Methods in Teaching Region and Diversity in U.S. Western Women's History

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WHEN MY STUDENTS are asked to describe the "types" of women who inhabited the nineteenth-century American West, they usually reply with some combination of the following: pioneer women, farm women, prostitutes, dance hall girls (I'm not sure how they differentiate between the last two, but both are generally listed), and Indian women. And when asked how they came up with these images of western women, most credit television, film, and Laura Ingalls Wilder. The lists my students compile are not incorrect, but they are incomplete, leaving their knowledge of the American West with a gross under-representation of the vast diversity of women who called it home.

The history teacher's task, where region, diversity, and western women are concerned, is to broaden the minds of students; enlighten them on the vast diversity of women who did live in the West's mountains, plains, and prairies; and help them recognize that women of the American West made significant contributions to its settlement and development.

The challenge, of course, is how to go about such a daunting task. Before teachers can begin to bring women into the history of the American West, they must agree it is important to do so. Nothing goes further to trivialize women's place in any history than the "add women and stir" method, which we all encounter far too often, and teachers must work diligently to avoid falling into its trap. There are two important points

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teachers of western history must keep in mind: first, the history of the American West is incomplete without inclusion of its women; and second, the term "western women" does not accurately identify women in the American West. If it appears these points are painfully obvious, they are. But they are also forgotten—or ignored—by teachers who rely on "traditional" texts that do not devote equitable attention to women and men, and do not take the time and effort necessary to bring women fully into the curriculum.

"Region" and "diversity" are important terms, so a few words here about how I intend to use them. "Region" is a tricky term and historians have argued for decades, or longer, about how to define the American West as a region. The fluid nature of the West's national and regional borders has long contributed to the debate since, throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the West was a moving target, shifting first from the Appalachians to the old Ohio Valley, and later from the Mississippi to the Missouri, and points further west. Without getting bogged down in the debate here, I identify the West as those parts of the United States west of the Mississippi River, and its "regions," variously, as the plains, prairies, mountains, mining regions, California, the Pacific Northwest, and the southwestern portion of what ultimately became the United States.

"Diversity" is used to identify groups of women at home in these regions. In some cases, diversity will refer to women of a number of ethnicities and nationalities residing in a single region; in others, diversity might differentiate between laboring and non-laboring women in a particular area, but who share similar ethnic and/or national backgrounds. As is apparent, "diversity" can also be used in a number of ways, and teachers must take care to ensure their students understand how terms such as "region" and "diversity" are used in specific situations.

My contextual focus is the nineteenth century, particularly the mid-to-late nineteenth century. This era is significant for two reasons: first, it witnessed the great trans-Mississippi migration and, second, it represents a time when large numbers of women arrived at western destinations in a variety of ways, and for numerous reasons.

Bringing Women into the History of the West

History teachers may well feel challenged with the task of bringing women into their American West curriculums due to the great diversity of women in the West during the nineteenth century. At the same time, the past thirty years or so have produced a plethora of monographs, articles, and primary source collections on women in the American

West. So even though many textbooks persist in telling the traditional "great men and great deeds" western history with women relegated to the background, source materials continue to become available on women in the West—though, regrettably, still not in large quantity on all groups of those women.

Where teaching methods are concerned, I find micro-histories very effective as a means of bringing women into my western curriculums. Micro-histories are also useful when source materials on specific groups of women are in limited supply. Primary source material pertaining to Native American women in the early to mid-nineteenth century, for instance, is scarce, making the micro-history method, perhaps, the best available for conveying the desired information. Finally, for micro-histories to be most effective, teachers must take care to impart this important point to their students: *a micro-history is neither a survey nor is it intended to act in the place of a synthesis; instead, it is a case study intended to assist students in understanding a greater, general history.*

In those cases where neither primary source materials nor micro-histories are available, I use collections of essays to introduce the lives and experiences of western women to my students: most often, two volumes edited by Susan Armitage and Elizabeth Jameson, *The Women's West* and *Writing the Range*; Karen Blair's *Women in Pacific Northwest History*; and Lillian Schlissel, Vicki Ruiz, and Janice Monk's *Western Women: Their Land, Their Lives*.[1]

In order to provide clear and concise thoughts and suggestions on ways teachers might incorporate women more fully into their western history curriculums, I focus here on women from three western regions: the Native American region, the overland trail and settlement region, and the western mining towns region. While these represent but a small sampling of nineteenth-century women, and nineteenth-century western regions, the thoughts and suggestions are effective for bringing most groups of western women, from most western regions, into the curriculum.

