

Who was Greasy Sal? Outlaw Horses and the Spirit of Calgary in the Automobile Age

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This article examines the development of the bucking bronc as an icon of modernity, business, and tourism promotion through a study of living horses and their representation at the Calgary Stampede during the 1920s. It draws upon the management records of the rodeo, tourism theory on back stage and front region performance, and theory on human-animal relationships. The little known mare Greasy Sal serves as a case study exposing which aspects of their horses' lives Stampede managers sought to keep private in order to mass produce the displays of bucking central to the bronc ideal for locals and visitors.

L'étude de chevaux vivants et de leur représentation au Stampede de Calgary dans les années 1920 permet de traiter de l'émergence du bronco qui rue en tant qu'emblème de la modernité, des affaires et de la promotion du tourisme. Pour ce faire, l'auteure fait appel aux archives administratives du rodéo, à la théorie du tourisme concernant le comportement en coulisse et dans l'arène ainsi qu'à la théorie sur les relations entre l'humain et l'animal. Elle se sert du cas de la jument peu connue Greasy Sal pour révéler les aspects de la vie de leurs chevaux que les dirigeants du Stampede ont tenté d'éviter de divulguer afin de produire en masse les scènes de ruades essentielles à l'idéal du broco aux yeux de la population locale et des visiteurs.

THE HISTORY of the Calgary Stampede, its charismatic founder Guy Weadick, its place as the pre-eminent tourist event in western Canada, and how it came to represent a brand for the city of Calgary is legend. From the very beginning of the Stampede in 1912, the figure of the bronco-buster was central to its iconography. Portraying a rider atop a sunfishing horse, whose body is curved into a crescent in resistance, the figure presents a struggle between two identifiable individuals. It offered endless opportunities for the depiction of cowboy gear and clothing, as well as beautiful horses, in a familiar and eye-catching icon that could be isolated and imposed upon any backdrop. In Calgary, the icon often upstaged Mounties

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and “Indians” in the city’s tourist and civic identity, which amiable city editorials and popular histories defined as “confidence [and] community spirit” (1923) as well as “brashness, optimism, and resilience” (1994), positing Calgary as a site of economic progress and community consensus.¹



Figure 1: “Let ‘Er Buck.” The dynamic image of bucking bronco with rider was always an icon of the Stampede. Red felt Calgary Stampede pennant, 1912.
 Source: Collection of Glenbow Museum, Calgary, C-7753.

Thanks to the work of a century of journalists and scholars, we know plenty about the actual historical labourers—whether ranch hands or rodeo competitors, male and female, aboriginal or white—who have been idealized by the broncbuster figure, including their possible ethnicity, economic status, aspirations, family connections, and politics.² However, if we gaze down and ask of the

- 1 “Old Spirit,” *The Albertan*, July 13, 1923; Hugh A. Dempsey, *Calgary: Spirit of the West* (Calgary: Glenbow and Fifth House, 1994), p. 1. The idea has staying power, and today the Glenbow Museum hosts an online exhibition called “Mavericks: An Incurable History of Alberta.” The site, which features Tom Three Persons, the champion bronc rider at the first Stampede, features a landing page that quotes Aritha Van Herk’s definition of that spirit as “a unique character, an inspired or determined risk-taker, forward-looking, creative, eager for change, someone who propels Alberta in a new direction or who alters the social, cultural, or political landscape.” See “Mavericks: An Incurable History of Alberta,” Glenbow Museum, www.glenbow.org/mavericks (retrieved December 10, 2014); see also Mary-Ellen Kelm, *A Wilder West: Rodeo in Western Canada* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2011), p. 24.
- 2 The literature on historical ranch workers and rodeo competitors as myth and reality, male and female, is very extensive. See, for example, Michael Allen, *Rodeo Cowboys in the North American Tradition* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1998); Christine Bold, *The Frontier Club: Popular Westerns and*

horse—Who is this?—there are fewer answers. Scholars have said little about the historical horses or the human-animal relationships that supported the broncbusting ideal at the Stampede or other rodeos, or how resistant horses became so central to modern tourism in places like Calgary.

The ornery bronc supporting the cowboy rider also reveals a paradox in Calgary's history that scholars of tourism have not yet understood, namely how animals representing nostalgia and the forces of the natural world came to represent modernity, optimism, and economic opportunity in the early twentieth century. Researchers in various social science disciplines and business schools have recently begun to examine how tourism and animal entertainments such as wildlife tourism and zoos intersect in the contemporary world. Nonhuman animals have long been a factor in tourism development globally and have shaped how modern travellers and their hosts think about what it is to be human and about environmental change or conservation. These recent studies demonstrate that, in a tourism context, animals are often vehicles for consumer-friendly messages between host and guest endorsing an ideology of benevolent human entitlement to and stewardship of nonhuman life. Moreover, interactions with living animals often serve to authenticate the tourist experience since animals are perceived to operate from an honest position grounded in nature, distinct from any artifice put on for show.³

This study of the early days of the Calgary Stampede examines this aspect of tourism and, more specifically, how and why performances of resistant animals became central to the annual event, to Calgary's brand, and to the broader meanings of tourism in the Canadian or North American west. Calgaryans used rodeo performances to distinguish their community by its particular relationship to what were perceived to be distinctively western animals and the landscapes they inhabited. Rodeo participants and fans claimed authority over those animals and spaces through competitive riding or roping of cattle and unbroken horses whose behaviour helped revitalize a heroic cowboys' and cowgirls' West that people imagined had existed in the late-nineteenth century. Indeed, many Calgaryans seemed to see the Stampede as an opportunity to demonstrate their exoticism

Cultural Power, 1880-1924 (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013); Paul H. Carleson, *The Cowboy Way: An Exploration of History and Culture* (Lubbock: Texas Tech University Press, 2000); David Dary, *Cowboy Culture: A Saga of Five Centuries* (New York: Knopf, 1981); Mary Lou LeCompte, *Cowgirls of the Rodeo: Pioneer Professional Athletes* (Champaign: Illinois University Press, 1993); Robert M. Seiler and Tamara P. Seiler, "The Social Construction of the Canadian Cowboy: Calgary Exhibition and Stampede Posters, 1952-1972," *Journal of Canadian Studies*, vol. 33, no. 3 (Fall 1998), pp. 51-82; Richard W. Slatta, *Cowboys of the Americas* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990); Heidi Thomas, *Cowgirl Up! A History of Rodeo Women* (Guilford: TwoDot, 2014); Clifford P. Westermeier, *Man, Beast, Dust: The Story of Rodeo* (1947; repr. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1987).

