

established well enough by the academic reviews he has received for his previous publications.

So Much To Be Done: Women Settlers on the Mining and Ranching Frontier, edited by Ruth B. Moynihan, Susan Armitage, and Christiane Fischer Dichamp. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1990. xxii, 325 pp. Illustrations, bibliography. \$32.50 cloth, \$12.95 paper.

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So Much To Be Done is a collection of letters, diaries, and little-known autobiographies written by nineteen women who lived on the mining and ranching frontiers of the American West. Nearly all of the women were white (the exception was an Indian woman), but they came from diverse backgrounds—urban and rural, genteel and working-class. The book is divided into three parts, corresponding to the different regions of mining and ranching activity: California and Nevada; the High Plains and Rocky Mountains; and the Southwestern Desert.

The editors of *So Much To Be Done* hoped to show that "there is no single, simple interpretation that can encompass all of western women's . . . experience of settlement" (xiii). In this goal they ably succeed. They have selected a rich array of writings, revealing a fascinating multiplicity of responses to western life. Although some female settlers were timid, others were brave; some spent their lives in childcare and housework while others were urban entrepreneurs; some women enjoyed the challenges of life in the frontier West while others never overcame their separation from loved ones and their isolation from the ordered society of the eastern states.

Still, this could be a better book. It needs a much stronger introduction, one that offers a sustained analysis of women settlers' gender values, their interaction with the western market, their expectations and experience of marriage and motherhood, and their relations with outlaws, Indians, and Mexicans.

So Much To Be Done will be of particular interest to new western and women's historians. However, it should also have comparative value for those studying settlement in Iowa and other midwestern states.

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