

River Republic: The Fall and Rise of America's Rivers

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ancient mounds in the Ohio Valley in two different years. It may be too much to say that errors of fact (and I could cite more examples) hurt Schneider's credibility, but they are annoying to the careful reader with knowledge of the subject at hand, and they could cause some readers to question other aspects of Schneider's tales.

On balance, there's probably more to like, and more interesting insight to be gained, from Schneider's book than there are fatal flaws. Ultimately, the book offers a great deal to readers interested in the histories of the upper Midwest. The Mississippi River is a central element for the history of Iowa, Illinois, Wisconsin, and Minnesota. Schneider's treatment of the period beginning when Europeans were first coming into the upper reaches of the watershed and his focus on the watersheds to the south and east of the upper Mississippi are important contexts for understanding much of what has happened here. Readers should be advised, though, that Schneider's tales are like the tales of a steamboat passenger: engaging, interesting, and seductive, but always in need of skepticism and critical inquiry.

River Republic: The Fall and Rise of America's Rivers, by Daniel McCool. New York: Columbia University Press, 2012. xix, 388 pp. Map, illustrations, notes, index. \$34.50 hardcover.

Reviewer Mark Harvey is professor of history at North Dakota State University. He is the author of *Wilderness Forever: Howard Zahniser and the Path to the Wilderness Act* (2005) and *A Symbol of Wilderness: Echo Park and the American Conservation Movement* (2000).

Dan McCool has written a hopeful book about the rivers of the United States. McCool, a political scientist at the University of Utah, is the author and editor of several books on water policy and history, especially in the American West. As such, he brings to bear considerable expertise on the subject, especially in regard to the political and policy-making struggles affecting rivers and water use generally. But McCool also knows his history. Throughout this fine study he is mindful of the powerful forces that have reshaped American rivers for decades. In the book's early chapters, he reveals how the Army Corps of Engineers and Bureau of Reclamation, along with irrigation districts, private power companies, and a variety of economic and political interests connected to municipalities and states, largely had their way in reshaping rivers for human uses. Since the early nineteenth century, rivers have been dredged, laced with levees, and dammed to control floods, generate power, provide irrigation, and ensure ease of transportation on the Mississippi, Missouri, and Ohio rivers. The often

ghastly condition of numerous rivers reflected as well a habit of treating them as dumping grounds for a barrage of pollutants, industrial discharges, agricultural chemicals and wastes, and an array of old machines, cars, tires, and other detritus of a throwaway society. Throughout, McCool is mindful of this thick history of manipulation and abuse of rivers, and he ably analyzes the history and political jockeying by powerful interest groups, influential lawmakers, and state and federal agencies.

But McCool is primarily interested in exploring the new era we have recently entered in which ideas about rivers have changed dramatically. Across the United States, a bevy of grassroots activists and nonprofit organizations have re-envisioned rivers and sought to clean and restore them. With dams removed, fish ladders installed, walking paths created, and the water cleaned, America's rivers are becoming avenues of environmental restoration and corridors of hope and renewal for the humans who live near them. In McCool's words, "Water hubris is slowly giving way to a new water ethic." At its core, he argues, the movement to restore rivers "means living like we care about the planet, care about the future, and care about one another. It means treating rivers as the common property of all, cared for by all, managed to serve the nation as a whole for innumerable generations" (23–24).

McCool explores such restoration efforts across the country. The author visited rivers and their local defenders from Washington to Virginia and Florida to Utah. His accounts of those visits are served up in a personal, engaging style. Along the way he introduces intriguing and determined individuals and grassroots organizations that have set restoration projects into motion, often against daunting odds. In short vignettes (sometimes too short for this reader), he paints vivid portraits of a variety of such people. Among them are grizzled veterans of the Army Corps and Bureau who have retired from government and are now engaged in river restoration and who sometimes acknowledge the shortcomings of their former employers' sense of "water hubris." Other profiles are of Lee Cain of Maryland, who saw the possibilities of restoring the Anacostia River and helped make it happen, and of 70-year-old Phyllis Clausen of the Friends of the White Salmon River in Washington, determined, energetic, optimistic, and the embodiment of the kind of local activist who should inspire us all. Renata von Tscherner, planner and architect, helped lay a fresh vision for how urbanites in greater Boston could enjoy the Charles River. McCool also explores the stories, politics, and restoration efforts involved with dam breaching on Oregon's Rogue River, Washington's Elwha River, and Maine's Penobscot River.

Readers of this book who (like this reviewer) are historically inclined might especially admire McCool's solid historical treatments of particular rivers and the challenges facing them. Among the best of these are his treatments of dams and hydropower on the Snake River in Idaho, the Glen Canyon dam and its effects on the Colorado River in the Grand Canyon, recreation on Lake Powell and the lost magnificence of Glen Canyon, and the impact of levees, locks, and flood control structures on the Ohio, Mississippi, and Missouri Rivers. Those more interested in political science will profit from McCool's analysis of the powerful stakeholders who influence river management, including big agriculture, the barge industry, communities in the flood plain, and those who rely on hydropower and flood control. For those intrigued with nonprofit organizations, there is much here of interest and insight as well. It is one measure of McCool's book that it will appeal to different disciplines and types of readers. Even more, he has given us a river book that shows with stark clarity and force the great shift—generational, political, environmental—in Americans' thinking about rivers in the past few decades, a shift that has transformed and restored countless rivers across the country as well as many citizens who live near them.

In Meat We Trust: An Unexpected History of Carnivore America, by Maureen Ogle. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2013. xiii, 368 pp. Notes, bibliography, index. \$28.00 hardcover, \$26.00 e-book.

Reviewer Wilson J. Warren is professor of history at Western Michigan University. He is the author of *Tied to the Great Packing Machine: The Midwest and Meatpacking* (2007) and *Struggling with "Iowa's Pride": Labor Relations, Unionism, and Politics in the Rural Midwest since 1877* (2000).

Food history is one of the fastest-growing fields of historical scholarship. Everyone eats, so the study of foodways is an ideal prism for understanding significant economic, social, and cultural changes. Food history has also made inroads into the popular history marketplace. Maureen Ogle's book on the history of meat in the United States is aimed at a broad readership and, as suggested by her subtitle, hopes to enliven and even startle Americans into new ways of thinking about our meat-eating proclivities. While interesting and well-researched in many respects, the book is also often misleading and overly polemical.

Two major assumptions about demand and production guide Ogle's perspectives on how the United States became one of the world's most carnivorous nations. Regarding demand, she believes that from the beginning Americans pursued a meat-centered diet. About pro-

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