3 Nicole Shukin, *Animal Capital: Rendering Life in Biopolitical Times* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009), p. 5. On animals and tourism, see, for instance, "Animals in the Tourism Experience," special issue of *Current Issues in Tourism*, vol. 12, nos. 5-6 (2009); Alan Beardsworth and Alan Bryman, "The Wild Animal in Late Modernity: The Case of the Disneyization of Zoos," *Tourism Studies*, vol. 1, no. 1 (June 2001), pp. 83-104; Cynthia Chris, *Watching Wildlife* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006); David A. Fennell, *Tourism and Animal Ethics* (New York: Routledge, 2012); Warwick Frost, ed., *Zoos and Tourism: Conservation, Education, Entertainment?* (Bristol: Channel View, 2011); Derek R. Hall and Frances Brown, *Tourism and Welfare: Ethics, Responsibility and Sustained Well-Being* (Cambridge: CABI, 2006).

by monopolizing particular for-profit performances that only westerners could claim.⁴

First I examine the Stampede as tourism generator and a function of local economies, both moral and economic. I ask how one's relationship to animals was tied to city, regional, or national identity for locals striving to define themselves and communicate with visitors. To show how early bronc riding events within Stampede developed and what people asked of themselves and animals in order to bring the bronc-buster ideal to life, I then examine the case of a long-forgotten grey mare generally known as Greasy Sal. She was no Midnight or Steamboat or Cyclone, the early bucking horse celebrities whose behaviours came to define desirable equine rough stock performances. Nor was she Seabiscuit or some other famous horse who captured public admiration. Rather, she was one of many dozens of wild horses employed at Stampede whose lives left only a few traces on the historical record and appear to have had no particular fan base or public advocacy for their welfare. Hence, she was far more typical than the equine superstars rodeo historians usually choose to document.

The equine character of the bronc outlaw was produced at the intersection of wild horse behaviour, local business cultures, and the Western genre. It seems to have appealed specifically to rodeo people and audiences living on the cusp of the era in North America when most people no longer employed horses for labour. That is, Greasy Sal as bronc outlaw was a post-equine horse employed primarily for therapeutic purposes to reconcile the west that people believed once was with the west they hoped might be in future. Beyond the therapeutic, theory drawn from performance and tourism studies also helps us to shed light on how horses such as Greasy Sal came to exist as enactors of the tourism and civic brand of interwar Calgary. To the visitor and performer, bronc riding seemed authentically western because riders were often local people and always amateurs, not professional entertainers.⁵ Any given struggle between horse and rider was materially real and so reflected the perceived risk inherent in rural western living.

Erving Goffman and Dean MacCannell additionally offer the concepts of "front region" and "backstage" to mark out what aspects of this process are included in a performance and how those decisions are made. If we consider which elements of Greasy Sal's life her handlers made public and which elements they kept confidential, we find that they clearly understood that the depictions of Calgarian or cowboy/western identities displayed at Stampede were constructed for visitors, but perhaps internalized these images nonetheless.⁶

Organized rodeos became crucial features of western tourism. An enthusiastic regional boosterism gripped many western cities during the interwar decades, which constituted part of a longer period straddling the turn of the twentieth century when many communities west of the 100th meridian had transitioned

4 Robert M. Seiler, "M. B. 'Doc' Marcell: Official Photographer of the First Calgary Stampede," *American Review of Canadian Studies*, vol. 33, no. 2 (Summer 2003), p. 219.

5 Kelm, *A Wilder West*, p. 33.

6 Erving Goffman, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (New York: Anchor Books, 1959), pp. 106-113; Dean MacCannell, *The Tourist: A New Theory of the Leisure Class, with a New Introduction* (1973; Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013), pp. 92-93.

from mining camps, farming outposts, or boom towns into promising cities. Many of these communities bore the markers of what Robert Wiebe has referred to as a “bonanza psychology,” in which men imagined potential profit opportunities almost everywhere.⁷ Dozens of communities publicized that optimism by way of a chamber of commerce stocked with bankers, newspapermen, and cattlemen and by organizing a yearly rodeo exhibition. Both institutions represented the interests of the town’s business class as it sought to expand the local economy by advertising to investors and immigrants, especially by developing a dependable tourist trade supported by growing transportation and accommodation infrastructure.

In that context, stationary community rodeos developed out of the circus and tent-show business when a number of impresarios and performers saw potential in adapting colloquial ranching traditions from the American far west and Mexico into travelling “Wild West” shows. Those shows flourished between about 1880 and 1910 by reflecting and enhancing pervasive ideas about the American west as a land of adventure and risk in which the white man always triumphed over nonwhites, animals, and the land. Still, after a generation of North Americans, Europeans, and audiences around the world had seen the shows’ recreations of the Indian Wars and the settling of the west, their ornate parades, and demonstrations of “cowboy sports” like bronc riding, the novelty subsided, and Wild West shows began to be eclipsed by competing forms of entertainment. Additionally, many complained that the Wild West shows seemed artificial since their cowboy sports were not competitive events squaring riders and ropers off against one another. Simultaneously, vaudevillians, defecting Wild West show performers, and some actual ranch owners and labourers drove a movement among city officials in various places to sponsor town rodeos as a kind of civic festival in the spirit of Mardi Gras. That practice coincided with the proliferation of railways, hotel and transport infrastructure, and cheap media that broadcast across the continent and to Europe the exotic idea of consumer travel in the west as feasible, affordable, safe, and fun for middle-class people.

The story of Stampede shares some common patterns with Jenny Clayton’s discussion in this volume of the efforts of local entrepreneurs to create a sport destination in Revelstoke during the 1910s. The puzzle that Calgarians confronted in attempting similarly to make their city a travel destination, at least for one week per year, was a lack of notable geography. City limits contained no mountains, oceans, or hot springs, and there was no comprehensible way to link Calgary’s space to the experiences of nature that many travellers to western Canada sought out in those years. The Stampede, however, did offer a “nature” that was metaphorical and nostalgic. Rodeo competitors performed competitions against cattle and horses that referred to and enhanced popular memory of the cowboy’s Old West, before the eras of barbed-wire fences and automobiles. Of course, who exactly that nostalgic audience might be at any given moment was not entirely clear-cut. Stampede as civic festival essentially was a travelling Wild West show with just one stop, produced for Calgarians and tourists who assembled together

7 Robert H. Wiebe, *The Search for Order, 1877-1920* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1966), p. 249.

at the Stampede grounds to watch rural people from Alberta and across the North American west—directed by an American vaudevillian—put on a Western-themed show that claimed to express the spirit of Calgary as a boosting, pro-business city.

