Dreiser was selfish and self-centered, illogical, erratic, inconsistent, deceitful, superstitious, suspicious of everyone, unpredictable, and both niggardly and extravagant with money. Possessing an animal magnetism, he considered "sex as the real business of life" (p. 355) and could bed three different women in one day. He quarreled with his friends—even his best friend, H. L. Mencken—and publishers, once throwing coffee in the face of Horace Liveright. He made the mistake of marrying, for he was consistently promiscuous with housewives, college girls, and others—even prostitutes. His many women friends were also important to him professionally, since they acted as secretaries and helped to criticize and cut his manuscripts.

Dreiser believed in evolution and survival of the fittest, held no hope for reform in politics or society, believed that life is chaos, and tried to develop a philosophy of life deriving from mechanistic science, though eventually he came to believe in a creative force, perhaps God. He made himself unpopular by espousing many radical causes. He hated the Catholic Church and the Jews; loved to quarrel (once he slapped Sinclair Lewis); considered entrenched wealth his enemy, although he was a capitalist himself, holding stocks and property; and plagiarized from Lewis and Sherwood Anderson. He admired Hitler. Alternately praising and damning Russia and communism, before his death he joined the Communist party—to the despair of many disciplined Communists. In Russia his works were the most published of American authors.

Still, his books, clumsy, prolix, and often boring, written too rapidly and abounding in technical inaccuracies and lack of taste, reflected great sympathy for human suffering, as in An American Tragedy, which was the novel that made him really famous and prosperous. Dreiser was a champion of social justice, the pioneer who made the important break in American literature from the genteel tradition. Fighting the censorship and Puritanism which banned his books, such as The "Genius," he was the leader in the field of realism, a transition between Howells and Hemingway.

This is beautifully written, well-documented scholarship which often reads like a novel. The only defect is the mass of detail, in which the reader may lose himself; yet this is the stuff of life itself. Swanberg's is the definitive biography of Dreiser.

*DePauw University*  
Arthur W. Shumaker


This is a good biography of one of Indiana's most able congressmen and political leaders in the periods immediately before and following the Civil War. While the author lists Julian as a radical, this reviewer...
is inclined to regard him as one of the leading reformers of his time. He was intensely interested in such national problems as slavery, public land policy, women's rights, and the labor movement. The author's handling and interpretations of those problems are excellent. Herein lie the value and the strength of the book.

Julian did not hesitate to change his political affiliations. He was a Whig, Free Soiler, Republican, Liberal Republican, and finally a Democrat. Julian was the only Free Soiler that Indiana ever sent to Congress. While his highest office was that of congressman, his liking for controversy probably prevented his appointment to the cabinet by more than one president.

Julian was quick to oppose some of the vested interests of his time. He was ever alert to oppose the efforts of the railroads to raid the public domain which, he insisted, should be set aside as an agrarian utopia for the people. His acceptance at a late age of an appointment by President Cleveland as Surveyor General of Public Lands in the territory of New Mexico is evidence of his interest in that direction. A free trader, he strongly opposed the efforts of manufacturers to persuade Congress to raise the protective tariff.

Julian's record as a radical was typical of that of the radicals in Congress who opposed Lincoln's conduct of the Civil War and Lincoln's and Johnson's reconstruction policies. His feud with Oliver P. Morton over Johnson's handling of the southern problem and his dislike for President Grant made him uncomfortable in the Republican party. Finally, convinced that the Republican party had shot its bolt in the matter of reform when it freed the slaves, he supported the Liberal Republican movement in 1872. Incidentally, the author was unable to find any evidence that Julian was involved in the scandals of Grant's administrations or that he was other than honest during his public career.

Only two weaknesses were found in this study. First, Riddleberger used too much space in his discussion and explanation of such items as the Compromise of 1850, the Kansas-Nebraska Bill, and Lincoln's controversy with General Fremont during the Civil War. Readers of the book should already know such information. Second, the author depended rather too much on secondary works as sources. That nearly six and a half pages of the bibliographical essay were devoted to secondary works is evidence of their use. Unfortunately Julian's daughter destroyed a portion of his Journal before making it available to the public. It is possible that this action created a gap or vacuum that compelled the use of secondary works. The index is adequate.

The above criticisms should not detract from the worth of such a scholarly volume which will be of great value to students of both Indiana and American history.

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Powell A. Moore