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## Review of *Western American Literary Criticism* By Martin Bucco

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criticism as well as in their poetry and fiction. He stresses the rejection of European influence by nineteenth-century writers who postulated that the true national literature lay in the West.

Limits of space have precluded more than a mention of women's studies, ethnic, minority, or Native American literature. Nor is the large body of nature writing included. We will have to wait for the Western Literature Association's *Literary History of the American West* for that.

Nevertheless, this is a most useful introduction to the history of Western literary criticism. As Bucco points out, "The story of this discourse has just begun," and this is a very good starting place.

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*Western American Literary Criticism*. By Martin Bucco, Boise: Boise State University, Western Writers Series, no. 62, 1984. Bibliography. 57 pp. Paper \$2.00.

Martin Bucco's *Western American Literary Criticism* is a tight, terse compendium of Western American literature and its criticism from the mid-1700s to the present. Beginning with an examination of the relative worth of the early criticism (and finding much of it "a by-product of the bar and the pulpit"), he discusses the American preoccupation at various times with Western humor, regionalism, morality, and the effect of Marxist criticism on the literature.

With so much territory to cover in so little space, Bucco cannot present a detailed study of the many individuals important to the field, but he manages adroit brief evaluations of major writers, pointing out their framing ideas of Western literature as exemplified in their