Tourism and event promotion was and still is inherently risky. Like supporters of other tourist ventures, such as Invermere's David Thompson Memorial Fort examined in this volume by Ben Bradley, Stampede's boosters and investors faced the task of founding, funding, and promoting their event as a tourist destination with no guarantee of public support for the premise of the attraction. As Bradley shows, financial viability relied upon successfully constructing and employing public interest in local history to mark an invented space as a tourist site. Invermere's Memorial Fort venture quickly failed in the 1920s, just as Stampede was prospering by drawing upon popular memory as much as upon any claims to historicity in its parades, banquets, pageants, and rodeo competitions. If, as Bradley puts it, the uses of local history as a "device for attracting tourists in Western Canada" were still rudimentary, public interest in a public festival themed on an imagined Wild West was highly developed and supported by the universally comprehensible Western genre in literature, theatre, photography, and cinema. At the same time, the Stampede required a collective suspension of disbelief on the part of tourists and locals in accepting a linkage between Calgary and the Western genre as legitimate, and we should not take that acceptance for granted since many Calgarians thought it hackneyed or even absurd.⁸

Moreover, across the continent, some of the early competitive rodeos founded in the same years as Stampede were badly run, operated at a loss, and failed to pay competitors the promised prize money.⁹ On balance, however, the community rodeo formula connected with audiences, and soon rodeo committees were springing up in countless small towns. After some early experimentation with ad hoc community rodeos in the 1890s and 1900s, and the discovery that visitors were fascinated by these events, local rodeo committees founded a core group of what would become the big shows of the twentieth century—in Prescott, Arizona; Cheyenne, Wyoming; Pendleton, Oregon; and Salinas, California—as well as dozens of smaller-scale events across the west.¹⁰ Through trial and error and studying one another's events, this network of rodeo committees refined the management of for-profit competitive rodeos. They learned to craft events that visitors seemed to enjoy and that the city and business class found promotional

8 Colin S. Campbell, "The Stampede: Cowtown's Sacred Cow" in Chuck Reasons, ed., *Stampede City: Power and Politics in the West* (Toronto: Between the Lines, 1984), pp. 105-106. See also Herman W. Konrad, "Barren Bulls and Charging Cows: Cowboy Celebrations in Copal and Calgary" in Frank E. Manning, ed., *The Celebration of Society: Perspectives on Contemporary Cultural Performance* (Bowling Green: Bowling Green University Popular Press, 1983), p. 153; Tamara Palmer Seiler, "Riding Broncs and Taming Contradictions: Reflections on the Uses of the Cowboy in the Calgary Stampede" in Max Foran, ed., *Icon, Brand, Myth: The Calgary Stampede* (Edmonton: Athabasca University Press, 2008), pp. 179-182.

9 Donna Livingstone, *The Cowboy Spirit: Guy Weadick and the Calgary Stampede* (Vancouver: Greystone, 1996), pp. 65, 71; Westermeier, *Man, Beast, Dust*, p. 50.

10 Earl Pomeroy, *In Search of the Golden West: The Tourist in Western America*, 2nd ed. (1957; repr. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2010), pp. 175-181.

and profitable.¹¹ Rivalling those in the United States, the Calgary Stampede was one of the original big shows, first held in 1912 and then again continuously beginning in 1919.

During the 1920s, with the emergence of affordable automobiles and a nascent middle-class tourism industry out west, commercial rodeos grew and experienced a certain vogue (as rodeos always do in economic boom times), spreading as far as Madison Square Gardens. These events also began to take on the pretensions of western heritage festivals, and Stampede founder Guy Weadick would be one of many promoters to tell the press that he was out to preserve the old cowboy ways that modern Canadians and Americans seemed to be forgetting in their rush forward into the future.¹² In the press, these claims to historicity came across by way of costumed “Old Timers and Indians” featured in parades and pageants, editorials promising “Ranch and range scenes ... depicted faithfully to the last detail,” and assertions that during the Stampede “Calgary Turns Back Clock to Rough and Ready Frontier Days.”¹³ Community rodeos across the continent also tended to follow a common format. Beginning with a parade followed by competitive rough stock or timed roping events for women and men, the arena show was interspersed with contract acts like human-animal comedy teams and fancy roping performers who, like the rodeo announcer, cracked jokes that lampooned the bravery/foolhardiness of the rodeo competitors and the human condition more broadly. Outside ‘the show,’ the Stampede featured an “Indian Village,” parties and dances, and a small carnival. Rodeo Queen pageants, big-name country music concerts, bull-riding-only night shows, and other innovations emerged in the decades following World War II.

In the meantime, rodeos reflected the pragmatic and somewhat paradoxical agricultural values of their participants, wherein horses were at times beloved individuals and at others a perishable commodity, and the environment was both helper and enemy of man. Rodeo performances blended these complex ideas with the marketing goals of the local rodeo committee, newspapers, tourist magazines, the railways, hotel owners, the Alberta Publicity Bureau, and other parties looking to boost the local economy. This diverse group was loosely united around the goal of transforming decidedly unglamorous animal management work (like calf roping and horse breaking) and drunken ranch pastimes called “cowboy sports” (like bull and steer riding) into news and entertainment. The resulting festivities and paid entertainment were indeed “a conflation of present and past that could be marketed as authentic and relevant,” as Donald Wetherell puts it.¹⁴ It was not obvious at first which aspects of the conglomeration of people, animals, ideas, and practices—whether real, imagined, or manipulated through ample artistic license

11 Kelm, *A Wilder West*, pp. 27-28.

12 *Ibid.*, p. 25; Livingstone, *The Cowboy Spirit*, pp. 14, 33.

13 “Calgary Turns Back Clock to Rough and Ready Frontier Days” and “Indians and Old Timers Colorful in Big Parade,” *Calgary Herald*, July 11, 1927, p. 9; “A Welcome to Our Visitors,” *Calgary Herald*, July 11, 1927, p. 10.

14 Donald G. Weatherell, “Making Tradition: The Calgary Stampede, 1912-1939” in Foran, ed., *Icon, Brand, Myth*, p. 29.

and testing for audience response—would be featured at the Stampede so that it might stay financially viable while imbuing the city with a personality.

