

curiosity and draw the general reader deeper into Ewers's work, while suggesting new lines of inquiry to the specialist.

Each essay is engagingly written, balanced, and free of jargon, an adventure into one corner of plains ethnohistory, guided by a master who has worked in the field for half a century. The insights Ewers brings to each topic reflect his knowledge of and respect for native peoples and their cultures. He also respects the Euro-American observers' honest attempts to understand the Indians. Perhaps the most unexpected chapters in the book include Ewers's efforts to document nineteenth-century collectors of Indian artifacts, and a concluding chapter, "The White Man's Strongest Medicine," which to Ewers means the ability to record and preserve the record of the past in archives and museums. If that topic seems at first glance ethnocentric and self-serving, the depth of Ewers's argument will convince even the most skeptical reader that the topic is at least worth further thought. As an introduction to the field of plains ethnohistory or as methodological models, the essays seem as fresh today as when they were first published. Each demonstrates the value of uniting historical and anthropological method in the study of the past, and each in its own way demonstrates that it is not only possible but immensely valuable to combine native oral tradition, Euro-American written sources, and material culture studies in a unified approach to plains history and culture. A brief sketch of Ewers's career by William Hagan in the foreword is useful in setting the author's work in context.

*Wild West Shows and the Images of American Indians, 1883-1933*, by L. G. Moses. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1996. xvi, 364 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$39.95 cloth.

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This study is broader than its title suggests. Besides images of show Indians, L. G. Moses examines the objections of reformers to the "exploitation" of native peoples. The dialogue between such entertainers as William F. Cody and such reformers as Mary C. Collins forms an important theme.

Ultimately, Moses concludes that employment in Cody's Wild West Exposition, as well as at such fairs as the 1893 Columbian Exposition, gave Native Americans the opportunity to "evoke and even to celebrate their cultures." Moses adds that "playing' Indian could also be viewed as defiance" (277). Other historians, however, argue that in order to earn money show Indians diffused native culture and also

manifested marginalization by twentieth-century capitalism, which offered native peoples little other employment.

In defending his interpretation, Moses delves into the records of show Indians. He also incorporates a plethora of wonderful illustrations, ranging from Samuel Lone Bear during the late 1890s to Oglala show Indians dancing during the noon hour at the General Electric Plant in Chicago in about 1930. Courtesy of such performances, many people learned something of native folkways, albeit not always what anthropologists and officials of the Bureau of Indian Affairs might have chosen.

Clearly, entertainment portrayals of American Indians affected everything from policy making to personal attitudes, whether in Washington, D. C., Iowa, or California. For many people, the American Indian became the figure in the arena, and they acted accordingly. In 1887, for example, as Cody sailed to Europe with a full complement of "warriors" and "squaws," the U.S. Congress created the ill-advised Dawes Act to detribalize Native Americans.

Moses points out that it is difficult to determine the full effect of show business on Native Americans and Indian policy because of the modifications that took place between 1883, when Cody organized his first pageant, and 1933, when the Miller Brothers 101 Ranch closed down, a victim of Americans' changing interests and such new media offerings as radio and motion pictures. Although Moses declares that by 1904 "Show Indians had won the battle of images" (149), one has to question the type of impact such images had on legislation.

It might have been helpful if Moses had paid more attention to gender in analyzing policy. More specifically, numerous scholars indicate that the depiction of native women as passive beings did a huge disservice to the reality of women's roles in native societies—and to resulting policy.

Moses also shows an occasional lapse in the critical use of sources, as in his presentation of Annie Oakley dressed in Indian costume (120). Annie, who displayed unusual regard and sympathy for Cody's Indians, attired herself as an Indian for a private masquerade rather than for public display. Neither did she fall so ill in Spain that she "barely survived"; the story resulted from a confusion of names with another performer.

Still, Moses's book is an achievement in research and in forcing awareness on a public just beginning to question the authenticity of media Indians. I hope that other scholars will follow his lead and delve into the intriguing issues he raises.

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