

## EDITOR'S CORNER

"Let a hundred flowers bloom," Chinese revolutionary leader Mao Zedong proclaimed a few decades ago. "Let a hundred schools of thought contend."

The response to Mao's poetic plea was predictable: People with opposing points of view started expressing themselves, and Mao, autocrat that he was, dealt with these dissenters in his customary fashion. Although the four articles in this issue of *Heritage* have nothing to do with Mao Zedong, they are linked to one another by a common theme: the clash of competing and often continuous forces in a Great Plains setting.

"The Battle of the Historians of Round Mountain: An Examination of Muriel Wright and Angie Debo" by Patricia Loughlin examines a seemingly minor bone of contention between those two giants of Great Plains studies. I say, "seemingly minor," because the larger issues that united and separated Wright and Debo remain with us yet.

In "Progressivism in a Frontier Town: Bowman, North Dakota, 1911-1917," Lowell L. Blaisdell carefully traces the intricate mating of ideas and personalities that too often elude our gaze when we look at the past and ask that most common and frustrating of questions: "Why?"

Anne L. Kaufman's "Ross's Disappearing Prairie in Contemporary Fiction" tells us about the complex, often contradictory mix of forces in human relationships. On one level, the literary prairie might be "a barren, empty reflection" of a marriage. Yet it is also "a symbol of the possibility of reconfigured boundaries."

Tricia Currans-Sheehan uses "A Woman Ahead of Her Time: Willa Cather and Women's Domestic Art in *O Pioneers!* and *Shadows on the Rock*" to take us on a journey from a provocative exhibit in a contemporary Chicago art gallery to a fuller appreciation of the complexity of her subjects' views about "traditional" women's work.

So: "Let a hundred flowers bloom. Let a hundred schools of thought contend." And hold onto your hats, podners.

Ron McCoy  
Editor