Some historians have argued that the Calgary Stampede represents early evidence of a negative American influence, a “promotional gimmickry” driven by “hucksters, promoters and civic politicians,” which many Albertans actually resented.¹⁵ Although such comments may be grounded in later twentieth-century concerns, even in the early days we can see how Calgary was being integrated into tourist conceptions of the North American rural west over which no one had much control. The efforts of Albertans to brand and boost their communities by way of human-animal performances were not specifically Canadian. Instead, commercial rodeos as tourism and community events linked civic branding and promotion in western Canada to similar patterns in various American locations. During these years, many people opportunistically ignored the Canada-US border, with populations and cultural influences drifting back and forth. It is no wonder the rodeo traditions between the nations were very similar.¹⁶

The Stampede’s charismatic founder and dominant personality, American vaudevillian trick roper and impresario Guy Weadick, openly acknowledged that he was adapting an American entertainment tradition to Calgary to frame the city in a comprehensible and appealing way for non-Albertans.¹⁷ He rightly claimed that the Stampede gave “the city world wide publicity.” Since the railroads, the press, the mayor’s office, and local businesses reaped the bulk of the financial benefits, he believed, they should boost, boost, boost for the event and even give discounts to Stampede visitors.¹⁸ In actuality, the early Stampede constituted a performance context in which Albertans were talking to themselves about who they were, but doing so before a continental audience. From the beginning, Stampede management encouraged attention from filmmakers and sent marketing materials to be displayed as far away as New York City.¹⁹ Moreover, all the rodeo managers across the North American west communicated by mail, sent schedule and purse announcements to be posted on one another’s bulletin boards, and visited one another’s shows. Thus did they slowly build a supportive network that drove a uniformity of rodeo performance conventions, but would keep all the community rodeos afloat so that rodeo competitors, contract acts, and stock suppliers might make a part-time living by travelling the network.²⁰ Although most competitors in the early days of the Calgary Stampede were Albertans, they also included plenty of men and a few women from Montana and Wyoming, and from as far away as New Mexico and Arizona.²¹

15 Campbell, “The Stampede,” pp. 105-106.

16 Peter S. Morris, “Fort Macleod of the Borderlands: Using the Forty-Ninth Parallel on the Southern Ranching Frontier” in Carol Higham and Robert Thacker, eds., *One West, Two Myths: A Comparative Reader* (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2004), pp. 149-173.

17 Livingstone, *The Cowboy Spirit*, p. 33.

18 Calgary, Glenbow Archives, Weadick Fonds, Personal Correspondence, 1912-1953 [hereafter WFPC], [Guy Weadick] to George Lane, Chairman, September 12, 1919.

19 WFPC, L. E. Waterman to Guy Weadick, August 3, 1916; and T. J. Tanner to Guy Weadick, August 20, 1913.

20 Westemeier, *Man, Beast, Dust*, p. 50.

21 This point results from a survey of lists for the years 1912, 1925-1930 of competitors in various rodeo

Later in life, Weadick would explain that the Stampede had become “legitimate”—at least as he defined it—because it had gained “the endorsement of the livestock industry and residents of the west in general” in the early part of the century.²² However, the local community was not unanimously supportive. Even in 1911 and 1912 there were many prominent Calgarians who thought a rodeo was an inappropriate way of promoting the community. Calgary had a thriving yearly agricultural exhibition, they noted, and Alberta was suited for grain production, the petroleum trade, and land speculation, while many did not believe that the growing cattle trade in the province was favourably represented by some kind of Wild West show.²³

This sentiment may have been a minority opinion, but Calgary’s newspapers and citizens demonstrated only modest enthusiasm for the Stampede when it resurfaced after World War I. One of Weadick’s general managers complained that organizers had brought the rodeo back too quickly, noting that the majority of visitors were non-Calgarians. Weadick had little sympathy, however, and berated the city establishment and “the majority of the citizens of Calgary” for being embarrassingly indifferent to the event. “The City Hall, every place of business of merchant and dealer should have been decorated, so that the city would be in gala attire,” he complained, “thereby giving visitors the impression upon their arrival, that the citizens of Calgary were as much interested in the celebration, as the out-of-town people were expected to be.”²⁴ Indeed, an expectation was developing that the appropriate emotional response to Stampede was to reflect the city’s emerging brand: energy and excitement. In the 1920s Stampede staff and the growing number of visitors to the city won many locals over, at least to the parades, carnival, and unbridled drinking that took place during the week of the event. Increasingly, Calgarians saw their own opportunities in the fictions the Stampede offered about the rural west and Calgary, or at least in the revenue those fictions helped to generate.²⁵

As for those fictions, Calgarians who endorsed the rodeo would work diligently to define themselves comprehensibly as westerners and brand themselves with an attitude toward life that relished challenging labour, persevered in contexts in which others failed, and valued personal independence and self-sufficiency. The Stampede’s competitive events would perform these usually unspoken values, only vaguely encapsulated as the “cowboy spirit” or “real spirit of Calgary.” Through events that pitted humans against cattle and horses, whom viewers were encouraged to interpret as “western” because they resisted human control and were bred in rural Alberta, rodeo participants and Calgary claimed unique

events. Stampede managers compiled various lists each year to record payment of entry fees, results of competitions, and other information necessary to the show and consisting of many dozens of pages for each year. See Glenbow Archives, Stampede Fonds.

22 WFPC, [Guy Weadick] to R. J. Hoffman, Toots Mansfield, Fred McGargar, and Earl Lindsey, November 11, 1946.

23 Max Foran, “Land Speculation and Urban Development: Calgary 1884-1912” in Anthony W. Rasporich and Henry C. Klassen, eds., *Frontier Calgary: Town, City, and Region, 1875-1914* (Calgary: McClelland & Stewart, 1975), pp. 203-220.

24 WFPC, [Guy Weadick] to George Lane, Chairman, September 12, 1919.

25 Weatherell, “Making Tradition,” pp. 21-45.

authority over those creatures and so presented an exoticized themselves for local and distant audiences. That is, competitive performances of human versus “half-wild” animals came to symbolize the city’s modern business brand, perhaps because they performed a metaphorical moment symbolizing infinite possibility.

