

have explored themes of transnational feminism, intraethnic community formation, and multiracial cooperation and conflict. What is fresh about these essays is their insistence that a multitude of actors, both within and outside of Latina/o communities, has shaped Chicana/o history and identity. After all of the “nuance” these authors provide—this is another keyword in the collection—it’s unclear what will be left of Chicana/o history. Will it be subsumed by Latina/o history, or histories of ethnicity and race in the United States in general? *A Promising Problem* both highlights new work and raises these important questions for continued debate.

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Making the White Man’s West: Whiteness and the Creation of the American West. By Jason E. Pierce. (Boulder: University of Colorado Press, 2016. xxvi + 296 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$45.00, £32.00; ebook.)

From Manifest Destiny to Frederick Jackson Turner’s frontier thesis, the notion that the U.S. West was predestined to become a refuge for white men has long shaped the culture, politics, and demography of the region. Yet, until now, no author has produced a single coherent narrative that examines the relationship between whiteness and westward expansion across the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Jason E. Pierce fills this hole in the literature with a concise, readable, and trenchant cultural history of how the U.S. West came to be imagined as a “white man’s” country.

Pierce begins in the early nineteenth century, when many white Americans were skeptical about the West’s potential. Early writers variously envisioned the Far West as a desert wasteland where white men might revert to

savagery, as an abundant paradise where Anglo-Saxons might become lazy and soft, or as a “dumping ground” for removed Indian tribes and free blacks. With the conquest of the Mexican North, white Americans reconceptualized the region as a healthful refuge for independent white farmers and wage workers. By the turn of the twentieth century, western intellectuals such as Charles Fletcher Lummis and Frank Bird Linderman touted the West as an Anglo-Saxon retreat from the ills of industrial society and the influx of Southern and Eastern European immigrants. In the second half of the book, Pierce explores how white Americans attempted to make the intellectual construct of the white man’s West a reality. He analyzes the legal policies that disfranchised non-white westerners; railroad recruitment campaigns that targeted northern and central Europeans as ideal settlers; and systemized campaigns of violence against Indians, Chinese, and Mexicans.

Pierce excels at tracing the intellectual genealogy of the white man’s West across decades and huge geographic expanses. He ably demonstrates that “whiteness” was a fluid category, sometimes broad enough to include all people of European origin, but at other times narrowed to exclude Catholics, Mormons, and southern and eastern Europeans. The book could benefit, however, from engagement with newer scholarship on race in the American West during Reconstruction by historians Joshua Paddison and D. Michael Bottoms. Both demonstrate that in the wake of emancipation, many white westerners embraced a new formulation of citizenship that emphasized manhood, civilization, and Christianity—rather than whiteness—as the primary prerequisites for political inclusion. One wonders whether these shifting postwar attitudes toward race and citizenship unsettled white/non-white racial dichotomies and notions of the West as an exclusively white man’s country. The book also curiously

lacks a fully realized gender analysis of how masculinity and whiteness intersected to create a “white man’s” West, or how women fit into racialized regional imaginings. Despite these issues, Pierce has produced a compelling book about the construction of a distinctively western version of white supremacy that continues to mold the region’s identity in the twenty-first century.

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Epiphany in the Wilderness: Hunting, Nature, and Performance in the Nineteenth-Century American West. By Karen R. Jones. (Boulder. University Press of Colorado, 2015. xiii + 363 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$55.00, £39.00, cloth.)

The merciless slaughter of wildlife across the American West was so pervasive that most historians have just heard it as background noise, tuning their ears instead to more exceptional melodies. But by carefully listening to hunting as a performance that communicated—and sometimes subverted—a heroic code of manly power in the nineteenth-century American West, *Epiphany in the Wilderness* offers a rich account of the complex ways that hunting constituted a theater where women and men could craft for themselves diverse social identities.

A number of familiar voices populate its pages: Jim Bridger, William Cody, Calamity Jane. However, the cast of lesser-known characters and their stories are more remarkable. It turns out that the aristocratic émigré Evelyn Cameron took frequent breaks from raising polo ponies to shoot antelope with her husband, acquiring a reputation for “unladylike” behavior amongst her neighbors in Miles City, who threatened to arrest her for

riding her horse down the street (121). Martha Maxwell, the Oberlin-educated, self-taught taxidermist, filled her Rocky Mountain Museum in Boulder with hundreds of animal specimens that she herself stalked, shot, and stuffed, all while maintaining a strict vegetarian diet (256). In 1854, Sir St. George Gore, the bookish Irish baron, brought seventy-five rifles, twelve shotguns, and an entourage of forty servants on a three-year shooting spree across present-day Colorado, Montana, Utah, and Wyoming, killing more than 2,100 bison and elk, along with innumerable birds (82). On his way home, he burned his baggage train outside Fort Union after the post trader made an insultingly low offer for the unwieldy luggage (15). These are the kinds of wide-ranging accounts that Karen R. Jones writes about most compellingly, and that demonstrate how the “golden age of sport hunting” in the American West meant so much more than just the “remedial training in barbarism, violence, and appropriation” that Theodore Roosevelt and his fellow affluent Spartans cherished as the solution to the masculine crisis confronting an America with no frontier (41).

In fact, one of the most striking elements of *Epiphany in the Wilderness* is the way that Jones charts the history of sport hunting across the great divide of 1893, showing how men and women were fascinated with the performative killing of western wildlife decades before Frederick Jackson Turner told them to don hunting shirts. Their anxieties over race, class, and gender raged violently as they shot and skinned their trophies across a blood-soaked nineteenth-century stage; they raged later too, as the “penitent butchers” took up the crusade of wildlife conservation. In the twenty-first century American West, a world loaded with antler-themed tailgate stickers and pink-stocked shotguns, we are still living with the legacies of these diverse hunting performances, and *Epiphany in the*