall explore the role that whiteness played in shaping these two quite different views of the Civil War. As it turned out, the winners and the losers had one common lapse of “memory” that would not be dealt with directly until the civil rights era. What will we remember next?

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Elizabeth Cady Stanton

An American Life

By Lori D. Ginzberg

(New York: Hill and Wang, 2009. Pp. 254. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. Paperbound, \$16.00.)

Through a detailed and engaging biography, Lori Ginzberg has attempted to humanize the larger-than-life women's rights reformer, Elizabeth Cady Stanton. Culling rich primary resources, Ginzberg explores Stanton's often strained personal relationships, her ever-changing reform activities, and the complicated connections between the two. Additionally, Ginzberg attempts to place Stanton and her activism within the context

of evolving conceptions of gender within the dynamic nineteenth-century political debates over both women's and African American rights that, as Ginzberg aptly shows, both unified and polarized reformers themselves. Stanton was, in Ginzberg's telling, an “extraordinary American who, in many respects, lived a very ordinary life” (p. 8).

Ginzberg argues that Stanton was one of the first reformers to devote

her considerable intellectual and persuasive powers exclusively to the cause of women's rights and that, in the process, she came to define feminism and feminist reforms for generations. However, as Ginzberg ably demonstrates, Stanton was also a mother who struggled with the demands of raising a large family, a wife who mourned a strained and distant relationship with her husband, a friend who frequently misunderstood the needs of those who cared most about her, and a woman who loved comfort and luxury to the point of hypocrisy.

The greatest contribution of this work lies in its early chapters, where Ginzberg explores Stanton's attraction to reform movements, her involvement in the abolitionist cause, and her integral role in the women's rights movement up to the passage of the Fifteenth Amendment. Particularly valuable is Ginzberg's exploration of a number of prevalent myths surrounding Stanton's childhood and early reform activities and their impact on her ultimate women's rights work. Ginzberg contends that Stanton's own fastidious editing of her papers resulted in inaccurate accounts of the reformer's early activism, including the well-known gender discrimination that she faced on her honeymoon at the World Anti-Slavery Convention. The result of such changes was to inflate her importance within, and her dedication to, the abolitionist movement. Through

the use of exceptional primary research, Ginzberg successfully presents the image of a woman at times blinded by her own dedication to the cause of women's rights and never truly invested in abolition, making it logical for Stanton to argue against the cause of African American rights when she saw the Fifteenth Amendment as detrimental to women's suffrage.

Sadly, the subsequent chapters examining the period from 1868 to the end of Stanton's life in 1902 are not as detailed or as brilliant as the first section of the work. However, they still provide interesting insights into the early functioning of the National Women's Suffrage Association, the writing of the Women's Bible, and Stanton's other extensive women's rights activism during this period. Ginzberg's gift for culling a wide variety of primary sources is also prevalent in these chapters, as she explores Stanton's complicated personal and professional relationship with Susan B. Anthony, the reactions of other reformers to her personality and her activism, as well as her strained and at times heartbreaking connections to her family.

Overall, *Elizabeth Cady Stanton: An American Life* provides a valuable contribution to nineteenth-century American reform history. Lori Ginzberg fills a substantial need in the historiography of the women's rights movement, providing a well-researched and accessible biography, and ably demonstrating that Eliza-

beth Cady Stanton was at once a remarkable intellectual, a vastly influential reformer, and a complex and flawed human being.

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*Hamlin Garland, Prairie Radical
Writings from the 1890s*
Edited by Donald Pizer

(Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2010. Pp. xxvii, 162. Notes, index. \$45.00.)

Hamlin Garland's standing in contemporary American literary studies rests largely on his tales of the Middle Border found in *Main-Travelled Roads* (1891), a collection of short stories that present an honest and often excoriating portrait of midwestern farm life in the 1880s. For a while he was an essential reference point in the history and teaching of American realism and naturalism, but his stock fell sharply in the culture wars of the 1970s and '80s, and it has only been with the recovery of local color writing and regionalism in the last twenty years that his name has begun to creep back into mainstream academic discussion. Donald Pizer's collection attempts to contribute to this small resurrection of Garland's reputation, and does so not by reiterating his position within the field of regional fiction but by bringing together for the first time a series of his writings from the late 1880s and '90s—the "first act" of his career, before he turned to writing more conventional romantic novels—that reveal him as an engaged and sometimes radical political writer.

The figure that emerges in these pages is, however, not always entirely persuasive. After a typically thorough and informative introduction from Pizer that emphasizes the personal motivations behind Garland's work and that highlights, especially, the importance of Henry George and Herbert Spencer to his intellectual formation, the book splits into two sections: four examples of his Middle Border fiction not previously collected, and a small but indicative selection of "Social, Political, and Critical Writing" that captures the anger and vigor of Garland's early life. The fiction is a welcome addition to Garland scholarship and will prove invaluable to a fuller picture of his literary output, but does present a vision of midwestern farm life that can be forbiddingly hopeless. The first story, "A Common Case" (1888), tells of a work-worn woman dying from cancer whose delirious and desperate final moments are spent denouncing her entire life, particularly her husband; "John Boyle's Conclusion" (also 1888), whose eponymous character is driven to suicide by failed crops and