Consider for a moment the ways in which you picture the American West. The image might contain mountains and plains, buffalo and horses, and men engaged in numerous pursuits involving exploration, natural resource extraction, war, farming, and settlement. The picture might be of the Oregon Trail, an army fort, or a Kansas cattle town, and it might include a diverse group of individuals: Anglo-Americans, *Californios,* African-Americans, Asians, Native Americans, and more. Some pictures may include a few women. If the active players in your picture are women as well as men, congratulations, you've already accomplished what this article will try to do for the rest of us. If, however, the women in the picture are on the periphery, or absent, please read on.

Native American Women

Those things students already know—or think they know—are particularly useful in bringing western women, region, and diversity into the larger discussion of the History of the American West. Take advantage of their knowledge and use it as a stepping stone to broaden their understanding of a complete West. Students know the West was home to countless groups of Native Americans, and they probably think they know a fair amount about America's indigenous population. Ask them to talk about the Native American communities of the mid-nineteenth century: familiar groups such as the Lakota, the Crow, and the Nez Perce, and their lives on the Great Plains and along the rivers of the Rocky Mountain range. What comes to their minds? Students will probably talk about well-known Native American leaders—Sitting Bull and Geronimo, perhaps. They will imagine them in full headdress and want to discuss the battles they fought against the U.S. Army—the Little Big Horn and the Red River War. Some students might mention Crow villages on the plains, or buffalo hunts, or perhaps a symbolic gathering of tribal elders—most, if not all, of their familiarity with Native Americans will involve men. Now ask students to talk about Native American women. They will likely respond with two names—Sacagawea and Pocahontas—and they may have difficulty distinguishing between the two. Move forward with Sacagawea and table Pocahontas, she belongs to another time and place.

The story of Sacagawea should be a familiar one to students, but it is also a story shrouded in some mystery, and one whose telling varies from storyteller to storyteller. None of this should dissuade teachers from using Sacagawea's story, a "micro-history," to bring Native American women into the discussion for a number of reasons. First, the story introduces students to at least two nineteenth-century Native American societies and two very distinct nineteenth-century western regions; second, this micro-history brings Native American women out of the shadows from which traditional history has often cast them.

The Shoshone community into which Sacagawea was born had lived in the American Northwest, and practiced its cultures and traditions for centuries. At the time of her girlhood—the turn of the nineteenth century—the Shoshone had encountered few, if any, Europeans or Americans, as the latter had yet to travel so far west. While details of her young life are few, it is believed Sacagawea's Shoshone village followed the herds, participated in an extended Native American trade network, gathered camus and other edible plants and berries, and prided itself on its large herds of horses.[2] As a young girl, Sacagawea was kidnapped by rival Native Americans, and eventually found herself among the

Mandan in Dakota Territory. There, she became the wife of French fur trapper, Toussaint Charbonneau. This union was not at all uncommon, for many trappers and traders in the nineteenth-century West forged marital relationships, and raised children, with the Native American women they encountered there. And while men from all nationalities and ethnicities engaged in the practice, it was most common among the French.[3]

Sacagawea's life changed dramatically with her marriage, for Charbonneau's life and livelihood centered and depended on the highly lucrative fur trade. As a result of their marriage, then, Sacagawea became part of a multi-ethnic society comprised of Native American women, French male trappers and traders, and, eventually, the American explorers Lewis and Clark. And, as was the case for many Native American women over the next several decades, Sacagawea became an essential partner to her husband, through her knowledge of preparation of skins and hides and her affiliations with other Native American societies in the West. Sacagawea probably did not "guide" Lewis and Clark to the Pacific Ocean, as western lore has suggested, but her very presence did, in all likelihood, make the going much easier as the Corps of Discovery made its way through the mountains and valleys of the Pacific Northwest in search of the elusive Northwest Passage.[4]

Sacagawea's story is a wonderful way to begin to bring Native American women into the curriculum, but it does have a drawback or two. First, Sacagawea did not record her reminiscences, or leave diaries and journals for historians to utilize in reconstructing the details of her life. Second, Sacagawea's story has been taught in American history classes for more than a century, but, for the most part, teachers have concentrated on her association and affiliation with Lewis and Clark. Once Sacagawea, the Native American woman they thought they knew, is introduced to your students, they will likely be interested in learning about other nineteenth-century Native American women.

