

sued his analysis further by loosening the geographic and chronological scope of this study to incorporate more literature. I would have enjoyed reading Smith discussing Theodore Dreiser's description of New Yorkers pouring by in a thick stream in 1900's *Sister Carrie*, and Mark Twain's 1905 satirical imagining of himself as a cholera germ coursing through the body of an immigrant in his story "Three Thousand Years among the Microbes" (echoing Shattuck a half-century earlier). But the analysis offered here demonstrates that public health experts and policy makers shared in this collective rhetoric and provides a valuable illustration of the culture in which municipal policies

were made. This engaging book is an important contribution to urban environmental history and is highly recommended for readers seeking to understand the complex ways in which nineteenth-century Americans interacted with the natural environment, the built environment, and each other.

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Cultivating Regionalism: Higher Education and the Making of the American Midwest

Kenneth H. Wheeler

DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2011. Pp. 156. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$38.00.)

Kenneth H. Wheeler begins this interesting study of higher education in the Midwest by telling the story of Robert Noyce, inventor of the microchip, founder of Intel Corporation, and pioneer of the non-hierarchical work culture that came to define California's Silicon Valley. But this West Coast millionaire's life began in a small Iowa town, and he graduated from a small midwestern college. Wheeler posits that Noyce sprang from "a regional culture that emphasized productivity and usefulness,

had a rich history of egalitarianism in social institutions, and valued creativity and new ideas" (p. 3). In the five chapters that follow, the author goes on to chronicle the building of western colleges, the nature of their manual labor programs, and their influence on the Progressive movement.

Wheeler starts with the foundation of regional colleges in the land ordinances of the 1780s and the spread of denominations intent on founding their own institutions of higher learning as they moved west-

ward. The new schools arose in towns rather than cities, and educational leaders intended them to produce “excellent and Christian citizens” while providing “a statement of values” (p. 20). While easterners focused on sports like gymnastics and southerners included military drills to keep students active and healthy, the midwestern schools promoted manual labor. Students worked literally to build and expand the schools, to pay off their education, and to advance the cause of scientific agriculture. Grounded in the goal of perfecting society that grew out of the Great Awakening, educational leaders furthered the cause of coeducation to bring all into the fold and strove to make education practical, anti-elitist, and useful—the last term, according to Wheeler denoting a “mostly middle-class emphasis on practical and productive labor for the common good” (p. 54). These westerners defined themselves by the work they did, rather than the goods they bought. As eager participants in nineteenth-century reform movements, pious students engaged in vigorous public debates. Ohio receives more attention than Indiana in this study, but readers of this journal will enjoy the way Wheeler uses a story of non-violent conflict between the students and faculty at Indiana Asbury University in 1856 to explore student culture. The author finishes by tracing the career paths of graduates such as John Wesley Powell and Harvey W. Wiley as they helped shape the Progressive

movement in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Wheeler dives into the writings of college founders, analyzes the correspondence of professors and supporters, and looks at the published papers that grew from lectures delivered by invited speakers. Student voices are heard through their diaries and the letters they sent home. In addition, the author delves into the minutes of literary societies, college catalogs, and regional education news published by local college and denominational presses. Looking over this list, it is easy to see why Wheeler’s story is an overwhelmingly positive one. He concludes that there are “many midwests” (p. 99) and argues that too much emphasis is given to Sinclair Lewis’s novel *Babbitt* (1922) with its depiction of middle-class anti-intellectualism and conformity, reminding readers that Lewis wrote another novel, *Arrowsmith* (1924), that celebrated the traditions of science, medicine, and community service that were also hallmarks of the Midwest. *Cultivating Regionalism* is a slim book—it barely tops one hundred pages of text—but it is a thought-provoking and welcome addition to the history of the Midwest.

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