Courage and Change, Mount Mercy College: the First Fifty Years

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Courage and Change, Mount Mercy College: The First Fifty Years.
By Sister Mary Augustine Roth. (Cedar Rapids: Stamats Communications, Inc., 1980. pp. vi, 150, illustrations, notes appendices, index.)

This is the courageous story of the Sisters of Mercy and their struggles and triumphs in creating a liberal arts college in Cedar Rapids and its subsequent changes and growth during the period from 1928 to 1978. This period saw it go from a junior college for women to a fully accredited four-year college for both men and women. The author weaves an intriguing piece of local history. The book is an excellent example of an institutional history which others can emulate.


Prucha, a Jesuit priest and noted scholar of western Americana, has written another book (his third since 1973) on Indian educational policy in the United States. He has woven a solid piece of history from the tangled strands of religious bigotry and bickering. While one does not learn much about Catholic Indian missions and their schools, the reader can glean useful insights into the political battles in Washington between Catholic and Protestant lobby groups. In this sense, this is more a book about "religious wars" than educational history.


Any reader is unlikely to find two scholars who know so much about the history of Montana and who write about it so well as do Michael P. Malone and Richard B. Roeder. This is the first book to study the state's general development since the 1920s. While the book was meant to be a general history for the mature reader, it is also a "must" for students of western Americana and should long remain the standard one-volume history of Montana. The publisher has performed a great service to students by reissuing the book in paperback form at a most reasonable price.