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Review of Son of Old Jules: Memoirs of Jules Sandoz, Jr.

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out many of her vignettes of her Swiss immigrant family and their community.

Jules Jr.'s autobiography, written in his eighties with the help of sister Caroline, tells stories of his family that, true to Caroline's introductory avowal, "supplement, not contradict" Mari's record. The elder Jules seen from his son's eyes rather than from Mari's is the same Jules who would always rather fight, and would switch residences to do so. Jules Jr.'s account adds a bit of information to the story of Mari's marriage and divorce, events never mentioned in *Old Jules*. Jules's description of Mari as "playing the part of the gay divorcee" is positive, but he reflects the community and general male attitude several pages later when he reveals that whatever his other standards for a prospective wife, he is not interested in a divorcee.

Jules Jr.'s stoic acceptance of Old Jules's irascibility and downright cussedness is in contrast to Mari's familiar tone of ironic resentment, particularly in their accounts of what happened to the wishes of the women in the family. Jules admires his father's ingenuity more than he regrets his mother's extra labor when he tells of how "Papa" replaced the rubber wringer of "Mama's" washer with iron pipes so that he could use rollers to crush sugar cane from a bumper crop. Mary wrung clothes by hand "for years" until the rubber tubes were replaced. Still, Jules recognizes the injustice in his father's refusing ever to accommodate his mother's interests and is appalled when he has to stop Old Jules from angrily choking Mary because she will not sign over her share of the land so that the family can sell and move to Canada.

Another contrast between Jules's memoirs and Mari's biography is Young Jules's lack of interest in political affairs and community conflict, though he does clarify some incidents that are only alluded to in Mari's account. Jules's account of a young boy's and young man's experiences also add a flavor that does not appear in *Old Jules*.

The diction in this book may be more Caroline than Jules, but the tone and the persona are consistent and clearly Young Jules. When

Son of Old Jules: Memoirs of Jules Sandoz, Jr. By Caroline Sandoz Pifer and Jules Sandoz, Jr. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1989. Maps, photographs. x + 125 pp. \$24.50 cloth, \$6.50 paper.

Readers of *Son of Old Jules* familiar with Mari Sandoz's biography of her Nebraska Sandhills father, *Old Jules* (1935), will be sharply aware of the references to this earlier published Sandoz and her book. So are the authors, who, from the first word of the introduction to the last chapter, continually evoke Mari's memory by specific reference to her work and by rounding

Caroline appears in the story, there is no sense of her own voice, only Jules's. Jules Jr.'s voice is quiet and measured, even when telling of how his father, apparently in spite and jealousy, carefully pulled up sixteen-year-old Jules's tenderly planted cottonwood saplings, killed his fish, and finally trumped up an excuse to throw him off the homestead. A portrait develops of a hardworking young man who learned to hold his tongue and keep his views to himself. Yet, just as in *Old Jules*, a sense of family loyalty and caring comes through in this account. Despite Old Jules's flaring anger and Mary's resentful reserve, this is the sort of family where a sister would write a brother's reminiscences when he wanted them saved but could not do it for himself. Caroline remarks in the introduction that Young Jules became an eccentric millionaire. That story, if told, might make a better sequel to *Old Jules* and the saga of the Sandoz family and their Sandhills community.

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