

might have provided the link Cassity needed to demonstrate the continuity of values (localist, antimodern, antimarket) between the antebellum generation and that of the late nineteenth century. As it stands, the link is presumed and not proven.

Much of the chapter on women's experience in Sedalia is devoted to an account of railroad promoter Smith's two daughters. While highly speculative in places, the chapter includes a fascinating account of the sisters' psychological, marital, and gynecological travails as well as their activities in support of the Women's Christian Temperance Union and other reform causes.

Cassity's work is both more and less than the standard community studies that urban, social, and labor historians have turned out over the past twenty years. It is more because his evocation of a bucolic ideal and the values of mutuality and community reads like a belletristic essay; it is less because the demographic, economic, sociological, and political data standard in such works is simply missing. Despite a ten-page bibliographic essay and exhaustive primary research, there is little evidence that the author was trying to address the historiographical issues raised in the usual community studies. Even the notation of secondary sources in the endnotes seems thin and dated. The writing style, too, is both more and less than that expected in such community studies. Flowing and elegiacal in places, penetrating and thought-provoking elsewhere, sometimes the style tends toward the overblown and the pretentious.

The author of this work is to be commended for taking the less well-traveled path in the search for the *mentalités* of his subjects. Whether he reached his destination is considerably less clear or certain.

Victorian West: Class and Culture in Kansas Cattle Towns, by C. Robert Haywood. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1991. xiv, 325 pp. Illustrations, tables, notes, bibliography, index. \$29.95 cloth.

REVIEWED BY WILLIAM L. HEWITT, BRIAR CLIFF COLLEGE

For twenty years, television audiences brought Matt, Doc, Miss Kitty, Chester, and Festus of Dodge City into their living rooms. Each episode of the "Gunsmoke" horse opera began with Sheriff Matt Dillon facing down a gunfighter in the dusty streets of Dodge, providing an image of the West and Kansas cattle towns as violent and ruggedly individualistic.

The "Gunsmoke" imagery, however, tells only a small part of the story, as historian C. Robert Haywood illustrates in his comprehensive

study, *Victorian West: Class and Culture in Kansas Cattle Towns*. Not denying that the late nineteenth-century Kansas cattle towns initially attracted a largely male population—whose baser diversions were met by saloon keepers, gamblers, and demimonde—Haywood shows that there was much more to the story than the shoot-out imagery. He describes processes of community building as the product of a synergism of “conformist eastern patterns and radically new lifestyles” (xii). The Jekyll and Hyde personality of Kansas towns has been misrepresented by the popular culture’s preoccupation with Mr. Hyde, whereas Haywood concentrates on the Dr. Jekyll personality.

Haywood describes Dodge City, Wichita, and Caldwell as divided communities. One side abounded in positive tags such as “permanent residents,” “stable society,” “respectable folk,” “mainstream society,” and “the civilized people.” The other side abounded in negative labels: “the temporary population,” “the Texas cattle trade crowd,” “roistering habitués,” “summer season transients,” and “the sporting crowd” (18). After a period of conflict of varying durations, when the business element that made its money directly from the cattle trade predominated, the better sort eventually won out. The transformation was not fast on the heels of the exodus of the cattle trade. Rather, according to Haywood, “the respectable population gradually had acquired control of the economy and social life, leaving the roistering habitués in isolated business establishments—not quite a ghetto, but certainly a distinct area and class” (78).

Easterners carried white, middle-class, Victorian standards in the cultural baggage on their move west looking for financial opportunities. Haywood describes this tension by using a variety of descriptive metaphors: “conformist eastern patterns and radically new lifestyles,” (xii) or “old rural agrarianism and the new urban industrialism” (81), from which a hybrid society emerged. The hybrid had less of the cowboy culture and more of the dominant Victorian culture, however, which was “understood to imply an international sharing by English-speaking people of values, attitudes, material development, and social action held in common by the middle class during the last half of the nineteenth century” (4).

The cultivation of Victorian sensibility could best be seen in the lives of middle-class women. Haywood asserts more than once that the presence of “respectable” women and children necessitated “different visions of what a cowtown ought to be” (91; see also 34, 114). The Victorian “true woman” could be found in the cattle towns, “not so much the product of that peculiar environment as of her past associations and the values and manners of current times” (227). Women were not in complete harmony with their eastern model, but it was

expected that they would someday appear less "out of place" (274). They also demarked, in their values and their lifestyle, the respectable from the disreputable (Miss Kitty notwithstanding), creating a gulf that was "all but insurmountable" (63).

Haywood acknowledges his intellectual debt to precursors such as Robert Dykstra and his fine study, *The Cattle Towns*, which focused on the "wide open" (103) era of the 1870s and 1880s. The prevailing ethos had been that "no one knew better than businessmen what was better for business," and the Victorians agreed that "there could be no higher authority than the merchant leaders on what was both godly and what was good for the economic health of the community" (107). What Haywood describes is the fencing in and eventual crowding out of the cowboy culture by the Victorian middle-class business element.

The eventually dominant Victorian business class fought to establish the institutions they associated with Victorian sensibilities. Cattle towns lagged in establishing schools and libraries, for example, but they strove to catch up with eastern standards. In their architecture they also emulated eastern tastes and models, sometimes going to garish extremes with their affectations of Victorian culture. Yet as Haywood surmises, "perhaps the display and haute cuisine labels were not so much evidence of lusting after the cult of conspicuous consumption as a desire to prove the West was not a dreary place ignorant of eastern-style culture and manners" (217).

In the afterword to his well-written synthesis, Haywood observes that "the cattle towns had been superimposed . . . on raw, unforming hide and trade towns" (275). It could be said, moreover, that Victorian America was superimposed on the cattle towns, but this too was relatively short-lived. With the announcement of Queen Victoria's death on January 22, 1901, the Victorian ethos came under increasing criticism, culminating with the rejection of the old standards in the 1920s. Haywood underscores an irony: "For the people of Caldwell, Dodge City, and Wichita once again tried hard to forget the past, only this time both the roistering cowtown history and the innocent restraint of Victorian small-town life were denied" (277). Both heritages had been buried on Boot Hill; "Gunsmoke" partially brought one to life, but Haywood exhumes the Victorian West.

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