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1991

## Review of One-Room School: Teaching in 19305 Western Oklahoma

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## BOOK REVIEWS

*One-Room School: Teaching in 1930s Western Oklahoma.* By Donna M. Stephens. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1990. Notes, bibliography, index. xvi + 173 pp. \$19.95.

The term “one-room school” often evokes images, myths, and misconceptions. This book captures the memories of one young woman teaching in rural Oklahoma in the 1930s who succeeded despite unique problems of isolation, distance, time, weather, limited resources, and inadequate training.

After a brief history of Oklahoma public education, the author, daughter of this teacher, describes the mismatch between her mother’s experience and her in-service and classroom training: “None of them talked about how a rural teacher could teach seven or eight subjects in eight grades all at the same time.”

The appeal of this unsophisticated farm girl stifling her urge to laugh when disciplining a young speech-impaired child who “looked up at her with fury in his eyes and said ‘You old tunk!’ (skunk)” adds spice. Similar challenges face school teachers throughout the U.S. today.

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