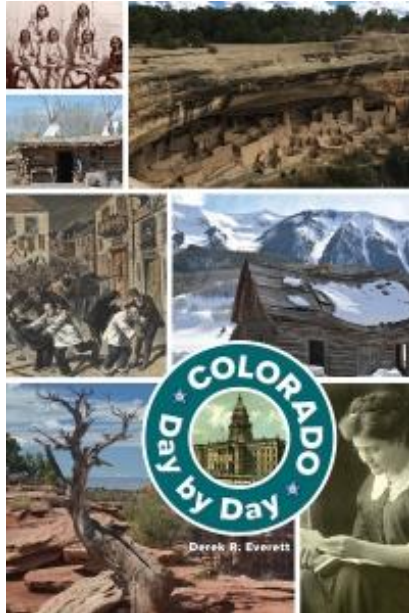


Review of...

Colorado Day by Day / by Derek R. Everett



Reviewed by:

Tom Noel

Publishing: Louisville, CO : University Press of Colorado and History Colorado, 2020. 438 pages. Black and white images, index, endnotes. 6 x 9 inches, paperback.

History Colorado is to be congratulated for expanding its once-shrinking publications program. Besides Everett's book, reviewed here, William Wei's *The Centennial State in 100 Objects*—also a publishing partnership with the University Press of Colorado—is forthcoming.

Everett's work features one-page-or-less essays keyed to 366 days in history (leap year is included). No matter how well you know Colorado history, you will find surprises, such as these facts:

Elvis Presley loved night snowmobiling at Vail.

Teddy Roosevelt shot Colorado mountain lions to mount in his New York home. (Despite Colorado claims, his teddy bear encounter took place in Mississippi.)

The Russian Grand Duke Alexei Androvitch, the fifth child of ill-fated Russian Czar Alexander II, after a successful Colorado buffalo hunt, hugged and kissed his guide, George Armstrong. Custer.

Rocky Mountain PBS (Channel 6) was born in 1956 in a makeshift studio in the auto repair shop of Emily Griffith Opportunity School.

Philanthropist Frances Wisebart Jacobs helped throw a banquet in Denver's City Hall for a then-impooverished fellow do-gooder, Aunt Clara Brown.

Everett is a Colorado native born and raised in the Denver metropolitan area. He graduated from Arvada West High School and holds a BA degree from Western State College of Colorado, an MA degree from Colorado State University, and a PhD degree with the esteemed western historian Elliott West at the University of Arkansas. His dissertation with West evolved into *Creating the American West: Boundaries and Borderlands* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2014). Therein Everett explores how politicians drew lines to create states in the trans-Mississippi West. Did they use rivers or geometric lines? (an easy answer for Coloradans). Everett's first book, *The Colorado State Capitol: History, Politics, Preservation* (Louisville: University Press of Colorado, 2005), is the definitive work on arguably Colorado's most important building.

Colorado Day by Day should educate and entertain scholars as well as the general public with coverage of major events, places, people, and trends. Thumbing through this easy-reading book, readers will find 366 topics of that date to choose from, ranging from the Denver Broncos to Kit Carson's death in Colorado, from AMTRAK to the Zang Brewing Company, and from the legalization of "Rocky Mountain High" (January 1, 2014) to the birthday of singer/songwriter John Denver (January 31, 1943), who coined the phrase. A thorough index provides another way to skim this paperback for topics of interest. Sources are provided for each day's morsel if you want more information or documentation.

To avoid criticism often aimed at Colorado history—that it is Denver-centric—Everett goes out of his way to include many non-Denver stories, including at least one entry from all 64 counties. Sometimes he overdoes diminishing Denver, as in declaring that Golden's Colorado Central was the territory's first railroad when that honor actually went to the Denver Pacific and Denver. A few other errors: Mayor Speer was not ousted in 1912; he refused to run. In a book as fact-filled as this, errors are nearly inevitable.

Everett tells these intriguing stories with eloquent conciseness and often adds a snappy concluding sentence. For instance, for Trinidad's far-famed Dr. Stanley Biber, Everett concludes: "Between 1969 and 2003 he performed over 4,000 sex reassignment surgeries, not bad for someone whose first such patient had to explain to him what 'transsexual' meant."

Everett, who teaches at both Colorado State University and Metropolitan State University of Denver, has found an inviting new way to teach and learn Colorado history. As Steve Leonard, Tom Noel and Duane Smith retire, it is a treat to introduce you to one of the new generation of Colorado historians.

About the Reviewer:

Tom Noel, a longtime professor of history at the University of Colorado Denver, is the coauthor or author of 53 books with *Boom and Bust Colorado* (with Bill Hansen) and a history of *Denver's Women's Bank* in the works. Noel was a longtime Sunday columnist for the *Rocky Mountain News* and *The Denver Post* and appears regularly on Channel 9 as Dr. Colorado. A former board member of History Colorado, he was named state historian in 2019 as the first in the State Historian's Council.