

"acculturated mixed-blood with a Ph.D.," leaves unanswered the question as to "whether or not the Female Seminary was entirely beneficial or entirely detrimental to the Cherokees," observing only that "it was perhaps a bit of both." She also does not fully explore what in fact constituted Cherokee identity for the two generations of mixed-bloods who set the tone of the school, or for the tribal leaders who were the seminary's supporters. Mihesuah asserts that past students remained "intensely proud of their Cherokee lineage," but does not explore in any detail what it actually meant—and means today—to be a "Cherokee."

Cultivating the Rosebuds is an extraordinarily intriguing case study of the critical role played by formal education in shaping identity. Despite the Cherokee Female Seminary's records having been lost in a school fire in 1887, Devon Mihesuah has recreated the school's ethos in captivating fashion. Mihesuah's larger goal was to "show that, historically and today, Cherokee women are especially complex individuals." This point she also makes graphically and effectively, not just for the Cherokees but, by inference, for Native women across North America.

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Abbie Morgan Madenwald. *Arctic Schoolteacher, Kulukak, Alaska, 1931-1933.* Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1992.

Volume 59 in the Western Frontier Library. Pp. 196, illus. \$19.95 U.S. cloth.

In August 1931, a young American couple set off for the Alaska hamlet of Kulukak as economic refugees from the Great Depression. Naive but enthusiastic, they gradually made a home for themselves and in the process were welcomed into the lives of the people of the region. This little book is a charming memoir of Abbie Morgan Madenwald's experiences as a teacher for two years in Kulukak.

This is not a book for those who would like an examination of pedagogical theory and technique in the 1930s, nor will it be particularly useful for those looking for ethnographic details on a northern society in transition. Instead, it is a collection of anecdotes with all the classic elements of a good story: tragedy, comedy, suspense, action, and even romance. The author's photographs add an interesting visual dimension to the tale.

At a time when it is fashionable to agonize over the assimilation programme foisted upon aboriginal children through North American schools, this book is a quiet reminder that the assimilation programme was carried out by some very well-meaning individuals. The author came to teach in Alaska with very little knowledge of the people and apparently no clear sense of intention other than to be a good teacher. While she and her husband learned to accommodate to the realities of their spartan situation, there was always a hidden assumption that things ought to be done "properly" as

often as possible, and that the Eskimo needed to learn those conventions. Occasionally she reveals the attitudes of her generation, referring, for example, to the Eskimo religious beliefs as "superstition." But she never mocks their customs and her obvious fondness for the indigenous people of Alaska shines through on every page. She respected and admired a number of her new neighbours and genuinely loved the children in her care, seeking to make their lives as happy and comfortable as she knew how. This is the gentle face of assimilation.

The book is intended to be entertaining rather than educational and it certainly succeeds in its goal. One is left, however, hungering for more information. What did the people of Kukulak think of their schoolteacher and her husband, the novice reindeer-herder? Under what circumstances did she obtain the beautiful clothing made by Eskimo women? What exactly did she teach in school, and, with experience, did she change her mind about any of the curriculum? What did the community think about the new technologies and ideas reading them from "outside?" What did the parents want their children to learn at school?

Although the book contributes nothing of substance to our knowledge of the history of education, it makes delightful reading for a winter's evening. It also serves as a snapshot reminder of the experiences and attitudes of a previous generation in the Arctic.

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Mary Hurlbut Cordier. *Schoolwomen of the Prairies and Plains: Personal Narratives from Iowa, Kansas, and Nebraska, 1860s-1920s.* Albuquerque: The University of New Mexico Press, 1992. Pp. 365. \$32.50 U.S.

There exists an enduring stereotype of the selfless spinster schoolmarm, born and bred to eastern values and ideals, who travels west to effect a civilizing influence upon the children of the little red schoolhouse. Of course, this stereotype contains more fiction than fact, but just how far removed it was from the reality of the 1860s to 1920s is brought to light via Mary Cordier's discourse on prairie schoolwomen. Cordier's subject is indigenous schoolteachers, heartland women by birth and choice, for it was they, and not their eastern counterparts, who participated in the early creation of an educational system. These women, the role of teaching in their lives, and their own role within emerging communities form the subject of this book. To recover the lives of schoolwomen the author has turned to their own narratives, letters, diaries, interviews with living pioneers and their descendants, memoirs, and school reports. Where possible she has included photographs documenting individual lives, the development of schools, and the importance of the land. Many schoolwomen are represented through these sources, but the second half of the book is devoted to an in-depth treatment of five of them. Cordier chose to focus her research about schoolwomen on the heartland