In the past several decades, some reminiscences and oral histories from nineteenth-century Native American women have come to light. These make valuable additions to western history curriculums because, unlike Sacagawea, these women purposefully left records of their words—and their voices—for future generations. I use the memoir of a Crow woman named Pretty-shield in my classes. Pretty-shield was born on the Great Plains in the 1850s, and dictated her memoirs in the 1930s. This micro-history of one Crow woman's experience is particularly useful in introducing Native American women of the Plains to students, for during the time of Pretty-shield's young womanhood—the decades of the 1870s and 1880s—life changed dramatically for the Crow and other Plains tribes.

Pretty-shield's reminiscences do much more, though, than validate the familiar tales of the adverse affect Anglo-American presence rendered to indigenous societies. They also call to mind a pre-contact society that considered the roles and tasks of men and women to be quite equitable, and reveal how those considerations changed as the proliferation of the horse on the Plains elevated the roles of men and boys above those of women and girls. Pretty-shield's memories recall the importance of nature to the Crow and the animal spirits they held in awe, and bring to light a communal society which emphasized the importance of extended family and community-raising of children.[5]

By the time Pretty-shield dictated her memories at the turn of the twentieth century, the Crow way of life she remembered from girlhood had vanished. The later decades of the nineteenth century witnessed concerted efforts by the United States government to assimilate Native Americans into the dominant Euro-American culture through legislation such as the Dawes Severalty Act, and establishment of Native American boarding schools in the East.[6] Through division and distribution of tribal lands and forced attendance at these schools, where Native American children were forced to abandon cultural habits and traditions, Native American communities of the West suffered damages yet to be rectified. In the closing pages of her life story, Pretty-shield reveals the extent of these damages in her concerns about the future of the Crow. She sees the younger generation turning away from Crow culture and tradition and, in the process, becoming both spiritually and physically lost.

Exposing students to reminiscences and memoirs like Pretty-shield's—and stories about Native American women such as Sacagawea—gives them a greater understanding of the Native American societies at home in North America long before the European conquest. These histories help to instill in students a greater appreciation of Native American culture and society, and the roles Native American women played in sustaining and defending their families and communities, regardless of the circumstances they endured. At the same time, bringing these women's histories into American West curriculums changes—or at least alters—the Western narrative and allows teachers to teach a more complete and inclusive western history: a history that reveals to students the actions and interactions of the many groups of women, and men, who occupied the nineteenth-century West.

Women as Pioneers and Settlers

The first Anglo-Americans most Native American women of the Plains and the far West encountered were pioneer women traveling west with their families on the overland trails. At the outset of their journeys, many

pioneer women were terrified at the very thought of encountering "Indians." They had heard fabricated and embellished horror stories of massacres and ravaging, and held out hope against hope their wagon trains would safely reach Pacific destinations without incident. For individual Anglo women, those fears and trepidations lessened over time, and as they settled into homes on the plains and prairies, often in close proximity to Native American villages and reservations, the two groups of women established acquaintances numbering among the earliest of the complex relationships entered into by women of different backgrounds in the West.

There is no shortage of source material available on women's experiences during their overland journeys and as they established homes and communities in the West; in fact, studies in these areas were among the first "women's histories" to emerge.[7] I do utilize some very fine secondary source materials to bring pioneer women into my western curriculums, but here, too, find the micro-histories contained in overland trail journals, and in settlers' diaries and reminiscences, the most effective and reliable way of introducing students to these women who played pivotal roles in the settlement and development of the West.

The surviving records of the overland journey preserve not only the histories of the men, women, and children who made up the westward migration; they chronicle the history of the overland trail "region" as well. Pioneer women kept careful records of all they saw on the overland journey, and all they experienced. They wrote late at night, after their litany of chores was completed, their children and husbands were asleep, and the camp was quiet. They taught themselves to write as they walked alongside the wagons, for most did walk, and not ride, to the West. They kept cryptic notes of the numbers of graves they passed, of the new plants they discovered, and of the beauty of a plains sunset. They wrote of family joys and tragedies, births and deaths, and weddings and sickness; they wrote of evenings spent singing around a campfire, and of a hurried Sunday morning prayer service before striking out across the prairie. They introduced buffalo chips as both an excellent source of fuel and a wonderful insect repellant, and they wrote, quite frankly, of the traditionally "male" chores and duties they assumed on the trail, though men seldom reciprocated this "turn."

