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Review of *Cather Studies 6: History, Memory, and War* Edited by Steven Trout

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The collection includes essays by fourteen Cather scholars and moves from the Civil War through World War II in examining Cather's continuing personal absorption with war, including treatments of individual characters and essays on an eclectic array of topics from recreation and art to word choice and sources. The collection could not be better written nor more informative and complete.

Three essays discuss Cather's personal preoccupation with war or her commitments to helping the war effort. Ann Romines focuses on Cather's ambivalence to the Civil War and how *Sapphira and the Slave Girl* "allowed her to plumb the Terrible as it was grounded in her own family's Virginia history." Janis Stout shows how Cather was "haunted by [the Great War] for years afterward" and had a "sense of gloomy expectation of another war to come." Mary Chinery shows how Cather allowed several novels to be published in cheap Armed Services editions in World War II because of her "deeply felt desire to serve the Allied war effort in the best way she could." Together the essays argue persuasively for the persistence of war as an aspect of Cather's consciousness, from something she needed to work out about her own family history, to a "fixation on the Great War experience," to her generous attempts to lift the spirits of the troops.

Five more essays explore characters who can be seen in the context of their reactions or nonreactions to war. Michael Gorman, writing about *My Ántonia*, shows how oblivious Jim is to the prior settlement of the Great Plains by Native Americans; Pearl James looks at Enid in *One of Ours* as a "New Woman, whose bids for independence threaten men"; Celia Kingsbury shows Bayliss Wheeler in the same novel to be a "sinister model of American acquisitiveness and coercion"; Jennifer Haycock examines Tom Outland's motivations in *The Professor's House* for going to war; Susan Meyer looks at Louie Marsellus, Professor St. Peter's Jewish son-in-law.

In addition to the eight essays on Cather's interest in war and her portrayal of war characters, six others provide an eclectic richness to

Cather Studies 6: History, Memory, and War. Edited by Steven Trout. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2006. xxv + 312 pp. Figures, notes, works cited. \$35.00 paper.

Steven Trout's engrossing *History, Memory, and War*, volume 6 of the acclaimed *Cather Studies* series, is a collection of essays showing how pervasively war appears in Cather's works: the "sheer number of armed conflicts evoked in her fiction is perhaps unprecedented in American literature." Trout's wide-ranging volume shows "the ubiquity of armed conflict . . . as a major theme or as a background feature in Cather's writing" as well as showing that she personally "thought of war on a regular basis."

the volume by dealing with sources and little-known aspects of the war books. Margaret Anne O'Connor examines letters sent to a teenage G. P. Cather by three Webster County friends; Steven Trout ties the Outland engine to an actual device, the Liberty engine. Mark Robison looks at how "recreational activities pervade the war sections" in *One of Ours*; Debra Rae Cohen shows Claude to be both tourist and traveler in ways that "ultimately destabilize the distinction Cather employs"; Wendy Perriman examines dance in *The Professor's House*. Mary Ryder, in focusing on Cather's use of the words *men* and *boys* to describe soldiers, shows *men* to be used for "trained killers who endured and inflicted violence," while *boys* were "innocent, clumsy, and soft."

From detailed examinations of word usage and sources, to treatments of characters, to showing the role of war in Cather's life, in every way the volume is first-rate. *History, Memory, and War* is an impressive addition to the *Cather Studies* series.

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The Force of Vocation: The Literary Career of Adele Wiseman. By Ruth Panofsky. Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2006. xvii + 204 pp. Photographs, notes, bibliography, index. \$22.95 paper.