

Gabbert, Lisa *Winter Carnival in a Western Town: Identity, Change and the Good of the Community*. Ritual, Festival, and Celebration. Logan, Utah; Utah State UP, 2011. 231 pages: appendix, bibliography, index.

In the first book in a series titled "Ritual, Festival, and Celebration," Lisa Gabbert provides an interdisciplinary look at the role and function of annual festivals as a vehicle for understanding the structural and cultural accommodations that celebratory communities, their residents, and their guests experience as a consequence of these events. Specifically, *Winter Carnival in a Western Town* explores the concepts of "carnavalesque" and "ritualesque" behaviors in McCall, Idaho, in the planning, preparation, and conduct of their annual mid-winter event. Through interviews, observations, participant observation and secondary research, Gabbert provides an insightful look at an event which shapes community identity, social norms and practices within the sociological tradition of community studies, resort studies, and related inquiries into individual and collective responses to periodic population undulation.

The author documents the relationships between the constructions of community and the process of change which accompanies the transformative process of a rural community moving from a mining, forestry, and ranching economy to one increasingly based upon tourism. From a place of residence to a destination, McCall manifests many of the characteristics of a "New Western" community. During the summer, Lake Payette serves as a focal point for recreation and summer residents. However, like many seasonal resort communities, McCall has sought to extend its appeal to multiple seasons. Winter sports, long an area attraction, have been augmented through the development of a two-week long Winter Carnival that features ice sculptures, parades and other events.

Gabbert, in many ways, employs the Winter Carnival as a metaphor for the changes being experienced by the community and its residents. The growing dichotomy between inward-looking traditional residents and the more outward-looking new residents is documented throughout the introduction and five chapters which comprise this text. Numerous maps and pictures of carnival activities provide a comprehensive appreciation of the structure, function and meaning of Winter Carnival as a cultural component of an evolving community.

This book explores the history of winter carnivals and festi-

vals and focuses on McCall's Winter Carnival. This investigation illuminates the economic, demographic, and normative transformations associated with this annual event. Gabbert covers the goal of Winter Carnival as a community-enhancing vehicle, as well as the traditions, customs, and emergent norms which shape the meaning and forms of interactions within the carnival context. The organizational planning and mobilization of community volunteers illustrate the meaning of these events to both participants and the public. Gabbert places special emphasis upon the ways various community groups define the different events and establish their meaning within the folklore of the winter carnival tradition.

As an ethnographic study, *Winter Carnival in a Western Town* provides an informed look at a seasonal resort community. It provides unique historical and sociological insights into not only the community, but also the social construction of frivolity and its role in shaping individual and community behaviors. This well-written inquiry bridges the social sciences and folklore and is both scholarly and entertaining.

Rodger Bates

Clayton State University