

nization of American Historian's report, *Imperiled Promise: The State of History in the National Park Service* (2011). Like *Imperiled Promise*, Soukup and Machlis point to the NPS's lack of support and hiring of experts (historians in the OAH's case, scientists in the *American Covenant's* case) as a hinderance to the agency's ability to manage its sites "unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations."

In this manner, the two authors' larger assertion that America needs a National Park Service for tomorrow rings true. However, their argument that in order to meet the environmental challenges of the future the national parks must become more than "vacation destinations" is a much harder lift. While the NPS has come to place conservation above visitor enjoyment, the surge in visitor numbers over the past decade illustrates that the public views the national parks as places to recreate and find respite. Furthermore, to convert the parks into living laboratories would require a revision of the NPS's Organic Act—a political unreality.

Yet, *American Covenant* is the start of an important conversation. Not just on the future of the national parks, but of the environment more broadly. Certainly, the parks can become as Soukup and Machlis envision—hubs of life-long learning and community dialogue. For as they point out, the parks are illustrative of the much larger environmental problems facing us both today and into the future.

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The Geology, Ecology, and Human History of the San Luis Valley. Edited by Jared Maxwell Beeton, Charles Nicholas Saenz, and Benjamin James Waddell. (Louisville: University Press of Colorado, 2020. 518 pp. 86 halftones, index. \$101.00 cloth, ISBN 978-1-64642-039-1; \$36.95 paper, ISBN 978-1-64642-041-4; \$28.00 ebook, ISBN 978-1-64642-040-7.)

This edited volume contains eighteen chapters, plus an introduction and forward, from twenty-seven different authors on the human and physical characteristics of the San Luis Valley in southern Colorado and northern New Mexico. As North America's largest interalpine valley, surrounded by towering mountains and situated at the northern frontier of Spanish colonization, the San Luis Valley has long garnered interest among scholars from many disciplines. The volume is organized into three sections, the first and longest addressing the geology and ecology, the second dealing with the human history, and a short final section on travel itineraries.

Chapters in part 1 begin with the geologic history and geomorphology of the valley and surrounding mountains with a focus on the dunes of the Great Sand Dunes National Park. Other chapters discuss the mining history, natural hazards, plant and animal life, and ongoing conservation efforts, but the strength of this section is chapter 7, which covers groundwater resources, including an explanation of the hydrogeologic model, methods of recharge and discharge for the aquifer, and the overall water budget. All throughout the West, particularly in this desert valley, irrigation is the basis of the agricultural economy. The topic is even more contentious here because external actors have targeted ground water seeking to export this resource to Front Range cities in Colorado.

Part 2 provides a comprehensive summary of the prehistoric settlement and historic Indigenous use of the valley and an overview of the Hispano and Anglo settlement, including the Denver and Rio Grande Western Railroad's influence. Chapter 12, on early Hispano settlement, is particularly rich with discussion of the changing geopolitics of this Spanish colonial frontier. It examines Spanish exploration of the region, the issuance of Mexican land grants, Jewish roots of many settlers in the Upper Rio Grande, the growth of the Penitente Brotherhood and other folk religious expressions, and the evolving relationships between early agricultural settlers and Native Americans, fur trappers, and, later, Anglo settlers including Mormons. Chapters 14 and 15 deal with Japanese settlement and the history of discriminatory lending practices that continue to contribute to Hispano poverty, respectively. The section ends with a strong chapter (16) on the linguistic distinctions of traditional Spanish spoken in the valley, a reflection of the unique culture that evolved in this isolated frontier.

Part 3, at first, seems out of place as a sort of tourism promotion guide discussing fly fishing and rock-climbing opportunities in the valley and surrounding mountains. Upon reflection, however, these chapters do make important contributions that reflect the changing economies and use of public lands in the New West. A regional geography such as this runs the danger of devolving into a series of superficial and potentially boring descriptors about place—landforms, climate, economic output, demographics, etc. Happily, that is not the case with this volume. The editors have ensured that all contributors maintain a balanced mix of introductory context along with more detailed research for each topic.

While experts in any one field may find the chapter for their particular discipline somewhat generalized, other chapters on related topics will surely enrich their understanding by highlighting connections between the many different topical fields. The editors also state that the intended audience is broad, not merely scholars—they target a diverse group of readers with interest in the valley. Commendably, Beeton, et al. have succeeded at blending academic research

with popular language. This book can be a useful reference for academic audiences, but also presents a series of stories with rich descriptions of people and land that are of interest to a general readership, particularly anybody interested in the unique place identity and landscapes of the San Luis Valley.

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With Grit and Determination: A Century of Change for Women in Great Basin and American Archaeology. Edited by Suzanne Eskenazi and Nicole M. Herzog. (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2020. 224 pp. 30 halftones, tables, bibliography. \$60.00 cloth, ISBN 978-1-64769-004-5; \$48.00 ebook, ISBN 978-1-64769-005-2.)

With Grit and Determination: A Century of Change for Women in Great Basin and American Archaeology is a well-constructed volume with a foreword, introduction, and nine chapters. Seven chapters (by Catherine Fowler, Melinda Leach, Heidi Roberts, Charlotte Beck, Barbara Frank, Laurel H. Glidden, Linda Scott Cummings) and the foreword (by Lorann S. A. Pendleton) are biographical; three—including the introduction—are synthesized (Nicole M. Herzog and Suzanne Eskenazi, Rebecca L. Rauch, and Shannon Tushingham and Tiffany J. Fulkerson).

Herzog and Eskenazi's introduction identifies three themes present in the chapters that follow it: serendipity in career paths, the way the author's work relates to changing theories (even without many explicitly feminist paradigms in Great Basin archaeology), and the importance of mentorship. Most of the authors are senior scholars who provide reflections and analyses of their career paths; Glidden, one of the younger biographers, relates her challenges and choices to the work of and guidance from the women preceding her. The authors represent academia, museum work, and private and public sector cultural resource management. The biographical pieces are uneven, some with more clarity of purpose and others more about life's journey. Many personal accounts offer a sense of each author's primary contributions to research or practice. Pendleton's foreword is a pep talk and I imagine this author, and the others in the book, are writing for an early career audience of Americanists and women. The authors are often modest in tone, as they impart to the next generation what it takes to navigate a satisfying career, even if not anticipated.

Chapter 1, by Fowler, interweaves her own career development into a biographical presentation about Isabel Kelly, who worked in archaeology and