Trail diaries and journals are available in a number of forms and some of my favorites are found in the *Oregon Historical Quarterly*. The *OHQ* can be found in many college and university libraries, both in print form and through databases. It is also indexed, and specific articles can be secured from the Oregon Historical Society.[8] Another wonderful source providing micro-histories of women's overland experiences is Lillian Schlissel's edited volume, *Women's Diaries of the Westward Journey*.[9] This

volume is a treasure, and I recommend it to teachers of western history, as it provides students with diary and journal excerpts from a plenitude of women traveling the overland trails, whose thoughts on the journey, as well as their western destinations and the lives they would lead there, differed considerably. The variety of women who traveled the trails, and whose reminiscences Schlissel's volume has preserved, represents one of the many forms of "diversity" discussed earlier in this article.

To the participants, the overland experience must have seemed, at times, endless. After a period of months, pioneer women—some with families, some widowed with children, and some left alone by the rigors of overland travel—reached their destinations and established homes, farms, and communities. At that point, their western experiences entered a new phase. Their contributions to the settlement of these new regions, unfortunately, continue to be largely overlooked.

Talk with students about these "westering" women. What images come to mind? They will likely describe women "forced" to leave behind their homes, farms, and all they knew to move to a heartless and lonely region where their only companions were their children, an occasional traveler, and a nearby Native American village or reservation. They might describe these women as tired and worn out by the western experience, worked into early old age by the trials and tribulations of the plains. They might relate stories of pioneer families killed by those neighboring Native Americans or of women driven to madness by the isolation of the plains. Once again, the images students call to mind are not incorrect, but they certainly do not reflect the full range of encounters—and emotions—experienced by women in the West. Students may not be able to conjure up a single positive western woman's experience—unless, of course, they read "The Little House" series as youngsters. They may not realize a significant number of women settling the West found great pleasure in the experience—reveling in the beauty of their surroundings and in the level of independence they enjoyed the further west they traveled and settled. Two of my favorite micro-histories to use in making students aware of the diversity of women who enjoyed the experience of western settlement are Nannie Alderson's *A Bride Goes West* and Elinore Pruitt Stewart's *Letters of a Woman Homesteader*.

Nannie Alderson left her home in West Virginia as a young bride and traveled with her husband to the Montana ranching region. Educated in the genteel and fine arts, Alderson was in no way prepared to take on the duties of a ranch wife, and later wrote with humor of her inability to prepare even the simplest of meals. In her co-authored reminiscence,[10] however, she recalled with a great deal of pride her ability to adjust and adapt to life in the American West. Alderson confirmed the scarcity of female companionship in Montana, but added she would not necessarily have

considered as friends—or even acquaintances—some of the women who did reside in relatively close proximity to the Alderson ranch. Alderson's statements are matter-of-fact—she did not lament the absence of other women, she merely made mention of it. She did, however, become acquainted with a number of Native American women in the region and, in fact, employed some to assist her with childcare as her family grew. This association between Native American and Anglo-American women is an example of female "diversity" in the West, for as various groups of western women became acquainted, they were reminded their commonalities as wives and mothers often outweighed their differences. Alderson struggled to keep this commonality, and the relationships she had forged with her neighbors, firmly in mind when members of the same neighboring Native American community burned the Alderson home to the ground. Students might expect animosity toward the perpetrators from Alderson, but she harbored none. Nannie Alderson took life in the American West in stride—and while she acknowledged ranching in Montana was trying and difficult at times, she looked back at the years she and her husband spent on the ranch, and the full life they led there, with a great deal of pleasure and satisfaction.

Elinore Pruitt Stewart's letters will introduce students to a woman they absolutely did not expect to find in the West—an "unaccompanied" female homesteader. They will likely be under the misconception no American woman could own property in the nineteenth century; therefore, a woman could not possibly be a homesteader. In fact, no restrictions existed to prohibit single women from owning property, and a good number of them did homestead on the western plains and prairies. Other settlers, both men and women, simply "squatted"—moved onto and established homes and farms—on land they neither owned nor held title to, but considered unoccupied and available. The Homestead Act of 1862 made homesteading—and eventual property ownership—available to a greater percentage of the population by allowing any adult citizen, or head of household, to claim 160 acres of surveyed government land, live on it, improve it, and clear title after five years.[11] "Head of household" is most important here, as its inclusion allowed women to take advantage of the Act.