We can understand the paradox of a bucking bronc somehow encapsulating a typically 1920s can-do attitude toward economic development by considering the broader anthrozoological context wherein consumers were increasingly shielded from animal suffering in which they were complicit. Across the continent, an urbanizing public was at once long-familiar with anti-cruelty activity with respect to city workhorses while gradually becoming alienated from holistic experiences of the livestock upon which they relied materially. Rural people would have noted that middle-class urbanites had the luxury of growing squeamish and sentimental about animals and their suffering, while still demanding steak on the plate as a key indicator of status because they did not work with animals directly. Accordingly, rodeo people found themselves in a difficult position. They sought to define their region with representations of the labour that produced beef and gentle dude ranch horses before an audience of visitors unused to and potentially shocked by the sight of animals struggling against human control. At the same time, the urban Calgarians and even rural Albertans who brought the event to life were themselves consumers who experienced the contradiction of sentimentality and consumption. There were no dyads here but a number of overlapping moral economies, as rodeo people worked out how to talk to themselves and to outsiders about horse and cattle sentience and needs, and about what animal suffering was acceptable because it was necessary to human goals.

Early audiences also intervened. During the 1920s, ticket sales, arena talk, and press reviews made it clear that Stampede spectators wanted to see rodeo sports that were difficult and violent, but not deadly. Most rodeo events (if we exclude team roping, pageants, parades, and contract acts) demonstrated “raw challenge and excitement” in the form of dramatic, explosive action, but not finesse.²⁶ That is, rodeo was a fireworks show rather than a ballet. Wild horses drawn from rangelands in Alberta, Montana, and Wyoming bore the burden of living up to the ideals of outlaw bronc-ness invented by rodeo people and their allies. Regarding competitors from Montana who might invest in a trip to Stampede, for instance, Guy Weadick promised the secretary of the Montana State Fair in Helena that “[f]or the bucking contest here ... I would say to you, that we are going to have [the] buckinest bucking horses that ever bucked a buck.”²⁷ Talk in the business often made a fetish of the “buck” as evidence of horses who enjoyed struggling against a rider, who were mean cusses and born fighters—“real bad ones,” as the lore held.²⁸

From the beginning, the buckler—the outlaw bronc—dominated the Stampede show and its iconography, effectively demonstrating to viewers and participants

26 Livingstone, *The Cowboy Spirit*, p. 68.

27 Glenbow Archives, Weadick Fonds, Calgary Exhibition & Stampede Correspondence, 1912-1953, Guy Weadick to J. A. Shoemaker, July 25, 1912.

28 Weadick Fonds, Indian Agent [name illegible] to Guy Weadick, July 26, 1912.

how a “western” animal behaved and reflected upon the character of western people. Bronc riding, with its bounding, kicking horses and “wrecks,” often involving cowgirl and cowboy injuries, epitomized early rodeo as (what today we would call) an adrenalin sport. The practice also fostered breathless press and magazine publicity. The newspapers embellished this practice by accepting advertising for the Stampede that might, for instance, juxtapose a full-page image of a twisting, air-borne, snorting bronc dislodging a rider who flails akimbo, also in mid-air, with charged patter that promised ticket buyers:

—SEE—

The Bucking Horses

The Bucking Steers

The Bucking Bulls

The Bucking Mules.²⁹

Stampede’s rough stock events supplied captivating, dynamic illustrations in the form of early rodeo photography, which would also circulate as postcards. These images commonly featured sunfishing broncs colloquialized as, for instance, a “Stampede Twister” who produced “precipitous trajectories” with “a gale of dust [and] pounding hooves” that challenged the continent’s best riders.³⁰ Local businesses also played on the bronc icon to sell their products and services, such that readers might fold over a page in the *Calgary Herald* and find a used car dealer greeting them with the image of a rearing horse and cowboy waving his hat in salute, or a brewery employing the bronc-buster icon to claim that it was “Ridin’ Pretty” and “On Top To Stay.”³¹

Many additionally believed bronc riding captured what anthropologist and veterinarian Elizabeth Lawrence has called “the very heart of rodeo ... [the] central symbol of its spirit, which has come to stand for the West itself.” By her analysis, “the contest of riding a bucking horse ... serves to express man’s basic concern with the phenomenon of subduing that which is free, taming that which is wild, and measuring his own part in it.” In interviews she conducted in the 1970s, informants said saddle bronc riding was an especially important rodeo feature because it “shows the process of making a bronc into a partner.”³² Indeed, horses had been crucial to western expansion. They had been ambivalent partners to humans in many ways and, many suspected, chafed under the responsibility, since even the best trained horse rebelled at times and probably yearned to be free, or was at least ambivalent about human control.

Enter Greasy Sal, a grey mare from rural Alberta. Her scant traces on the historical record reveal how horses experienced the rodeo’s drive to memorialize the Old West for tourist and local audiences with living animals. She was a work-a-day Stampede bronc whose barely recorded life history exposes the backstage

29 “Big Opening Day,” *Calgary Herald*, August 27, 1919, p. 12.

30 “Stampede Twister and Expert Navigator,” *Calgary Herald*, July 12, 1927, p. 1.

31 “Ridin’ Pretty” and “Used Cars—Stampede Visitors Look!!” *Calgary Herald*, July 9, 1927, p. 29.

32 Elizabeth Atwood Lawrence, *Rodeo: An Anthropologist Looks at the Wild and the Tame* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), p. 132.

reality that underpinned the front-region, public performances of an outlaw buckler. The Stampede employed her in the Canadian saddle bronc competition for several years in the late 1920s, then briefly as a bareback riding horse until around 1931, when she disappears from the historical record. Greasy Sal was among the 20 or so brones owned by the Calgary Industrial Exhibition Company and kept at the Stampede Ranch, as it would become known, where staff managed a cache of horses, which they sometimes loaned to other rodeos. They also rented horses from private individuals, sometimes from a competitor who might have a couple of “bad ones” he brought to Stampede to defer costs, and sometimes from men who made a serious business of finding proven buckers and contracting them out. Although the cowboy persona may have served as the human face of the rodeo sports, the stock contractor was a vitally important producer behind “the show.” Local ranchers and rural people supplied the bulk of the Stampede’s horses, and many wrote letters to Guy Weadick offering and advocating for their stock to supplement income they earned competing or working around the grounds for \$10 per day.³³

Greasy Sal had been purchased in 1926 from a contractor named Jim McNab of Macleod (now Fort MacLeod), Alberta, through the Stampede’s stockman, Clem Gardiner.³⁴ Typically, she performed for two or three of the seven days of the show along with many dozens of others, all indicated with a brand and a show name in the Stampede’s horse lists. She and the other rough-stock horses were valued from \$100 to \$200 each.³⁵ Greasy Sal was one of 195 brones employed at Stampede in 1927³⁶ and one of the 267 bucked in 1929.³⁷ These totals give an indication how resource-intensive Stampede managers found it to produce the kind of bucking performances riders and audiences demanded; the process demanded a sort of mass production of bucking.

