

The Girl in Building C: The True Story of a Teenage Tuberculosis Patient

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a large, urban water works to monitor public health in the absence of state, federal, or regional oversight, particularly as it relates to the city of Des Moines.

The Girl in Building C: The True Story of a Teenage Tuberculosis Patient, edited by Mary Krugerud. St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2018. 227 pp. Illustrations, notes, index. \$17.95 paperback.

Reviewer Lisa D. Lykins is associate professor of history at Georgetown College. Her primary research interest is the history of tuberculosis sanatoria.

Sixteen-year-old Marilyn Barnes entered Ah-Gwah-Ching sanatorium near Walker, Minnesota, in 1943. She had traveled hundreds of miles from her home, similar to the journey made by thousands before her, seeking treatment for *mycobacterium tuberculosis* (TB) infection prior to effective drug therapy. Marilyn would be one of the lucky sojourners; she was able to resume her life as a 19-year-old high school junior in 1946 and lived to see her story published more than 70 years later. While at the sanatorium, she wrote more than 300 missives, which she donated to the Minnesota Historical Society in 2010. For *The Girl in Building C*, independent researcher Mary Krugerud excerpted the letters, arranged them chronologically within thematic chapters, and provided context “to illustrate the daily life of a sanatorium” (5).

The excerpts reveal that Marilyn’s interests were similar to those of other white, small-town, middle-class teenagers in the 1940s. She comments on the war, listens to favorite radio programs, writes to her *Child Life* pen pals, asks her parents for money, has “parties” with her friends, and even primps to “dazzle” one of her “crushes” (87) among the patients. Her desire for normalcy is understandable; Marilyn was seriously ill and literally surrounded by death. During her three years at Ah-Gwah-Ching 162 patients died, including both of her romantic interests.

Her letters reveal how the unfamiliar experience becomes normal and the commonplace becomes extraordinary. Marilyn’s references to procedures such as aspiration, artificial pneumothorax, and thorocoplasty seem almost casual. Patient deaths are sad but routine. On the other hand, she is jubilant when her doctor gives her permission to walk to the bathroom once daily. She titles the letter detailing this event “MY LUCKY DAY!!” and enthuses, “Oh gosh, it’s such a thrill. . . . I’m so happy I feel just like getting up and shouting” (141). She concludes the letter with reactions to the previous night’s news that World War II was over. Patients celebrated with an “‘illegal’ open house” and listened to “band music and patriotic programs on the radio” (142); her own victory day was still 13 months away.

This is Marilyn's story, but it touches on issues social historians have explored through patient letters from other times and other sanatoria: the limits of medical authority; institutional culture; ways that patients operate within and upon an institution; the effect of disease stigma on the social identity of an individual or group; the degree of boundary permeability between institution and outside world. Krugerud does not address these issues explicitly, and the context and occasional interpretation of Marilyn's excerpts at times seem to be assumed knowledge rather than researched. That this book is not intended for an academic readership is evident from the seven endnotes, none of which reference the archival material or denote page location. The missing research trail and lack of historiographical context notwithstanding, Mary Krugerud introduces an important source to which future scholars will add analysis. Ultimately, Marilyn Barnes's letters are engaging, eliciting a vanished cultural and institutional era to be appreciated by generalists and specialists alike.

Women against Abortion: Inside the Largest Moral Reform Movement of the Twentieth Century, by Karissa Haugeberg. *Women, Gender, and Sexuality in American History*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2017. viii, 220 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$95 hardcover, \$24.95 paperback.

Reviewer Alicia Gutierrez-Romine is assistant professor of history at La Sierra University. She is the author of *From Back Alley to the Border: Criminal Abortion in California, 1920–1969* (forthcoming).

In *Women Against Abortion*, Karissa Haugeberg unearths the history of the pro-life movement from its beginnings in grassroots movements throughout the Midwest, and the women who made the movement possible. Haugeberg argues that while we may today associate aggressive anti-abortion strategies with evangelical Protestant men, conservative white women developed these strategies as early as the 1960s, forming their own grassroots organizations — characterized by less formal structures and hierarchies — when national anti-abortion movements were too “slow-moving” or prioritized fetal rights over women's interests (7).

Focusing on a number of high-profile women in the early anti-abortion movement, including Marjory Mecklenburg, Dr. Mildred Jefferson, July Loesch, Joan Andrews, and Shelley Shannon, Haugeberg seeks to answer two questions: Why did these women participate in a movement dedicated to ending abortion, and how did they find fulfillment and empowerment in this work? These women came to the anti-abortion movement through diverse avenues — religion, conservative ideologies,