Elinore Pruitt Stewart traveled with her young daughter to the Green River region of Wyoming in 1907, and her letters provide an invaluable resource for students as they record the daily activities of a woman surviving—and succeeding—alone in the West.[12] In them, she revealed the brutality of a prairie winter and her efforts in keeping both stock animals and humans fed and alive. She wrote of the difficulties encountered in constructing a home and providing for herself and her daughter. And she

wrote of her occasional visitors—a trapper or fellow homesteader—most always men. At the same time, Elinore Pruitt Stewart's letters are laden neither with complaints of hard work and loneliness, nor discontent at the lack of female companionship. Rather, the letters reveal the satisfaction she felt as she created a western home for herself, and from her own ingenuity and determination.

The reminiscence of Nannie Alderson and the letters of Elinore Pruitt Stewart provide students with positive examples of the ways in which women made the West work for them, for while both faced hardship and adversity, they stood up to the difficulties they encountered. On some occasions, they conquered those adversities, and on others, they yielded to them before picking up the pieces and beginning again. In so doing, they reveal the seldom-disclosed truth that women—on their own and as members of families—played enormous roles in the settling of the West.

Women in the Western Mining Towns

The range of women's experiences in the West may have been most visible in its mining towns. These small villages, cramped and dusty in appearance and built into the region's steep hillsides, were crowded with saloons, mercantile establishments, houses of ill repute as well as the "respectable" side of town, and were populated by a greater diversity of individuals than any other region in the nineteenth-century West. Here, women from many walks of life, many regions, and many ethnicities, nationalities, and races found themselves living in very close proximity. Anglo-American women of every economic and social class were at home in these mining towns, as were Asian women, African American women, Mexican American women, and Native American women, among others. The very differences among these women, and a glance into their lives, makes the mining town, and the women who resided within it, a fitting region with which to round out this article.

Students may consider themselves quite familiar with the western mining town. Some may have traveled to mining communities and "ghost towns," and perhaps even panned for gold. They might know the names of "characters" associated with mining town lore, such as Wild Bill Hickok, Wyatt Earp, and Calamity Jane, and be familiar with some of the stories that made mining towns famous. They may know, for instance, that Hickok was shot and killed by a drifter at Deadwood's Saloon Number 10 while holding a hand of aces and eights—the "dead man's hand." Here, as elsewhere in the West, however, most of what your students know, or think they know, has to do with men—and men's adventures and activities in the West's mining communities.

Scholarship on mining regions is certainly growing, but individual reminiscences are more difficult to secure. While there are many reasons for this scarcity, the greatest may well be the transient nature of mining town populations. Individuals involved in "get rich quick" endeavors, whether miners, engineers, shopkeepers, or prostitutes, concentrated on getting rich, and not on recording their daily activities. And though I prefer to introduce students to a western region, and its women, through micro-history, in the case of mining towns—the most diverse of all western regions for women and men alike—the scarcity of reminiscences, diaries, and journals usually causes me to rely more heavily on available secondary source material.[13] I say "usually" because there is an alternative available to students: literature. There are a number of very wonderful volumes which, though formally labeled as fiction, shed light on the western mining town's female population. My favorite of these is Agnes Smedley's *Daughter of Earth*. In the early chapters of this work, which in all reality is an autobiographical study, students are introduced to Marie Rogers and her family—a family led to the mining region in order to better its situation. The hardships of the poor are revealed here in the persons of Marie, her siblings, and their parents, all in a constant struggle for survival. The uncertainty of income for her miner father creates domestic instability and violence in the Rogers' home, where her mother works continually—in her home and in the homes of others—to provide for her children. Marie's Aunt Helen, disgusted by the domestic violence prevailing in the mining towns, particularly among the poor, and troubled by the abundance of battered women left in its path, is determined to retain her independence and never marry. Helen turned to prostitution, an avenue many western women chose, and one even more of them turned to out of desperation.[14] In Smedley's work, Helen is able to provide for her sister's family as well as herself—another example of the independence women enjoyed the further from the established eastern states they traveled.