Originally, whether saddled or bareback, in bronc riding events men had blindfolded a wild horse tied to a post in an unfenced area in front of the stands. (In central and south America the event is often still structured this way.) After climbing aboard, the rider rode until the horse ceased bucking, kicking, and jumping. Not only was the process lengthy and painful for the rider, it also had the potential of permanently training a horse that there was no point resisting since there was no escape from the rider. In this style of performance, the horse’s behaviour was more instinctual and unrehearsed.

By the 1920s, Weadick and other Stampede participants, including competitors and stock suppliers, had come to realize that audiences would respond better to rough-stock events that were structured around spectators’ viewing needs. That

33 Such letters are too numerous to note here but are plentiful in the business and personal correspondence of Guy Weadick in the Stampede and Weadick Fonds in the Glenbow Archives.

34 Glenbow Archives, Stampede Fonds, series 7, Events Records 1927, M-2160-89, “List of Bucking Horses—1926 Stampede,” “List of Stock Delivered to Clem Gardiner July 18, 1927,” “List of Horses Purchases by Calgary Exhibition Co.,” “Bucking Horse List 1927 Stampede,” and “Bucking Horses 1927.”

35 Stampede Fonds, series 7, Events Records 1927, M-2160-89, Clem Gardiner to Guy Weadick, July 8, 1927.

36 Stampede Fonds, series 7, Events Records 1927, M-2160-89, “1927 Bucking Horses List Office Copy.”

37 Stampede Fonds, series 7, Events Records 1927, M-2160-91(a), “1929 Bucking Horses List.”

decade Greasy Sal bucked in a newly constructed fenced arena in front of the seating that prevented bucking horses or other stock from running out of sight or from simply running rather than bucking and kicking.³⁸ Additionally, directly across from the grandstands, Greasy Sal and her rider readied themselves in specially built bucking chutes in which rough stock waited with flank strap on (a new tool of the period that promoted a horse's desire to kick and fight since it triggers the sensation of being attacked by a cougar or wolf on the haunches) while the rider lowered him or herself down, prepared his or her rope, and secured a strong hold.³⁹ The opening of the bucking chute gate (and perhaps a kick with the spurs or some other jarring sensation) triggered Greasy Sal to begin resisting her rider, and many horses learned to save their energy for that moment.

In those days, rodeo managers also began limiting rough-stock rides to a maximum of eight seconds, awarding animal and rider points for the quality of the performance. A points system and grading sheets marked by a judge in the arena facilitated standardization in evaluating horses' performances by rewarding those that reproduced the outlaw character by offering the most kicks, jumps, and bucks. These movements transformed the rider from mere man or woman into a "bronc buster" and authentic westerner. This innovation saved equine energy while reducing the possibility of an animal losing the will to buck by inadvertently being broken while at the rodeo. As such, Greasy Sal and other equine performers became modern post-equine horses. One did not do more than get them halter-broken. One did not plow a field with or ride to church on such horses, nor drive such horses on hoof to the show. One hauled them in a trailer or rail car. All their energy and value were focused on their behaviour in the arena.

To the horses scouted and reserved for rodeo use, the process of bucking was one in which they successfully freed themselves of a rider every time and learned how to do so as quickly as possible. The modern bucking process essentially displayed the effects of operant conditioning on a horse, which rodeo people colloquially described as an innate "love" of bucking off a rider. In fact, the raw ingredients for the outlaw bronc were simply a horse who tended toward fighting and kicking (rather than running) when sensing danger and was unaccustomed to riders. Stampede officials and chute managers instituted these innovations of flanking the horse and rider in a chute and imposing a time limit once the gate was opened, not to silence critical Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals-type activists in Boston or other faraway cities, but to answer spectators that first summer in Calgary, who had made it clear they wanted to watch a spectacle of western life free of gore or gratuitous animal suffering. For instance, the 1912 event had featured steer bursting with longhorn cattle that Weadick and his partners appear to have regretted immediately. Cowboys jumped from a running horse onto a running steer and twisted the creature to the ground by the horns, and "bulls spewed blood in all directions when the cowboys ... tore their horns out by the roots." The spectacle generated complaints from the public and Stampede

38 James H. Gray, *A Brand of its Own: The 100 Year History of the Calgary Exhibition and Stampede* (Saskatoon: Producer Prairie Books, 1985), pp. 39-40.

39 Livingstone, *The Cowboy Spirit*, pp. 50, 74.

organizers.⁴⁰ Thereafter, the Stampede excluded various traditional events that led reticent or inactive animals to bleed, pass out, or lose body parts before an audience.⁴¹ Instead, the interventions of the 1920s sought to shape and measure a bucking horse's behaviour to the aesthetic and managerial needs of the rodeo and its audience. Packed with danger and dust ups, modern bronc riding using proven buckers promoted the myth of animal consent as well as the west's authentic link to the natural world, resolving for many (not all) people the contradiction between utilitarian use of animals and consumers' dislike for animal suffering. In these early days already, the wildness audiences witnessed on the part of Greasy Sal and the others was a carefully crafted one.



Figure 2: Stampede iconography made a fetish of the bronc “buck.” Detail from 1930 Calgary Stampede daily program sheet.

Source: Weadick fonds, Glenbow Museum, Calgary.



Figure 3: Steel Gray horse, akin to Greasy Sal, performing as outlaw. Souvenir postcard, 1928.

Source: Courtesy of Glenbow Museum, Calgary NA-2365-10.

40 Gray, *A Brand of its Own*, p. 40.

41 Weatherell, “Making Tradition,” pp. 26-28.

Living horses unknowingly played the outlaw bronc in a broader graphic and storytelling context in which Western stories featured shootouts, chases, and other dramatic action. For instance, for two generations, dime novels, Wild West shows, and popular memoirs such as Charles Wellington Furlong's *Let 'Er Buck* (1921) and John Barrow's *Ubet* (1934) celebrated the bucking horse as a wily character who challenged and exasperated cowboys. The genre also added action and humour to western life that separated the cowboy from an audience of "blasé, effete, lily-livered youths" in the East who knew not the outdoor life.⁴² Those horses who could produce the ideal "buck"—and many failed to perform it consistently and were weeded out of the bucking strings supplied to the Stampede—contributed to the rodeo-wide convention for presentation of horses as sunfishing, kicking outlaw buckers in flight. We should not take this visual convention and its relation to horse behaviour for granted, but consider the paths not taken by rodeo committees and graphic artists as they used trial and error to find the precise mix of violence and humour to which audiences responded and which rodeo people thus seem to have internalized as normative. Broncs were presented—not grazing on a remote hillside, or waiting in a paddock behind the arena, or being petted by a pretty girl dressed in fancy western attire—but at their most explosively violent.

