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Article Summary: This article is a selective bibliography of theses concerning Nebraska history written at the University of Nebraska at Omaha.

Organized by topics:

- Negroes
- Medical
- Nebraska Communities
- Nebraska Press, Foreign and Domestic Issues
- Political, Economic, Social
- Religion
- Willa Cather

# **NEBRASKA HISTORY IN GRADUATE THESES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA-OMAHA**

Compiled by **RAYMOND WILSON**

The following is a selective bibliography of theses concerning Nebraska history written at the University of Nebraska at Omaha (formerly the Municipal University of Omaha, 1931-1968; the University of Omaha, 1908-1931). Titles are followed by the date granted and a brief annotation:

## **NEGROES**

**Kerns, James Harvey, "Industrial and Business Life of Negroes in Omaha" (1932)**

A sociological study containing valuable figures concerning the number of blacks in certain occupations. The census of 1930 revealed that 11,123 blacks resided in Omaha. The author presents an early history of blacks in Omaha and discusses such topics as wages, opportunities, conditions, and black establishments in Omaha. He concluded that the conditions of work and opportunities help shape black's health, educational, housing, and crime conditions.

**Knapple, Francis Y., "The Negro High School Student—A Study of the Negro Student in Omaha Central High School, 1935-1941" (1942)**

The author employed questionnaires, interviews, and school records in a study of black's curricular and extracurricular activities. Some of the conclusions arrived at were that blacks were involved in fewer activities; had a low attendance rate; and received lower grades than the white students.

**Taylor, Marion M., "A Survey of Employer Attitudes Toward**

**the Employment of Qualified Negroes in White Collar Positions in Omaha" (1954)**

A study of Omaha business firms and employment agencies and their hiring practices concerning blacks for employment other than menial. The author believed that although blacks in white collar positions were strongly discriminated against and received lower wages, the situation was gradually improving.

## MEDICAL

**Johnson, Jacqueline, "A History of Health and Safety Conditions in the Omaha Public Schools from 1872 to 1908" (1968)**

An interesting study which considers such problems of health and safety as heating, ventilation, contagious diseases, and fire prevention in the Omaha Public Schools. Credit was given to the progressive school boards and to the city health department for solving some of these health and safety problems.

**Pawloski, Jeanne Lunger, "History of the Nebraska State Nurses Association" (1955)**

A history of the nursing profession in Nebraska. The Nebraska State Nurses Association governs the licensing and registration of Nebraska nurses for qualification. A bibliography is included.

**Seeley, Mary, "The History of the Omaha-Douglas County Medical Society" (1969)**

The author presents a detailed history of the Omaha-Douglas County Medical Society from 1890 to 1962. Information concerning the Medical Society's members and their contributions to welfare and health services. Such contributions included the securing of sanitary codes—groceries and milk, establishing blood donor centers, and having immunization programs. Early physician organizations in Nebraska are also discussed.

**Woods, Darrell Milton, "A History of the Nebraska Tuberculosis Association" (1955)**

Considers good health promotion essential for the control of tuberculosis. The historical background of the eradication movement of tuberculosis, not only in Nebraska but in the entire United States, is presented. The association was organized in 1907.

## NEBRASKA COMMUNITIES

**Kearns, Edward F., "History of Papillion, Nebraska" (1962)**

This work concerns the early history, cultural aspects, and the community development of Papillion. The railroad was responsible for the town's boom. National topics are also presented in relation to Papillion's growth.

**Miles, Marian G., "The Founding of Florence, Nebraska, 1854-1860" (1970)**

A study of the founding (twice) of Florence, Nebraska. Originally called Winter Quarters and founded by the Mormons in 1846, it was abandoned in 1848. Florence was founded again in 1854. Such areas as the industry, religion, and early leaders are discussed.

**Mutz, Dorothy Ruth, "Benson, a Residential Suburban Community" (1935)**

An investigation of sociological patterns in Benson. Includes the history of Benson and relevant material about political, religious, educational, and economical developments.

