Review of *Beyond Mount Rushmore: Other Black Hills Faces* edited and introduced by Mary A. Kopco

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In 2010, the South Dakota State Historical Society celebrated its fortieth year of publishing the award-winning journal, South Dakota History. Over the years, South Dakota History has published about 500 articles, an impressive number. As with most journals, once an article appears, it soon disappears into past volumes, almost forgotten. But good articles can have a second life, and Beyond Mount Rushmore provides that for ten articles that appeared in South Dakota History between 1993 and 2009. These essays relate to the Black Hills, a popular topic among book buyers, but what ties them together is their focus on the human experience, either through personal accounts or biographies. The subtitle Other Black Hills Faces
relates to this human element, while the title
*Beyond Mount Rushmore* is really a foil, meant
to draw readers into the book. A more accurate,
but undoubtedly less appealing title would have
been “Stories about Black Hills People.”

Of the ten essays, four begin near the time
of the gold rush, while the remainder run from
1885 through 1973, the book essentially cov­
ering one hundred years. Topics vary from a
first-hand account of the Custer Expedition to
a story about a reformist newspaper editor in
Deadwood; Mary Kopco’s fine introduction ties
the ten essays together. Some of the standouts
include Jim McLaird’s account of journalist
Leander P. Richardson’s visit to the Black
Hills in 1876 (as McLaird states, Richardson’s
observations “deserve a significant place among
accounts of Deadwood”) and the essay by
Susan L. Richards and Rex Myers on Thomas
J. Grier, a Homestake mine superintendent for
twenty-nine years. As the authors demonstrate,
Grier at times extended the “velvet-gloved
hand of compassion,” while at other times
acted as a “vengeful angel.” Several other essays
also shine, while only one, on the involvement
of Mount Rushmore in Alfred Hitchcock’s film
*North by Northwest*, falls flat.

*Beyond Mount Rushmore* is an enjoyable
grouping of essays, effectively demonstrating
*South Dakota History’s* high quality over the
past forty years.

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