Why so? Rodeo committees had discovered early on that this icon and the corresponding horse behaviour sold tickets. The iconography of the outlaw bronc and cowboy offered a recognizable myth about western horses and people, and so it was reproduced. In time, the most common rendition, the copy (not the unique or unconventional), became the most dependable, consumer-friendly icon of the accepted and proposed truths about Calgary as a western city, uniquely tied to nature yet eagerly ready for business. In an age of mass production, authenticity "relies on repetition and redundancy to create its own standards of reality," Christopher Steiner explains of tourist tropes and iconography.⁴³ Indeed, this clichéd wild horse was a "stereotype" as Walter Lippmann would describe it in those days.⁴⁴ The outlaw bucker was a shorthand way to get across a whole variety of ideas and truisms about modern and traditional, rural and urban, animal and human, western and inauthentically non-western that helped viewers and performers identify with modern rodeo sports and related civic celebrations. Calgarians employed this equine character as a standard against which to evaluate all bucking horses and thus claimed authority over this unexpected symbol of western modernity. As a result, the horse who did not jump and buck in expected ways appeared to rodeo judges, riders, and audiences as sub-standard, and deserving of a low score or generating a re-ride for the cowboy or cowgirl in question.

Horse naming practices enhanced this tradition and added entertainment value to broncs by emphasizing the "buck" and the cowboy's experience of the ride.

42 Charles Wellington Furlong, *Let 'Er Buck*, (1921; New York: Overlook, 2007), p. xii; John R. Barrows, *Ubet* (Caldwell: Caxton, 1934). See also Allen, *Rodeo Cowboys*, pp. 109-130.

43 Christopher Steiner, "Authenticity, Repetition, and the Aesthetics of Seriality: The Work of Tourist Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" in Ruth B. Phillips and Christopher B. Steiner, eds., *Unpacking Culture: Art and Commodity in Colonial and Postcolonial Worlds* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), pp. 92-94.

44 Walter Lippman, *Public Opinion* (1922; New York: Free Press/Simon & Schuster, 1997), pp. 64-69, 224.

Greasy Sal herself took a name that indicated riders would have a difficult time staying on her back. Some show names drew attention to the acrobatics or supposed effects of preferred horses: Elevator, Jim Stink, Corkskrew, Zig Zag, Earthquake, Cyclone, Explosion, Flying Devil, Night Mare, Funeral Wagon, Calamity Ann.⁴⁵ Other names integrated rodeo with broader continental cultural economies by endorsing the audience's knowledge of contemporary popular culture and trends, cinema, celebrities, or Wild West clichés: Alberta Kid, Sox (baseball), The Sheik (in reference to the famous Valentino films), King Tut (in reference to relics that had recently been discovered in Egypt), Lindburgh (after the famed aviator), or Dirty Dora (to lampoon the "Dumb Dora" comic strip). Horses marketed to rodeo audiences in this manner were consumer-oriented creatures, defined solely by their few minutes in the chute and 10 to 20 seconds in the arena.⁴⁶

Erving Goffman's concept of the front-region and backstage zones of performance and identity also helps elucidate the life of a horse. In these years, rodeo people on both sides of the border invested much energy in imagining themselves and publicizing themselves as humane guardians of stock, thereby projecting what Mary-Ellen Kelm refers to as "a manly image that included responsible caretaking" that was tied to the boosting development strategies of the era.⁴⁷ For some spectators, the Stampede show may have convincingly portrayed rodeo people as careful guardians of their animals. As for any human performer at the Stampede, the arena announcer called out Greasy Sal's name to the crowds each time she was ridden between 1926 and 1930. Fans also learned the names of horse competitors from newspaper articles and countless postcards featuring photographs of Stampede bronc riding. Broncs were thus not anonymous but publicly named performers in the human show, and spectators might remember them from year to year. Still, Stampede records from 1927 also show that Greasy Sal was lent, leased, or sent to another (unnamed) rodeo in the care of Clem Gardiner, at which time Gardiner marked her on the back of his horse delivery list as out of the running: "X in foal."⁴⁸ This was decidedly backstage information.

In 1930, Greasy Sal foaled again at the Stampede Ranch. What happened to the first of these young horses is not apparent from Stampede records, but, of the 1930 birth in late May, Dick Cosgrove reported: "Gray Mare branded D2 I think she is called Grizley Sal she had a colt two weeks ago and I killed it."⁴⁹ Two other proven buckers, Baby Doll and Red Head, were also about to give birth but bucked again at Stampede later that year, with no foals in tow bawling for their mothers and distracting these mares from the arena performance. Cosgrove had promised

45 Stampede Fonds, series 5, M-2160-89 to M-2160-98, Sampling from 1927-1930 horse lists, events records, and correspondence.

46 In Calgary, horse lists show that few of the names expressed the publicly rampant xenophobia or racism of the period, presumably to keep rodeo at arms length with contemporary politics, although a Papoose or Sambo appeared occasionally.

47 Kelm, *A Wilder West*, p. 147.

48 Stampede Fonds, series 7, Events Record 1927, M-2160-89, "List of Stock Delivered to Clem Gardiner July 18, 1927."

49 Stampede Fonds, series 7, General Correspondence A-H 1930, M-2160-98, Dick Cosgrove to Guy Weadick, May 24, 1930.

Weadick that the three would “be dry and in shape in time for the show.”⁵⁰ From a rodeo point of view, Greasy Sal and other mares were modern therapeutic performers with a message to deliver, more valuable bucking than caring for a foal. Greasy Sal as mare (rather than outlaw bronc as she was presented to the public) would have grieved the loss of her foal, spent a period of days or weeks calling and pacing the paddock fence-lines or pasture looking for him or her. That aspect of her existence is an element we must consider to gain an understanding of her as a historical being with concerns beyond the bucking chute and to allow for her individual history as intrinsically valuable. Seeing Greasy Sal as a foaling mare exposes the degree to which westerners constructed themselves by shaping limited public understandings of animals. Did Dick Cosgrove think about how his act of dispatching a newborn horse, which many locals and tourists would have viewed as symbolic of innocence, beauty, and optimism for the future, defied the claims Stampede participants made to have unique insight into and the authority over the west and its creatures?

