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Westward Expansion

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Her first three chapters are devoted to daguerreotypes, the cumbersome photographic process that prevailed until the late 1850s and allowed for only one image to be reproduced at a time. Here she observes that, somewhat surprisingly, photography did not initially appeal to public tastes. Many daguerreotypes, in fact, were used as the basis for paintings. As she considers images of the Mexican-American War, Indian portraits, and early attempts to depict the western landscape for both entertainment and scientific purposes, she concludes that audiences preferred the drama and comprehensiveness of artistic views to the mere scientific accuracy of photographs.

Chapters four through six consider wet-plate photography, which enabled multiple reproductions from a single negative. Most significantly, according to Sandweiss, it allowed for the marriage of text and image, and thus produced a kind of directed viewing, with captions and titles instructing the audience how to interpret the photograph: "Eventually this new union of pictures and words would transform completely the ways in which western photographs could inform and shape public understanding of the region and its prospects" (5). Photographers accompanied railroad surveys and federal expeditions, depicting the landscape as a place full of promise for future development, and its Indian inhabitants as a vanishing population. As these images circulated and became familiar, they "reiterated and conveyed ideas about the West to a broad audience" (185) and helped to create the legend of the western frontier that even today remains a potent force. Chapter six, "'Momentoes of the Race': Photography and the American Indian," is a particularly rich exploration of the multiple uses and understandings of images of American Indians.

The final chapter examines the techniques of photographic reproduction. Even in the 1890s, Sandweiss finds a decided preference for artistic depictions over photographic images: "New reproduction technologies did not immediately create new ways of seeing" (323). An especially valuable epilogue on the uses of photographs as historical evidence reminds us of the myriad ways these images skew our understanding of the past. The range and excellent quality of the photographic reproductions add greatly to the richness of this work.

Westward Expansion, by Sara E. Quay. American Popular Culture Through History Series. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2002. xx, 301 pp. Illustrations, graphs, notes, bibliography, index. \$49.95 cloth.

Reviewer Richard W. Etulain is professor emeritus of history at the University of New Mexico. His most important book is *Re-Imagining the Modern American West: A Century of Fiction, History, and Art* (1996).

In the 1950s and 1960s American popular culture emerged as a new field of study. Through the American Studies and Popular Culture associations scholars began to examine a full gamut of American culture and society, from elite to the most mundane of subjects. No one has done more in the past two generations to encourage this examination of American popular culture than Ray B. Browne of Bowling Green State University in Ohio. The volume under review clearly reflects Browne's influences; indeed, he edits the series in which this book appears. Regrettably, although the subject is worthy—the popular culture of “Westward Expansion”—the volume's author is not fully up to this large, demanding task.

Sara E. Quay tells us she will examine “the deeply resonant relationship between popular culture and the period of westward expansion [1849 to 1890]” (xiii). By examining trends in popular culture about the American West, she promises to offer readers “an overview of the cultural motifs and agendas that defined the frontier experience” (xiii). In addition, she endeavors to “trace the roots of frontier popular culture” through the twentieth century (xiv). Finally, the book “offers readers a resource for additional exploration of the western symbols that appear in American society” (xiv).

To achieve her huge goals, Quay provides information on many topics. Her book opens with two fact-filled chapters on “Everyday Life” and the “World of Youth.” Then follow other straightforward sections on advertising, architecture, fashion, food, and leisure activities. The final chapters, sweeping in their coverage, treat literature, music, performing arts, travel, and the visual arts. A final section lists more than 200 books and essays on western popular culture that the author considers helpful.

Quay covers dozens of pertinent topics in easy-to-follow prose. Even though her writing is more descriptive than analytical, general readers will profit from her introductory coverage of these many subjects. Alongside her discussions of popular culture mediums such as dime novels, comics, road shows, and schoolyard games are treatments of events such as the California Gold Rush, overland trails, stagecoaches and railroads, and the Homestead Act. Generally, she writes about a popular culture of a Wild West, a frenetic frontier teeming with unorthodox, palpable differences from the popular culture of other American regions.

Unfortunately, the volume's limitations outweigh its contributions. The author betrays a very limited knowledge of the American West. Nor does she seem aware of recent trends in western historiography challenging the primarily triumphalist perspective she follows. Re-

vealingly, the names of Frederick Jackson Turner, Walter Prescott Webb, Herbert Eugene Bolton, and James Malin, as well as those of the leading New Western historians, do not appear in the book's index.

Especially troubling are the more than 75 mistaken facts, misspellings, problems of form, and incorrect conclusions marring the text, notes, and index. Abraham Lincoln did not begin his life in a log cabin in Illinois (129), Theodore Roosevelt was already president in 1902 and did not run for reelection in 1908 (37, 21), and the Homestead Act did not provide free land (47). Authors' names are misspelled, with Rodman W. Paul becoming Paul W. Rodman (293) and Patricia Nelson Limerick changed into Patricia Limerick Nelson (263). Many western scholars will not agree that the late nineteenth-century West spawned a "unique culture which defined the period of westward expansion and which continues to shape the West today" (150). Continuities and changes led—and lead—to an even more complex West.

Also, the author never defines her West. At times it encompasses Niagara Falls, Lincoln's Illinois, and the bluegrass country. But the volume includes little on the Pacific Northwest, the northern Rockies, or the range of states just west of the Mississippi. Iowa readers will benefit from the general discussions of farmers, sod houses, and agricultural experiences but will wonder why Iowa writers such as Emerson Hough, Ruth Suckow, and Frederick Manfred are not discussed.

Nonspecialist readers may be less critical. Quay's book is a helpful guide to popular culture, but much less so for the American West. If used with caution and alongside more authoritative and dependable sources, *Westward Expansion* can be a handy reference source for public school teachers and students. Graduate students and western historians will find the volume less helpful.

German Pioneers on the American Prairie: The Wagners in Texas and Illinois, by Andreas V. Reichstein. Denton, TX: University of North Texas Press, 2001. xii, 288 pp. Illustrations, maps, appendixes, notes, bibliography, index. \$32.95 cloth.

Reviewer Eleanor L. Turk is professor of history emerita at Indiana University East. She has published a number of articles on German Americans in Kansas.

Andreas Reichstein is a lecturer in American history at the University of Hamburg, Germany, long a center for the study of German emigration. His breadth of knowledge of both countries grounds this multi-generational portrait of a family that migrated both within Germany and to the United States. He sketches the social and political changes in nineteenth-century Germany that prompted brothers Wilhelm and

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