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**Review of *Outside America: Race, Ethnicity, and the Role of the American West in National Belonging* By Dan Moos**

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*Outside America: Race, Ethnicity, and the Role of the American West in National Belonging.* By Dan Moos. Hanover, NH: Dartmouth College Press; Lebanon, NH: Published by University Press of New England, 2005. xii + 260 pp. Photographs, notes, works cited, index. \$65.00 cloth, \$24.95 paper.

*Outside America* offers a perceptive analysis of racial and ethnic undercurrents integral to the shaping of American western history. Its chapters revisit "rough riding" Theodore Roosevelt, African American narratives of homesteading and prosperity on the Great Plains and further West, Mormon literature, and the dubious position of Native American "performers" in Buffalo Bill's Wild West shows.

The opening chapter on Roosevelt places the president in the midst of burgeoning conversations about the mythical West and includes passages from Roosevelt's writings on his experiences as a hunter and rancher, often citing his frequent trips to the Dakotas and other locales in the Great Plains. Dan Moos pays close attention to Roosevelt's racialized language in his many publications, including *The Rough Riders*—a text that often belittles the contributions of African American troops from the Ninth and Tenth Cavalries during the battle at San Juan Hill. Moos also notes that while Roosevelt considers his "Rough Riders" distinctly American in terms of race, class, and education, the regiment was only "2 percent Native or Mexican American," and there was no Asian American or African American presence.

As the later chapters unfold, it becomes clear that *Outside America* is primarily concerned with the performance of identity and language as Moos continues to locate critical conversations about race and region in the written and visual narratives of his subjects. Chapters 2 and 3 examine novels, memoirs, and semiautobiographical narratives written and published by African American residents of the Great Plains (Oscar Micheaux, Robert Ball Anderson) and the West generally (Nat Love, Thomas

Detter). Moos is interested in how "the African American presence in the American West raises the question of how the political rhetoric of national unity and homogeneity . . . played out within this definitively American and supposedly leveling geographic space."

In chapter 4, Moos maintains the emphasis on literature but moves away from the totalizing discussion of racial identity. Here he presents a brief history of the rise of Mormonism in America, but focuses extensively on the origins of Mormon fiction. Many readers will be interested to learn about the Home Literature movement and the mid-twentieth-century novels (primarily authored by women) that challenged polygamy, "traditional" gender roles, and male emotional abandonment.

Discussing the performance of Native American identity within Buffalo Bill's Wild West in chapter 5, Moos suggests that the indigenous performers who took part in the traveling show seized the opportunity to earn income, provide for their families, and leave the reservations, albeit for a short time. He also notes the show's many drawbacks, including distorted dramatizations of "historic" events, exaggerated stereotypes of the "Indian Warrior," and the fact that many Native performers were abandoned overseas without a connection to land, region, or family.

According to Moos, while his "study defends the place of the American West (as a region and as an ideological construct) in the formation of American national identity," at the same time he does not "argue here for the primacy of western mythology in the construction of national culture." Still, there are times when the reader is left wondering what unites these chapters, as they can easily stand alone (and have done so) as separate published pieces. Nevertheless, the study is another important contribution to the process of "remapping" the American West from the perspective of those most often ignored and misread within popular accountings.

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