By 1930, Greasy Sal was nearing the end of her tenure at Stampede. She was noted on one horse list in a group marked “These horses not very good,” and was soon to be weeded out of the bucking string.⁵¹ Of the original group in which Greasy Sal had started in 1926, Alberta Kid, Sliptivity, Santa Claus, Honorable Patches, Tennessee, Big Smoke, and Dirty Dora were still bucking, but others on the list had performed for fewer than four years.⁵² It appears that for most horses the average number of years appearing at the Stampede during the 1920s was three to five, which was about the average length of time cart horses spent hauling in cities when they had been employed by the millions in the equine era.⁵³ In some ways, the Stampede’s outlaw broncs were not so different from their turn-of-the-century urban workhorse kin.

Carefully crafted tourist practices and messages like the claimed historicity of Stampede events or the icon of the outlaw bronc might seem inauthentic and manipulative from an academic vantage point, but they indicate that some local people in interwar Calgary managed to shape tourism and the city’s brand to their own ends. Indeed, Dean MacCannell draws from Goffman’s concepts of front region and backstage to explain, “A back region, closed to audiences and outsiders, allows concealment of props and activities that might discredit the performance out front. In other words, sustaining a firm sense of social reality requires some *mystification*.”⁵⁴ Certainly, horses like Greasy Sal helped some Calgarians and

50 Stampede Fonds, series 7, General Correspondence A–H 1930, M-2160-98, Guy Weadick to Dick Cosgrove, May 30, 1930.

51 Stampede Fonds, series 7, Events Records 1930, M-2160-97, “List of Bucking Horses Owned by Calgary Exhibition Assoc. June 27, 1930.”

52 In 1930, Greasy Sal was still owned by Exhibition Co., delivered to manager Dick Cosgrove (Stampede Fonds, series 7, Events Records 1930, M-2160-97, “Horses Delivered to Dick Cosgrove”), but not on events records for 1930 or 1931 (Stampede Fonds, series 7, Events Records 1931, M-2160-97 and M-2160-101, “Bucking Horses Calgary Stampede 1930,” “Mr. Dillon’s Bucking Horse List 1930,” and “Office Copy Bucking Horse List Stampede 1931”).

53 Clay McShane and Joel A. Tarr, *The Horse in the City: Living Machines in the Nineteenth Century* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007), p. 34.

54 MacCannell, *The Tourist*, p. 93.

Albertans to self-mystify as at once modern and rawly connected to the forces of nature. The cowboy and bronc characters integrated into the culture at the Stampede put the balance of representational power into the hands of Stampede organizers and their allies in Calgary's media, the Alberta Publicity Bureau, and business circles in defining the city's personality.

Or, perhaps showmen like Weadick and Gardiner, and all the riders and local boosters as well, marshalled these particular clichés because they equally drew from a collective western denial about how modernity challenged their sense of cowboy identity, which of course many in the west rejected in any event. Like many artists living in the modern world but seen to represent a timeless past, many Stampede participants and supporters may have internalized some of the lore. As Janet Berlo explains of people who find that their self-conception is strongly shaped by outsiders' mythology about them, some Stampede participants and Calgarians must have idealized their own past by internalizing "a fiction of [their] life that is a century out of date."⁵⁵ By the 1920s, the Stampede's identity was grounded in a way of cowboy living that was 50 years in the past yet infused with an ideology that rejected public talk of animal suffering in order to support the myth that broncs like Greasy Sal, rather than being disposable, were enthusiastic partners in the adventure that was the interwar west.

As a souvenir of the cowboy age, Greasy Sal represented older agricultural uses of land and animals that were materially integral to western tourism and consumerism more broadly, but (although audiences did not know it) her persona was constituted by her handlers' more pragmatic decisions about costs and entertainment value rather than sentimentality over the life of this or that horse. Most rodeo people probably took it for granted that talking to audiences about events such as the killing of Greasy Sal's foal was inappropriate, even if some killing always went on at the ranch. The British historian Keith Thomas described this phenomenon as a function of modern life wherein many people have found themselves in a "confused state of mind" as they struggle to reconcile protective desires toward animals and the environment with their society's accelerating manipulation and consumption of the natural world. Therapeutic animals like the outlaw bronc who hankers for a fight and "just loves to buck" were creatures that Calgarians and their visitors employed to paper over this paradox while branding the city as open for business as an important tourist destination.⁵⁶

Greasy Sal and the many other broncs at Stampede served up what Thomas calls the "mixture of compromise and concealment [that] has so far prevented this conflict from having to be fully resolved."⁵⁷ Thomas's insights intersect here with Dean MacCannell's analysis of modernity as he notes how tourist-oriented performances often offer "work displays" that evoke authenticity for spectators because they contain a grain of historical truth that gently resolves contradictions

55 Janet Catherine Berlo, "Drawing (Upon) the Past: Negotiating Identities in Inuit Graphic Arts" in Phillips and Steiner, eds., *Unpacking Culture*, p. 191.

56 Keith Thomas, *Man and the Natural World: Changing Attitudes in England, 1500-1800* (New York: Vintage, 1983), pp. 17-50, 242-303.

57 *Ibid.*, pp. 243, 303.

and misunderstandings produced during the meeting of the modern traveller with the supposedly traditional local world.⁵⁸ In this case, the issue at stake was citizens' growing alienation from the holistic knowledge of work animals, namely the breaking of saddle horses on western ranches. Still, audiences in the stands at Stampede understood that the bronc riding they watched was an entertainment derived from ranch work, and so just symbolic, unlike the re-enactments of labour practices one might find in the historical villages examined in Alan Gordon's chapter. The outlaw bronc manufactured an ostensibly authentic relationship between horse and human, one that was truthful in that neither the bronc nor rider was "acting," so to speak.

This post-equine nostalgia for an imagined western animal who defiantly resisted, but was somehow complicit in her own captivity and commodification, offered a consumer-friendly western animal with no needs except to please people. She was symbolic of a "Wild West" somehow free of injustice or disappointment. Accordingly, Greasy Sal's job was to represent to visitors and Calgarians alike the myth that westerners were still cowboys and cowgirls at heart and that they had a unique hardiness and optimism that enabled them to balance the contradictions inherent in modern life by being at once of nature and not of nature. People came to see bucking horses like Greasy Sal as representatives of a western spirit of individualism, optimism, and moral purity (by representing the forces of nature), although they were in fact signs that industrialization, mass consumerism, and tourism were quickly changing Alberta forever.

58 MacCannell, *The Tourist*, pp. 57-58, 91.