Dust Bowl, USA: Depression America And The Ecological Imagination, 1929-1941

Brad D. Lookingbill
Beginning with "conquest" of the land, the six chapters track the progression of the affective interface between humans and the Great Plains environment in light of the dust storms and related social and economic crises during the Great Depression. As a cultural narrative, this work is more literary than James Malin's The Grassland of North America (privately published, 1947) and more encompassing geographically than Donald Worster's Dust Bowl (1979). Exploring old and new explanations of the disaster, Dust Bowl, USA is an engaging and moving metanarrative of the region. It
Brad Lookingbill's Dust Bowl, USA turns a discursive eye on stories about the Dust Bowl, a well-known but still perhaps poorly understood chapter in American agricultural, national, and environmental history. In two ominous words, Dust Bowl sums up a region, a drought and blowing soil, an era, and its victims. It is a subject that has been treated by many historians, as Lookingbill knows, but "the story of the dust bowl needs retelling" (4r-5) to read the cultural narratives used by people at the time, creating meanings for their predicament. Book Review: Dust Bowl, USA: Depression America and the Ecological Imagination, 1929-1941 by Brad Lookingbill. Posted on July 9, 2016 by admin. During the 1930s, the American Midwest region witnessed one of its most acute agricultural droughts in the history of the nation. The main reason for this is its coincidence with the Great Depression that precipitated in 1929 with the stock market crash and continued into the next decade. The sweep and magnitude of the Great Depression was such that it overwhelmed attention to an equally catastrophic drought unfolded in several states in the Midwest. Hence the main purpose of Brad Lookingbill is to fill a perceived deficiency in scholarship pertaining to this event. October 2002 · The American Historical Review. Charles J. Shindo. Read more. Article. Brad D. Lookingbill. Dust Bowl, USA: Depression America and the Ecological Imagination, 1929â€”1941. A...Â The Dust Bowl: Men, Dirt, and Depression. March 1980 · The Journal of American History. Paul E. Mertz. Paul Bonnifield. Read more. Discover more. Download citation.
"Dust Bowl, USA is a critical examination of the myths and memories that grew out of the hard times in the Great Plains. Across the nation, newspapers, magazines, books, films, and songs produced imagery of blight for local and mass audiences. As modern technology, irrigation projects, and government programs were extended on a wider scale during the "dirty thirties," the saga of the frontier continued to unfold through accounts of dust, drought, and depression." "By examining the social construction of legends, lore, allegories, and ideologies. Brad Lookingbill provid Dust Bowl also examines environmentalist narratives about natural equilibrium and attempts to understand environmental crisis through scientific knowledge and manage it by technological intervention. Another chapter discusses nationalist and patriotic narratives about the agrarian "survivor" of a transient, but trying, moment.Â Like Dustbowl, Mark Allister's Refiguring the Map of Sorrow considers "environmental imagination." A literary critic, Allister considers texts that could be classified as both "nature writing" and "autobiography." Each text shares [End Page 471] a common structure in which the writers turn to a contemplation of nature to more fully understand themselves and to come to terms with, and heal from, a painful loss.