ship, first as elected officials and later, in Wetherell’s case, as director of environmental agencies under Democratic and Republican governors. Poole, who interviewed Wetherell, states that these women “were trailblazers, using their energies, training, and grasp of facts to gain hard-won respect and power in a male-dominated and often sexist morass of business, government, and community leaders” (215).

Such pithy comments make Poole’s work engaging and inspirational. The first book to draw together the history of Florida’s female environmentalists, Saving Florida should appeal to most college students and many laypersons, especially at a time when climate change and political indifference threaten Florida’s fragile ecosystems.

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Brian Froese’s California Mennonites focuses on the history of the Mennonites who migrated to California beginning in 1850 and who both embraced and resisted waves of political, economic, and social change through the mid-1970s. They integrated into mainstream evangelical California, adapted their practices and expectations to their changing surroundings, and yet held fast to parts of their heritage that made them distinct. Froese argues that by 1975, “a modernizing transformation” had integrated and Americanized California Mennonites and led them to become more ethnically and racially diverse and more ecumenical, action-oriented, and religiously plural (xii). Nevertheless, they resisted modernity by maintaining their religious and educational practices and institutions. Migrating to and remaining in California, a state known for its remarkable religious, ethnic, and racial plurality, set the stage to “bring together religious identity, accommodation, and practice so that Mennonitism could take root in the Golden State” (xii).

Illustrative of this pattern of resistance and adaptation is the experience of Mennonite conscientious objectors (COs) during World War II. Mennonite COs asserted their patriotism and held on to their markers of pacifism and religiosity by engaging in work of national importance in Civilian Public Service camps. Although the men who served in these camps contributed to the Allied cause through such activities as fighting and preventing forest fires and caring for pa-
tients in mental hospitals, they also used the camps as spaces to sharpen their definitions of national and religious identity. Emphasizing the significance of their work in maintaining natural resources, COs claimed their place among those who fought for the nation’s defense, even as they maintained their religious commitment to pacifism.

Less convincing, however, is the book’s treatment of racial and economic inequality in the history of Mennonite California during the 1950s and 1960s. For example, Froese explains that following World War II, the demographics in the neighborhood around the Calvary Mennonite Church in Los Angeles shifted from mostly white and Latino to primarily African American. Citing “racial issues,” white church members joined white flight and opted to let go of their commitment to a community of reconciliation in favor of maintaining ethnic and racial homogeneity (102). Yet, in this and other instances of racial tension, Froese misses an opportunity to interrogate its meaning for broader understandings of race and how it changes white California Mennonites’ ethno-religious identity. Moreover, the story of these African American Mennonites or the Latino Mennonites, who presumably carried on after their white peers left, plays only a minor role in the story Froese tells. Including those stories would have strengthened Froese’s narrative of a more racially and ethnically diverse Mennonite community in California.

Nevertheless, this narrative of continuity and change among Mennonites in California complicates tired notions of an unchanging ethno-religious, pacifist, agrarian community and broadens our understanding of American religious history. Uncovering their stories and contextualizing them in American history, this book enriches the history of American Mennonites and California’s cultural history.

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Placing the Civil War in an agrarian context, R. Douglas Hurt analyzes how southern agricultural power crumbled as the Confederate government failed to respond adequately to the growing crisis. Hurt offers an important addendum to the standard southern military optimism that one Confederate soldier could