

at length of the horrendous Ludlow Massacre in Colorado and learn that Ben later spoke to Denver's mayor. We read in detail of Chicago's literati gathering at the Dill Pickle Club and discover only that Ben was an argumentative patron. We read of a poison attempt at a banquet for Chicago's Cardinal Mundelein and learn Ben later claimed to police that he spoke with the alleged poisoner. Ben was interested in the condition of the down-and-out, but he was peripheral to reform circles. He was outrageous and combative but managed only limited contributions to Chicago's turbulent social history. A more concisely described world would not have overshadowed Reitman's life.

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American Frontier and Western Issues: A Historiographical Review. Edited by Roger L. Nichols. (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1986. Pp. viii, 303. Notes, sources and repositories for frontier and western history, index. \$35.00.)

This book contains an introduction and thirteen essays on recent trends and developments in American frontier and western historiography. The essays cover a broad spectrum of topics, such as territorial government, frontier environment, mining, agriculture and livestock, transportation, economics, frontier military affairs, Native Americans, women, urbanization, and social history. In his interesting introduction, Roger L. Nichols briefly examines the several major problems that have plagued the field. These include a perceived lack of respect from colleagues in the historical profession as a whole, declining student interest on college campuses, and a persistent dilemma concerning definitions. As Nichols rightly asks, "If the practitioners of frontier and Western history cannot agree on the nature of their field, why should other scholars pay much attention to their efforts?" (p. 3).

Although some of the essays are analytically weak, amounting to little more than bibliographical lists, most successfully evaluate the current literature. Many of the contributors advocate using new methodologies—anthropological, sociological, economic, quantitative, and meteorological—to replace the traditional narrative histories of the West with more interpretive studies. More importantly, the authors' various suggestions on how to improve frontier and western history serve to stimulate thought and direct both students and professionals to new research problems. One should note, however, that merely advocating changes within the field does not necessarily produce them. Several of the authors, especially Lawrence H. Larsen (frontier urbanization), Mark Wyman (mining), and Paul A. Hutton (military affairs), believe that their areas of

inquiry are still essentially in a state of infancy. Echoing their sentiments, Nichols asserts in his essay that despite Indian historians' recent emphasis on exploring and utilizing ethnohistory and comparative studies, "it is difficult to avoid the persistent feeling that even the newer versions of Indian history have not reached maturity as a major force within the profession" (p. 168). Nichols concludes this book, however, by surprisingly predicting a rosy future for western and frontier history. If the generally inadequate depiction of Native Americans in the most recent college history textbooks is an indication of the effectiveness of new research in just one area, the editor's optimism might seem somewhat premature.

American Frontier and Western Issues is, nevertheless, a well-constructed work, a significant historiographical source, and a useful addition to major research libraries and institutions.

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Booking in the Heartland. By Jack Matthews. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986. Pp. ix, 161. \$16.95.)

"Booking"—the term is Jack Matthews's—is something akin to "antiquing." Matthews haunts country auctions, charity book sales, antique and second hand shops, and garage sales within a day's drive of his Athens, Ohio, home in search of rare books and, of course, bargains. He has spun the curiosities he has found and his occasional adventures of the chase into a series of essays, some of which have appeared in various Ohio magazines and are now gathered here in a rather slight but, nevertheless, amusing book.

Amusing because, above all else, Matthews is a showman and he uses language, as a carnival barker does, to puff, to exploit, and to sell his wares. He can take a "bumped, tattered, and torn copy of Samuel Cumming's *The Western Pilot* (in "The Wear of Time," p. 123) and convince his reader that, because its dreadful condition was achieved through use, not neglect, it bears witness to "the generations of men who have handled it and consulted it in sunlight and by lantern, to work their way through winter storms, spring rains, and the peaceful and fragrant air of summer and autumn" (p. 131). Thus this worn out old book is more desirable than an unused copy of the same edition that has survived in fine condition. He even pleads the case for accepting rebound ex-library books as collector's items. He does, however, draw the line at book club editions. In "The Expanding Universe of Collectibles" (p. 152) he writes, "But rarity, or at least scarcity, provides much of the interest in collecting; so that to collect book club editions would be like a hunter specializing in shooting spaniels or house cats."