**Schauer, Norma Launt, "A History of Oakdale, Nebraska" (1962)**

Concerns the Northeastern Nebraska community of Oakdale located in Antelope County. This agricultural community was incorporated in 1881. Its struggles of early settlement, achievements, and growth are presented. The railroad dominated Oakdale's development. Illustrations and bibliography.

**Schnier, Donald, "A History of Bancroft, Nebraska" (1967)**

The home of John G. Neihardt is studied in detail in this work. All facets of the development of Bancroft are discussed. An extensive study with helpful illustrations and a bibliography.

**Simmons, Jerold L., "The New Deal in Dawson County, Nebraska" (1967)**

The New Deal impact on Dawson County farmers and their revulsion towards Roosevelt by 1940. Contains an early history of the County. Valuable for New Deal and Roosevelt impact in Nebraska.

**Thorndike, David M., "A Geography of the Upper Salt Creek Watershed" (1968)**

A geographical study of flood control projects and their impact on the land use practices, economy of the region, and the population. Concerns the Southwestern Lancaster County area. Useful tables and figures.

**Wendell, Thurlan W., "A History of Irrigation in Western Nebraska" (1959)**

Several federally supported irrigation projects of twenty-seven western counties in Nebraska are discussed. Contains maps, charts, and very good bibliography.

**Williams, Aileen Lawson, "A History of Syracuse, Nebraska" (1958)**

A well-written account of a small agricultural community in Southeastern Nebraska. Helpful maps and a very good bibliography.

**Wurdeman, Frieda M., "A History of Blair, Nebraska, 1869-1920" (1964)**

The author presents a well-rounded account of the founding, growth, activities, and problems of Blair, located in Eastern Nebraska. Many helpful appendices and illustrations.

## NEBRASKA PRESS, FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC ISSUES

- Dalstrom, Harl Adams, "The Midwestern Press and American Neutrality: A Study of the Editorial Attitudes of Three Omaha Newspapers Toward the European War, 1914-1917" (1959)

The *Omaha World-Herald*, the *Omaha Bee*, and the *Omaha Daily News* are the newspapers used in this study. A brief history of each paper is included. Traces editorial reactions from the assassination of Sarajevo on June 29, 1914 to the United States declaration of war on April 7, 1917. Some of the conclusions drawn by the author are that Midwesterners were aware of European events; they generally espoused neutrality for the United States until declaration of war; and the Midwest was not the den of staunch isolationism.

- Eaton, Phebe Anderson, "Editorially Speaking: The *Omaha World-Herald* on International Issues, September 1, 1939, to December 7, 1941" (1959)

Opinions of the editorial staff of the *World-Herald* concerning Japanese, German, and our future allies' activities preceding Pearl Harbor. A study showing the change from isolationism to internationalism.

- Geffert, Beverly K., "Omaha Press Reaction to the Versailles Verdict: A Study Using Three Omaha Newspapers January, 1919-March, 1920" (1966)

A very interesting study. The author concluded that the *Daily Bee* represented the Republican view—the treaty did not protect American security and freedom. The *World-Herald* represented the Democratic view and defended the treaty. The *Daily News*, which was politically independent, generally favored the treaty and wanted a national referendum held.

- Jacob, Roger J., "A Study of the Editorial Attitude of the *Omaha World-Herald* Toward the Cuban Crisis, 1895-1898" (1967)

An exploration of the conditions in Cuba reported by the *Herald* prior to the American declaration of war in April, 1898. Although the *Herald* was sympathetic towards the Cubans, Gilbert Hitchcock, the editor, was not as chauvinistic in his editorials as were Hearst and Pulitzer in articles which appeared in the *New York Journal* and the *New York World*.

- Jones, Ira O., "A Study of the Editorial Policy of the *Omaha Bee-News* and the *Omaha World-Herald* with Regard to Social Problems" (1937)

Social problems such as sickness, bad housing, unemployment, and vice are considered. The study is limited to 1936. The author believed the editors were aware of these social problems but provided few answers or solutions in their editorials.

