

settlers had extended contact with each other and varying relationships to the federal government throughout the period she scrutinizes.

With a concise narrative interwoven with Roberts's family stories, *I've Been Here All the While* is accessible to academics as well as those engaging in genealogy, public history, and community-based knowledge-making. It provokes members of invested communities—descendants, historians, Indigenous activists—to ponder how and whether self-advocacy and rhetorical strategies contribute to settler colonialism amid larger contexts of coercion, enslavement, and violence.

Making A White Man's West

Deutsch, Sarah. *Making a Modern U.S. West: The Contested Terrain of a Region and Its Borders, 1898-1940*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2022. x + 640 pp. \$50.00 (hardcover), ISBN 978-1-4962-2861-1.

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The “History of the American West Series,” conceived in the mid-1990s by editors at the University of Nebraska Press as a multivolume cycle overseen by the renowned historian Richard Etulain, has been an extraordinary success. Colin G. Calloway kicked things off with *One Vast Winter Count* (2003), a sweeping survey of the Native American West prior to the expedition of the Corps of Discovery. He passed the baton to Anne F. Hyde, whose *Empires, Nations, and Families* (2011) offered a bold reinterpretation of the region across the first half of the nineteenth century, focusing less on state formation and more on the intimate relations of human networks. Between them, these first two installments of the series amassed an impressive collection of academic hardware, including a pair of major awards from the OAH for Calloway and the Bancroft Prize for Hyde, who was also a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize.

Sarah Deutsch meets these lofty standards with her own contribution to the series, *Making a Modern U.S. West*. As with the best syntheses, Deutsch's book covers extensive terrain, from the Spanish-American War to the nationwide mobilization on the eve of American entry into World War II. But instead of simply unspooling the narrative in chronological fashion, Deutsch advances a provocative and compelling thesis, too. Namely, she argues that the era in question is best understood as a “contest over who could participate in the modern West, whose claims to that participation would be seen as legitimate, [and] whose identities could be fixed or erased” (8). The victors in that struggle, she concludes, belonged primarily to a single group, asserting that “these decades were the glory days of the white man's West” (452).

The book's structure is straightforward and reader-friendly, composed of four sections of three chapters each. The first quarter, "Demarcating, 1898-1910," showcases the author's talent for moving easily among subfields. Deutsch begins by exploring how the federal government's vast irrigation schemes of the early twentieth century made possible intensive human settlement and the subsequent emergence of industrial agriculture in areas otherwise too dry for such purposes. She then pivots in the next two chapters to consider the lines drawn to separate the peoples—both natives and newcomers—who made their lives there. On the most basic level, there was the simple matter of geopolitics, as officials sought to stiffen the border with Mexico and shore up the U.S. territorial gains of the nineteenth century. Meanwhile, internal boundaries hardened, too, as seen in Boley, Oklahoma, which Deutsch uses as a case study to demonstrate how Indigenous groups and Black emigrants grappled for space on the Southern Plains, only to suffer disenfranchisement at the hands of white Americans.

"Agitating, 1910-21," explores the century's turbulent second decade, starting with the Mexican Revolution. The turmoil generated by that conflict soon spilled northward across the border, especially into Texas, where thousands of Mexicans sought refuge from the violence. Against this backdrop, rumors of an irredentist campaign to return the U.S. Southwest to Mexico precipitated a brutal crackdown led in part by the Texas Rangers, which resulted in the deaths of hundreds of people of Mexican descent. Other battles over belonging erupted during the same period throughout the West, including contests over women's suffrage, Indian citizenship, African American mobility, and labor. Deutsch notes that typically these movements "have been treated in isolation from each other," when in fact they emerged from a shared effort—often but not always thwarted—"to expand democratic participation" (173).

Perhaps the book's most fascinating section is the third, "Speculating, 1920-29," which charts the rise of what Deutsch calls "a state that is organized to promote and protect speculation and that creates the normative, virtuous citizen, the most desirable citizen, the modern citizen as speculator" (232). She illustrates this phenomenon by focusing on a pair of iconic western resources—oil and land—in order to show how white men were the chief beneficiaries of federal largesse, even as the individual (and not the state) assumed most of the risk when launching such ventures. Then, in the section's third and best chapter, Deutsch explains how the emergence of Hollywood was itself the product of this same speculative climate, which it packaged in celluloid tales consumed throughout the country, thus establishing a specifically western storyline as a national narrative. Just consider that "from 1900 to 1960, at least a third of films in the United States were westerns" (334).

The book concludes with a section titled "Mobilizing, 1928-40." Here Deutsch explores how the sudden collapse of the speculative economy and the cataclysm of the Great Depression deeply affected the West. The region's economic output suffered steep decline, as many of its key sectors—among them farming, ranching, mining, and oil—had huge surpluses but few consumers. It is thus little surprise, then, that New Deal programs had particular impact beyond the Mississippi, even as their implementation—underwritten by a tide of federal dollars—yielded a strange paradox for a region that located its virtue in rugged independence. As Deutsch writes, the West that had emerged by the end of the 1930s represented "at once the most modern manifestation of the nation and the most traditional promise of individual landed opportunity."

By a miracle of timing, readers inspired by Deutsch's book may satisfy their curiosity about the epochs immediately preceding and following her study by turning to the final pair of volumes in the Nebraska series, long in development but almost coincident in their

appearance: Elliott West's *Continental Reckoning: The American West in the Age of Expansion*, and John Findlay's *The Mobilized American West: 1940-2000*, published in the spring and summer of 2023, respectively. Taken together—and exemplified by Deutsch's glittering installment—these books offer a riveting portrait of a region that continues to fascinate and confound in equal measure.

Woodrow Wilson and His Inner Circle

Neu, Charles E. *The Wilson Circle: President Woodrow Wilson and His Advisers*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2022. 296 pp. \$49.95 (hardcover), ISBN 9781421442983.

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This is not Charles Neu's best book. The distinguished historian of American foreign relations has written penetrating and accessible analyses of America's involvement in Vietnam and U.S. relations with Japan, as well as a comprehensive biography of "Colonel" Edward M. House, Woodrow Wilson's sounding board on foreign policy (until their break midway through the Paris Peace Conference, when, during Wilson's brief illness, House made concessions to the British and French that the president considered insubordinate and intolerable). As Neu admits in his prologue, *The Wilson Circle* is an outgrowth of his book on House, a chance to "get to know" the full "inner circle" of men and women whom Wilson brought into his confidence as president (xi). For this reader, it feels like an effort to publish the ancillary notes biographers take on the individuals and relationships critical to understanding and sensitively portraying their central subject, but that do not belong in the biography of the central figure itself. The overall impression on this reader is a collection of potted biographies no greater than the sum of its parts—a string of profiles offering little new insight into Wilson's thinking and decision making either individually or collectively.

There are bright spots. It is welcome to see a historian take seriously Wilson's relationships with his two wives, Ellen Axson Wilson and Edith Bolling (Galt) Wilson. In the first case, however, it would have been useful for Neu to have spent more time on Wilson and Edith's pre-presidential life together, especially during Wilson's tenure as president of Princeton, when Edith helped Wilson develop, test, and implement some of the political habits, skills, and strategies Wilson would take into the New Jersey governor's mansion and White House. In the second, Neu successfully navigates a trickier subject by refusing to either swallow the myth of Edith as shadow president running (or bungling) the nation's affairs in the aftermath of Wilson's paralytic stroke of October 1919 or