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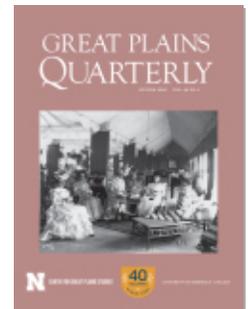
*Pioneers of Promotion: How Press Agents for Buffalo Bill, P. T. Barnum, and the World's Columbian Exposition Created Modern Marketing* by Joe Dobrow (review)

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on the back cover importunes archaeologists, historic preservation specialists, rock art enthusiasts, park rangers, and others to read the book for its “unsettling messages and useful critical methods.” For those who heed this advice, be prepared to be unsettled and challenged, but also at times to simply laugh and muse, “that argument is quite a stretch.” Linking the interpretive shift for some Great Basin rock art from hunting magic to shamanism as resulting from a contemporary “crisis of masculinity” is just one example.

Still, Rogers presents much to think about. Polly Schaafsma’s book *Images and Power: Rock Art and Ethics* (Springer, 2013) covers somewhat similar ground, but it does so in a slim volume roughly one quarter the size of Rogers’s tome. More is not necessarily better, since Rogers could have expressed his cultural criticisms more succinctly. Some of this occurs because four of his eight chapters are expanded revisions of previously published papers, with most of the other chapters used to place them in context by introducing his theoretical approach and then summing up the arguments. The result is considerable redundancy and repetition of his main points.

Rogers is keenly aware that criticism is easy (318) and that a critic who watches the game from a lofty booth rather than being down on the hot, muddy field of play is in something of an enviable position. There is critique aplenty but few or no remedies or suggested solutions, even for issues that a communications professor might be readied to attempt fixing, such as finding a suitable replacement for the term *rock art*. Rogers introduces the debate about this term but leaves it unresolved and sticks with it as part of an “uneasy consensus” rather than putting forward “appealing alternatives” (43). One result of taking Rogers’s critique to

heart, at least in the extreme, would be to cease all engagement with rock art. I doubt that he would actually advocate for this, and his final chapter makes it clear that he will continue to “collect” rock art and to write about it, at least as concerns its role in contemporary culture, in order to advance his academic career. I can easily envision using this book as a text for a student seminar on rock art and also using chapter 7, “Overcoming the Preservation Paradigm,” as a means to foment discussion in a class on heritage resource management.

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*Pioneers of Promotion: How Press Agents for Buffalo Bill, P. T. Barnum, and the World’s Columbian Exposition Created Modern Marketing.*

By Joe Dobrow. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2018. vii + 382 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$32.95, cloth.

Every spectacle has an aging star or two and, behind the scenes, the stagehands who help make the stars shine anew. For Buffalo Bill’s Wild West show, we immediately remember the iconic William Cody. Joe Dobrow takes us backstage and reminds us to remember John Burke, the show’s manager and marketer. Dobrow also examines the advertising achievements of Richard Francis “Tody” Hamilton, who made Jumbo famous in the Barnum & Bailey Circus (which performed its last show in 2017), and newspaper man and 1893 World’s Fair promoter Moses P. Handy. William Gilpin and other western boosters also get a chapter. As part of the William F. Cody Series on the History and Culture of the American West,

*Pioneers of Promotion* unsurprisingly gives most attention to Burke, whom Dobrow calls a “founding father of the marketing industry” (10).

If William Cody was the hero, John Burke was the mythmaker. Yet the latter is buried in an unmarked grave and all but forgotten. Cody’s legend and legacy as Buffalo Bill, the western scout and Indian fighter, “would never have come to pass without the trailblazing promotional efforts” of Burke, which began in the early 1870s. Techniques Burke helped develop during his forty-five-year connection with Cody include “celebrity endorsements, press junkets and press kits, publicity stunts, op-ed pieces and letters to the editor, mobile billboards, custom publishing, product licensing deals” (334). Stretching scant biographical sources on Burke—chiefly newspaper editorials—Dobrow breathes life into his character. More significant is that Dobrow gives Burke agency where other scholars have overlooked him. For example, historians routinely acknowledge the marketable significance of Mark Twain’s 1884 “open letter” lauding the Wild West. However, this letter appeared in multiple newspapers only because of a “truly novel” act by Burke. He “realized what a goldmine Twain’s testimonial represented” and forwarded the celebrity endorsement to his friends and contacts in the press (146–52).

*Pioneers of Promotion* is long and probably two books in one with its sprawling subject matter. But it is written with a wide audience in mind, and readers will be educated and entertained. People interested in marketing history will appreciate its attention to late nineteenth-century publicity innovations—and the inclusion of several color plates—while those familiar with postcolonial scholarship on nineteenth-century entertainment will

be disappointed with Dobrow’s uncritical treatment of John Burke and other men who promoted colonialism on stage. Burke advertised the Wild West as educational, imitating life in the Great Plains and transforming audience members into witnesses of the frontier experience, a stance Dobrow takes at face value. Still, Dobrow’s book helps demystify the popularity and enduring memory of the Wild West, World Columbian Exposition, and the Greatest Show on Earth. Dobrow demonstrates that asking novel questions about seemingly well-worn topics nuances our historical understanding and makes these topics shine anew.

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*Ned Christie: The Creation of an Outlaw and Cherokee Hero.*

By Devon A. Mihesuah. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2018. xi + 238 pp. Figures, notes, bibliography, index. \$29.95, cloth.

Devon Mihesuah’s book corrects 130 years of misinformation about Ned Christie, the Cherokee councilman who allegedly murdered US marshal Daniel Maples on Cherokee land in 1887. Christie refused to appear before a US judge in Fort Smith during the investigation and ultimately avoided arrest for five years before he was killed by federal lawmen. Originating in Indian Territory around present-day Wauhillau, Oklahoma, Christie’s story of resistance was picked up by newspapers across the country, who put their own sensationalized spin on the man. Christie was respected enough in the southwestern corner of the Ozarks to be elected to the Cherokee National Council