- Nelson, Arvid E., Jr., "The Formation and Early History of the

**Knights of Ak-Sar-Ben as Shown by Omaha Newspapers (1962)**

The founding and early history of this civic organization. The Ancient Order of the Knights of Ak-Sar-Ben was established in 1895 to provide entertainment for Nebraskans. Idea that it brings people together and promotes trade in the city. People tend to forget about their troubles and problems for awhile and enjoy themselves at these programs.

**Ohrvall, Charles W., "The Domestic Program of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's First Administration as Viewed in the Editorials of the *Lincoln* (Nebraska) *Star*" (1966)**

The biased writings of James E. Lawrence, editor of the *Lincoln Star*. He explained and defended the New Deal programs which directly affected Nebraska. The *Lincoln Star* was the staunchest supporter of the New Deal in Nebraska.

**Schmidt, William F., "Municipal Reform in Omaha from 1906 To 1914 as Seen Through the Eyes of the Omaha Press" (1963)**

Considers such progressive topics as public ownership of water works; home rule; commission form of government; and city ownership of gas plant. The Omaha press, in most instances, supported these municipal reforms.

**Zajicek, Leonard J., "American Partiality in World War One During 1914-1917 as Reflected Through a Critical Study of Editorial Cartoons Appearing in Selected American, British and German Publications" (1968)**

Many of the cartoons are from Nebraska newspapers. These cartoons reflected the opinions of the editors. The author concluded that American cartoonists declared war on Germany after the sinking of the *Lusitania*. The dominating cartoon was the submarine cartoon. Extensive bibliography and excellent reproductions of cartoons.

**POLITICAL, ECONOMICAL, SOCIAL**

**Barbe, Lucille, "A History of the Boyd Opera House in Omaha, Nebraska (1881-1889)" (1963)**

A highly interesting work. Such topics as the types of entertainment, uses of the theater, and reactions to the performers and activities are presented. The *Omaha Daily Bee* was generally more favorable towards the opera house than the other newspapers. A fire destroyed the opera house on October 2, 1889. An extensive appendices is provided. Valuable for researchers studying cultural aspects of development.

**Bitzes, John G., "The Anti-Greek Riot of 1909—South Omaha" (1964)**

In 1909 an estimated two to three thousand Greeks lived in South Omaha. By 1910 the census revealed that only 486 remained. The Greeks were blamed for the death of an Omaha policeman on February 20, 1909. On February 21 mobs swarmed into the Greek sector and caused havoc amounting to \$161,498.50 in damage claims. The author concluded that besides showing anti-foreign sentiments, this riot spurred other demonstrations.

**Burnett, Evelyn Clark, "The Cheese Industry in Nebraska" (1970)**

Considers the importance of cheese and its impact on the dairying industry in Nebraska. Contains useful tables, figures, and appendices.

**Campen, Lillian Henderson, "The Early History of the University of Omaha" (1951)**

The development of the University of Omaha from 1908 to 1931. High praise given to Dr. Daniel E. Jenkins, the prime individual responsible for its development. Considers student activities, early faculty and curriculum, and financial problems.

**Carson, Nan Viergutz, "Thomas Barnes Cuming, Jr., and the Location of Nebraska's Territorial Capitol" (1961)**

Cuming, born in 1827, held such offices as territorial secretary and territorial governor. A study exploring his efforts in locating Omaha as the territorial capitol. Contains information on territorial legislature. Cuming died in 1858. Provides a good bibliography.

**Christie, Robert H., "A History of the Telephone in the Midwest" (1954)**

A study of the development of telephone companies, practices, equipment, and procedures in the Midwest. An early history of Northwestern Bell is included. Telephones appeared in the Great Plains area in the 1870's and 1880's but were impractical.