The Rogers family is representative of many poor families in the West's mining towns. They were Anglo-American, but could easily have been African American, Native American, Mexican, Irish, or any one of the many ethnic and national groups lured to the West by promises of wealth. The women of these families earned the money necessary to feed their children and provide them with shelter by working in the homes of the mining town elite.

Social hierarchy was firmly in place in the West's mining communities, where class, race, and ethnicity all determined an individual's place in the pecking order. The families of mine owners, investors, bankers, and politicians topped the ladder as the elite and, as was typical in most late nineteenth-century American cities, Euro-Americans almost exclusively

comprised the upper class in these boom-and-bust mining towns. The middling class—the mine engineers, mercantile owners, and the like—was also largely Euro-American, but the large working class—the majority of the population in any mining town—was made up of men and women from a multitude of races, ethnicities, and nationalities. These working-class women toiled long hours in the homes of the elite and in the mining towns' shops, saloons, and bordellos before returning home to begin their second work day in a twenty-four hour period. Due to the rather cramped conditions of mining towns, these "classes" had much more contact with each other than was the case in the East. In spite of this familiarity, or perhaps because of it, the various groups of mining town women had very little to do with one another at the conclusion of the work day.

The difficulties experienced by the female elite in the West's mining towns have been trivialized when juxtaposed upon those of the working and poor classes, but in all fairness, these women did face challenges in the West—and usually faced them alone. Elite women always made up a very small percentage of the female population in their towns, and without the support of other women, they suffered their loneliness and isolation in silence. Of the utmost importance to all mining town women, regardless of class, was the desire to keep their children innocent of the vulgarities pervading the region—many elite women were able to accomplish this task, but it was an impossibility for most working-class women. In a strange twist of fate and irony, in this most diverse of western regions, where female support and companionship were both desired and attainable, its women were most often described as lonely.

Conclusion

The women examined in this article represent just three of the many "regional groups" of women who made the American West their home in the nineteenth century. All western women are accessible to history teachers through micro-histories such as those I have introduced here, collections of essays, secondary source materials, and literature.

In this article, I only begin to reveal women's experiences in the western region of the United States in the nineteenth century. Among the western women not discussed here are Asian, African American, and Hispanic women, all of whom contributed in large measure to the settlement and development of the West. Chinese families in huge numbers were convinced to send their daughters east—from the Chinese provinces to the American West—to be educated, trained in a trade, and employed, allowing them to send large sums of money home to their impoverished families. Most of these women ended up as prostitutes, unable to escape their fate or

even retain their individual identities, recorded in the U.S. census reports simply as "China woman."[15] African American women looked west for freedom and opportunity in the post-Civil War years, only to find that some territorial legislatures prohibited them from settling the region at all.[16] Women in California and the Southwest—some descended from the Spanish conquistadors, others from Anasazi and Hopi elders—learned legal ownership of the land meant nothing when wealthy newcomers and the U.S. government desired it. They watched helplessly as centuries-old estates and landholdings were confiscated, and as their fortunes melted away.[17] All of these women, and many others, can and should be included in American West curriculums.

The history of women in the American West is rich, and should be made available to students at every educational level. And while locating and gathering the materials necessary to incorporate the regionalism and diversity of U.S. western women's history into history courses can be challenging, it is my fervent hope that the thoughts, ideas, and sources provided here will prove helpful.

Women have been left out of the historical record simply because they are women, with accomplishments and contributions considered too commonplace for inclusion in the historical record. As teachers, we are charged with the important task of returning all women to their rightful place in history so future generations of students, when describing "types" of women present in the nineteenth-century West, will not only compile a more inclusive list than the one my students put together, but gain a clear appreciation of the accomplishments and contributions of all western women to the settlement and development of the American West.

Notes

1. Susan Armitage and Elizabeth Jameson, eds., *The Women's West* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1987); Elizabeth Jameson and Susan Armitage, eds., *Writing the Range Race, Class, and Culture in the Women's West* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997); Karen Blair, ed., *Women in Pacific Northwest History* (Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 2001); and Lillian Schlissel, Vicki L. Ruiz, and Janice Monk, eds., *Western Women: Their Land, Their Lives* (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 1988).

2. For information on Sacagawea's Shoshone tribe see, for instance, John W. W. Mann, *Sacajawea's People: The Lemhi Shoshones and the Salmon River Country* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2004).

3. For an extended discussion on the French and French-Canadian fur trade in North

America, see Carolyn Podruchny, *Making the Voyageur World: Travelers and Traders in the North American Fur Trade* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2006).

