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Review of *Sophus K. Winther* By Barbara Howard Meldrum

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Sophus K. Winther. By Barbara Howard Meldrum. Boise State University Western Writers Series, no. 60. Boise, Idaho: Boise State University, 1983. Bibliography. 52 pp. \$2.00.

Sophus Winther, who documented the experience of Danish immigrants in the novel *Take All to Nebraska*, is often considered a strictly regional writer. Barbara Meldrum's analysis of Winther's fiction, political essays, and literary criticism provides evidence of a philosophical consistency and depth in Winther's writing which transcends regional boundaries. Writing about immigrants in rural settings, workers in modern cities, the soldier/hero in post-war fiction, or about Eugene O'Neill's plays, Winther focuses on the individual struggle against the oppressiveness of

physical and economic environments.

In this monograph, Meldrum traces the influences which shaped Winther's naturalistic view of the world, but she also emphasizes the importance in his life and work of less prominent themes. Winther's belief in the value of work, of love, and of rational action, she believes, provides a balance and a release from the pervasive pessimism found in most of his writing.

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