**Dice, Harry Edward, "The History of the Omaha Fire Department, 1860-1960" (1965)**

Traces Omaha fire departments from early volunteers to modern day. Contains information concerning equipment, hazards faced by firemen, and financial matters. Several major fires in Omaha's history are included. Good illustrations, appendices, and bibliography.

**Fisher, Joe A., "The Liquor Question in Nebraska, 1880-1890" (1952)**

Presents the bitter warfare between the businessmen involved in the liquor industry and the prohibitionists. Pro and con arguments of each side presented. Good coverage by newspapers included. Nebraskans voted to keep "wet" in 1890 by over 50,000 votes.

**Flies, Thelma M., "A Comparative Study of the Female Clerical Labor Force Omaha, Nebraska 1931-1956" (1958)**

Interesting information on occupational patterns and changes concerning women's clerical labor force in Omaha. Some conclusions were that there was

an increase of women employed, an increase of married women employed, and several shifts in occupations. Useful charts and tables provided.

**Freeland, John Harrison, "The History of Professional Baseball in Omaha" (1964)**

A study of Omaha franchises and teams from 1879 to 1962. An Omaha team won its first pennant in organized baseball in 1889. Teams constantly plagued by financial problems.

**Gammon, Loren A., "The National Election of 1924 and Nebraska" (1948)**

An extensive work concerning the national problems and the election in Nebraska. An analysis is presented on the election results. Contains good maps and charts.

**Hartman, Cecil L., "The National Election of 1912 in Nebraska" (1940)**

Considers primaries, national conventions, campaigns, and election results. The Nebraska Republicans were more divided than the Nebraska Democrats. This was the first time that popular chosen delegates went to the national conventions. Previously, state conventions, dominated by local bosses, selected the candidates. A helpful appendix is provided.

**Jahnke, Shirley A., "Some Aspects of the Bread Industry in Omaha (1972)**

Investigates the input/output aspects of the bread industry in Nebraska. The author stresses the importance of bread to mankind. Valuable maps, charts, and appendices are included.

**Kalisch, Philip Arthur, "The Early History of the Omaha Public Library" (1964)**

The author presents the development of libraries in Nebraska. The first library was established in 1856-1857. The need for free reading material for people is stressed. Contains impressive appendices and bibliography.

**Lubman, Hyman, "A History of the Nebraska Winnebago Indians with Special Emphasis on Education" (1962)**

Explores the history of the tribe. This work does not include the effects of education on Winnebago Indians in Wisconsin. The author cited the need for more trade school training. Helpful tables and figures provided.

**Muir, Harold T., "The Formation and Adoption of the 1956 Omaha Home Rule Charter 1954-1956" (1969)**

A detailed study examining step by step the delegates, public hearings, drafts, and attitudes for and against adoption. Early Omaha charters are discussed. Contains an extensive bibliography.

**Pennock, Martin H., "The Formation of the Omaha Public Power District" (1971)**

A well-written account tracing the development of electric power plants in Omaha. Considers judicial problems and public opinion in relation to the take

