

National Parks and the Woman's Voice: A History

Polly Welts Kaufman

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Polly Welts Kaufman : National Parks and the Woman's Voice: A History before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised National Parks and the Woman's Voice: A History:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. The definitive book on women and the National Park ServiceBy Bonnie Hurd SmithPolly Welts Kaufman is one of my heroes, and a colleague, but that aside this book is "the book" on women in the National Park Service. Guess what? We weren't always welcome! Polly tells some wonderfully inspiring stories in this book, and her career-long devotion to and knowledge of women's history really shines here.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Good documentation women's roles in the history of the national parksBy Arthur DigbeeThis book is an essential reference if you are interested in the role of women in U.S. national parks, especially in those years when it was unusual for women to work for the NPS. While most of the book focuses on individual women, the later chapters of the book start to discuss broader womens themes such as pay equity, gender roles, or the nature of the work environment.Unfortunately, Kaufman does not spend much time theorizing about how gender matters. For example, she sometimes struggles to distinguish between things that happened *because* the people involved were women, and those that were essentially the same things men were doing. The volunteer work done by rangers wives is clearly gendered. So are the many womens clubs who served as advocates of parks from Mesa Verde to Mount Vernon.However, consider some other cases. Did Mary Meaghers biological research in Yellowstone depend on her being a woman? How did it affect her impact on park policy? It would be better if Kaufman would engage these questions and make the case that there was a distinctive womans voice in such cases.The book also tends to be a bit uncritical about what women have done. Though she documents all the things that women

have done for the parks, Kaufman does not criticize any of those things. America's national parks have seen a lot of criticism over the years for politicized wildlife management, for errors in historical restoration, for telling biased stories and excluding some groups, among others. In this book, women were not part of any of those things. That said, it's a go-to reference if you want to know things like, what have women done in Chaco Canyon? It will also provide a starting point for your own investigations into broader themes.

This lively study provides a missing chapter in the history of the nation's preservation of historic space and wild and scenic landscapes. Now available in paperback, it draws on extensive research, including hundreds of personal interviews. Kaufman presents the untold story of women's contributions to the national parks, making clear for the first time the role of women who have helped shape our national park system. Also included in this edition is information on women's history sites in the national parks.

"Because of the breadth and scope of this account, it represents a real contribution to environmental history."

(Choice) From the Inside Flap In this updated study, Polly Kaufman discovers that staff are no longer able to fulfill the National Park Service mission without outside support. About the Author Polly Welts Kaufman is adjunct professor of history at the University of Southern Maine.