4. For a recent study on Sacagawea and the Corps of Discovery, see Dale W. Nelson, *Interpreters with Lewis and Clark: The Story of Sacagawea and Toussaint Charbonneau* (Denton, TX: University of North Texas Press, 2004).

5. Frank B. Linderman, *Pretty-shield: Medicine Woman of the Crows* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1974).

6. The Dawes Act threatened the communal societies of the West's Native American populations by subdividing the reservation lands established by previous treaties, distributing parcels to individual households, and offering the "surplus" to white settlers. See, for instance, David Lavender, *The Great West* (Boston, MA: Mariner Books, 2000). For a recent collection of essays dedicated to Native American education, see Clifford E. Trafzer and Jean A. Keller, eds., *Boarding School Blues: Revisiting American Indian Educational Experiences* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2006).

7. Some of the earliest studies on pioneer women in the American West are still the best, and among them, please see John Mack Faragher, *Women and Men on the Overland Trail* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1979); Julie Roy Jeffrey, *The Trans-Mississippi West, 1840-1880* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1979); Sandra L. Myres, *Western Women and the Frontier Experience, 1800-1915* (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 1982); Glenda Riley, *The Female Frontier: A Comparative View of Women on the Prairie and the Plains* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1988); and Joanna L. Stratton, *Women: Voices from the Kansas Frontier* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1981).

8. Some of my favorites from the *Oregon Historical Quarterly* are: Joseph W. Ellison, ed., "Diary of Maria Parsons Belshaw, 1853," *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 33, no. 4 (December 1932): 318-333; Oscar Osburn Winther and Rose Dodge Galey, eds., "Mrs. Butler's 1853 Diary of the Rogue River Valley," *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 41, no. 4 (December 1941): 337-366; and Elizabeth Wood, "Journal of a Trip to Oregon 1851," *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 27, no. 1 (March 1926): 192-203.

9. Lillian Schlissel, *Women's Diaries of the Westward Journey* (New York: Schocken Books, 1992).

10. Nannie T. Alderson and Helena Huntington Smith, *A Bride Goes West* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1969).

11. Homestead Act (1862), available at <http://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?flash=false&doc=31>.

12. Elinore Pruitt Stewart, *Letters of a Woman Homesteader* (Boston, MA: Mariner Books, 1998).

13. Some of my favorite secondary sources to use in discussions of women in the mining towns and regions are: Elizabeth Jameson, *All That Glitters: Class, Conflict, and Community in Cripple Creek* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1998); JoAnn Levy, *They Saw the Elephant: Women in the California Gold Rush* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1992); and Paula Petrik, *No Step Backward: Women and Family on the Rocky Mountain Mining Frontier, Helena, Montana, 1865-1900* (Helena, MT: Montana Historical Society Press, 1987).

14. For further discussions on prostitution in the West, see, for instance, Anne M. Butler, *Daughters of Joy, Sisters of Misery: Prostitution in the American West, 1865-1890* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1987); and Michael Rutter, *Upstairs Girls: Prostitution on the American West* (Helena, MT: Farcountry Press, 2005).

15. See, for instance, Benson Tong, *Unsubmissive Women: Chinese Prostitutes in Nineteenth-Century San Francisco* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1994);

Liping Zhu, *A Chinaman's Chance: The Chinese on the Rocky Mountain Mining Frontier* (Boulder, CO: University Press of Colorado, 1997).

16. See Quintard Taylor and Shirley Ann Wilson Moore, eds., *African American Women Confront the West, 1600-2000* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2003).

17. See Patricia Preciado Martin, *Songs My Mother Sang to Me* (Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona Press, 1992).

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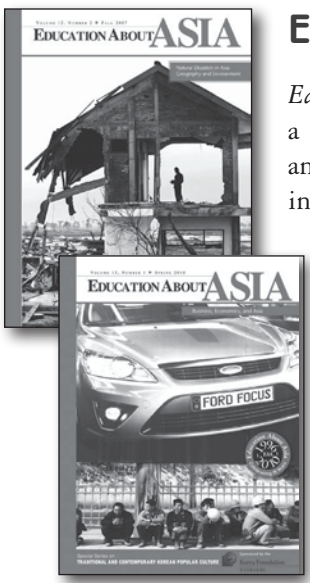

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