- over of the Nebraska Power Company by the Omaha Public Power District on December 2, 1946.
- Price, David, "The Public Life of Elmer S. Dundy 1857-1896" (1971)  
Major focus on railroad and Indian problems. Dundy, a partisan judge, held steadfast beliefs and was a controversial figure. A useful appendix and an extensive bibliography provided.
- Sharp, Walter Charles, "Fort Omaha and the Winning of the West" (1967)  
The author discusses the reasons why Fort Omaha was established in 1868; the buildings and facilities on the post; and interesting information of the troopers. Very good illustrations and an extensive bibliography included.
- Spittgerber, Fredric L., "The Independent Candidacy of George Norris in the 1936 Nebraska Senatorial Contest" (1963)  
A detailed study of the activities of Robert Simmons, Terry Carpenter, and George Norris in their quest for the office of senator. Background on Nebraska politics and economics during 1930 to 1935 is provided.
- Thavenet, Dennis, "A History of Omaha Public Transportation" (1960)  
The development of horse, cable, trolley, and bus transportation is treated in this work. The author considers such areas as the impact of transportation on the region, the competition of lines, and early leaders. Contains a good bibliography.
- Valdrighi, Carol A., "Agricultural Credit in Nebraska During the Depression of 1920-1923" (1969)  
The credit needs of the farmer and the responses by commercial and governmental agencies are presented. The author believed that agricultural credit legislation of the 1920's was not great, but it was a beginning. Contains helpful tables and illustrations plus an extensive bibliography.
- Walker, Samuel Emlen, "Populism and Industrialism: The Ideology of the Official Organ of the Nebraska Populist Movement" (1970)  
The populist response to industrialism as reflected in the *Alliance*, official organ of the Populist Movement. The author acknowledges the bias slant of this newspaper. He also provides an extensive survey of the literature concerning populism and industrialism.
- White, Charles Evans, "Social Legislation in Nebraska" (1931)  
A study of social legislation from territorial days to 1927. The author treats such areas as public welfare, child welfare, public safety, and pensioners. He believed that the development of social legislation in Nebraska kept pace with the national progress of social legislation.
- Wilson, Raymond, "The Nebraska State Board of Agriculture, 1900-1920" (1972)

A history of the state board from 1858 to 1920 with emphasis on the 1900 to 1920 period. A study based largely on the board's minutes and farm newspapers. Contains information on state fairs and the development of agriculture in Nebraska.

**Zika, Irene S., "Some Aspects of Territorial and State Legislative Control of the Municipal Government of Omaha (1857-1875)" (1946)**

Explores the control of the city of Omaha by territorial and state legislatures. The most "pernicious" legislation governing Omaha was passed between 1866-1871. In general, however, the author believed that the city charters enabled local city officials to exert significant authority.

### RELIGION

**Gendler, Carol, "The Jews of Omaha: The First Sixty Years" (1968)**

Besides offering a general history of the American Jew, this study focuses on the Jews of Omaha from 1855 to 1915. Their customs, practices, business establishments, and church activities are presented.

**Heck, Mary E., "Eighty Years of Service: A History of the Presbyterian Theological Seminary at Omaha, Nebraska 1891-1971" (1972)**

An extensive study based on the minutes of this seminary which trained ministers for the Midwest. The author discussed such topics as the seminary's curriculum, faculty, and financial problems.

**Kuhlman, Paul, "A Brief History of the Mennonites in Nebraska" (1953)**

This work contains the early history of the Mennonites in Europe and in the United States. Mennonites from Russia, Prussia, and the eastern United States migrated to Nebraska. Such topics as their ways of living, beliefs, and church government are presented.

**Robbins, James M., "A History of the Episcopal Church in Omaha from 1856 to 1964" (1965)**

A comprehensive study of the Episcopal Church in Omaha based on the minutes of vestry meetings. An early history of the Episcopal Church in the United States is included. The first Omaha congregation was established in 1856. Contains appendices and bibliography.

### WILLA CATHER

**Daly, Daniel J., "The Cycle of the Seasons in Selected Works of Willa Cather" (1969)**

Explores the significance of seasonal imagery in Willa Cather's works. Some of the works studied are *O Pioneers*, *My Antonia*, and "Autumn Melody." Summer, for example, suggests life, vibrancy, and a youth growing up.

**Marsh, Marilyn Miller, "Willa Cather and Eugene O'Neill: A Bond of Tragedy" (1965)**

The author contended that the works of Cather and O'Neill, although on the surface poles apart, are in actuality very similar in their content. Both were sympathetic with their characters. One embraced traditionalism; the other modernism.

**Ward, Michael Harold, "The Growth and Decline of the Pioneer Spirit in the Nebraska Novels of Willa Cather" (1968)**

The theme that mechanization and modernization caused the pioneer to lose his spirit and beliefs. Her four "Nebraska novels" *O Pioneers*, *My Antonia*, *One of Ours*, and *A Lost Lady* are employed for this study. Contains background material on Willa Cather.