

labor and nurturing for each group in the Blackland. Childhood, courtship, marriage, and children (along with socioeconomic position and race), affected women differently and altered the family balance, in some cases complicating the farm woman's position and role in the house. Within the home, women worked to provide shelter, clothing, and food usually with very little cash or resources. Specifically, discussion centered on types of housing, household furnishings, indoor plumbing and electricity, construction of clothing or purchase of pre-made clothes, and foodstuffs grown/raised, consumed, and preserved, as well as sold. On the farm, women provided field assistance during peak periods such as cultivation and harvest.

While women's importance to families is easily recognized, farm women, as the largest adult section of Texas population before 1940, held equal worth to the local community. Their involvement in local affairs and institutions, such as religion, extension, and education, strengthened positions held by families. Over time, however, the arrival of the automobile, out migration of young people, and urbanization of rural towns fundamentally changed the agricultural way of life for these women and the Blackland. Their stories then, bound together by class, ethnicity, experiences, and race, provide scholars with their history. And, while most agricultural and southern historians, for the most part, have concentrated on postbellum cotton production and crop lien systems, with little analysis toward the women and their personal lives on southern cotton farms, Sharpless has changed that with *Fertile Ground, Narrow Choices*.

Stephanie Carpenter
Murray State University

Vision in the Desert: Carl Hayden and Hydropolitics in the American Southwest. By Jack L. August Jr. Fort Worth: Texas Christian University Press, 1999. 386 pp., \$29.95, ISBN 0-087565-191-7.

More than a political biography, Jack August's study of Senator Hayden addresses the large role Arizona played in the politics of western water development. The Reclamation Act of 1902 provides the springboard permitting the federal government access to western water development; even-

tually ushering in the era of big dams. The expenditure of huge capital outlays, hydroelectricity, and urban/agricultural water supplies fired the imaginations of western political leaders. Carl Hayden was no exception. Along with other western senators (Francis Newlands, Hiram Johnson, and Key Pittman, to name but a few) he saw the possibilities—even the absolute necessity—for big dams if the West were to become something more than a wind-swept desert in an otherwise modernizing nation.

Arizona presented a problem. It opposed the Colorado Compact, but Carl Hayden did much to avert and overcome the belligerent behavior of a series of governors. The author admiringly relates his skill maneuvering in the state's serpentine politics that at one point caused the deployment of the Arizona National Guard to oppose work on an aspect of the Boulder Dam Project. The milestones along the way for Arizona and its leaders were the Colorado Compact, the building of Boulder Dam, and finally the initiation of the Central Arizona Project by the late 1960s. Ultimately Senator Hayden was very much responsible for what fellow Arizonan and current Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt sees as ushering in "the modern era" in the state (p. 2).

Carl Hayden's longevity in the Congress was legendary. He served Arizona from 1912 until his retirement in 1969. He was Arizona's single representative until 1928 and a senator thereafter. He moved carefully through the minefield of state politics. When he began his career in territorial Arizona, it was solidly Democratic because of southern migration. The National Reclamation Act, contrary to the states rights orientation of his party, prompted him to become "a progressive" who endorsed a nationalist program of federal action for western water development. His emphasis upon the increasing importance of the federal government eventually made him an ally of the New Deal. His politics matured along with his party over the course of the century. Not until his final senate term in the late 1960s in an increasingly unfriendly Republican Arizona was he able to gain acceptance of the Central Arizona Project in Congress. It was a triumph that came only after the Supreme Court's *Arizona v California* (1963) decision on the water of the Colorado River, which favored Arizona.

This is a solid and insightful work. August generally avoids the controversies raised by Marc Reisner's *Cadillac Desert* (1986) and Donald

Worster's *Rivers of Empire* (1985). But he does note that even Hayden recognized that new environmental voices against dam building, especially in the Grand Canyon, presaged the need for alternative sources of power to pump the water for the new Central Arizona Project. Underlying this account of Hayden's life, ending in 1972, is the message: neither Hayden nor author would sacrifice the benefits of the western dams for the return of natural river systems. This choice would leave lands and cities without the wherewithal to produce and exist.

William D. Rowley

University of Nevada, Reno

The Bottom Rung: African American Family Life on Southern Farms. By Stewart E. Tolnay. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1999. 296 pp., \$45.00, hardback, ISBN 0-252-02435-4; \$19.95, paperback, ISBN 0-252-06745-2.

Much of *The Bottom Rung* will be familiar to historians of twentieth-century southern agriculture. It tells the story of the formation, reproduction, and work patterns of southern African American farm families. What *The Bottom Rung* does in a new and fresh way is to bolster narrative evidence with quantitative verification. Author Stewart Tolnay, a sociologist and demographer, demonstrates the power of the data set known as the Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS). IPUMS combines the data from so-called public-use samples compiled from every decennial U.S. census and provides "national-level information with which to trace longitudinal patterns for a wide variety of personal and household characteristics, including family patterns" (p. 182). The author uses data from 1910 and 1940 to track change over time.

Tolnay uses well-known secondary literature to outline African American participation in agriculture from slavery to the present and to examine work patterns in agricultural labor. The strength of IPUMS becomes evident as the author presents quantitative data, for example correlating the percentages of children enrolled in school with the percentage of children reporting an occupation to demonstrate the overlap of children's work and their schooling. The change between 1910 and 1940 shows the decreasing significance of children as agricultural laborers.