

James E. Fell, Jr. *Ores to Metals: The Rocky Mountain Smelting Industry*. 1979; reprint, University Press of Colorado, 2009; 358 pp., b&w illus., revised pref., notes, bib., ind., paper, \$28. ISBN: 9780870819469.

As part of its Timberline Books series on Colorado subjects, the University Press of Colorado has reissued *Ores to Metals*, originally published by the University of Nebraska Press in 1979.

Chemist and historian Jay Fell surveys the entire history of Colorado's ore reduction industry, which started with the laborious shipping of ores of only the highest grade as far away as Swansea, Wales, or more locally to Omaha or St. Louis, in quest of economical processing.

Colorado's early smelting experiments began in the 1870s with Nathaniel Hill's Boston and Colorado smelter processing gold ores at Black Hawk, as well as some crude undertakings in South Park. These efforts usually tried to adapt known processes to meet Colorado's needs. But the real adventures began when Colorado shifted from smelting relatively simple gold ores to processing silver ores in all their variations.

The Leadville boom was the great stimulus for this reorientation, and by 1880 the district featured fifteen smelters having a go at the problem. By the mid-1880s, however, the larger smelting companies began curtailing their mountain operations in favor of building plants on the prairie—principally at Denver and Pueblo—that occupied larger parcels of inexpensive land in proximity to the state's railroad hubs, and offered better access to fuel and water supplies. Fell devotes a chapter each to the development of Denver and of Pueblo into the smelting centers of the state.

By the 1890s the state's silver mining industry, and therefore its silver smelting industry, were sliding into crisis. The same Panic of 1893 that essentially shut down the state's silver mines, thinned out its smelters and led the remaining firms to attempt to stabilize the industry by controlling prices or reducing competition. When

the former, attempted through pool agreements, proved unavailing, most of the surviving smelters consolidated as the American Smelting and Refining Company (ASARCO) in 1899.

Initially, the ASARCO combination did not capture the entire industry, the Guggenheim family retaining its assets outside of the trust. Soon after the trust's formation, with it damaged by strikes and short of capital, it was ASARCO's directors who approached the Guggenheims about a merger. The family merged their company into ASARCO in 1901, at the price of assuming management of the trust. But this last great consolidation also proved temporary. With Colorado's mining industry fading, the jig was effectively up by the 1920s, although ASARCO's and Colorado's last smelter, the Arkansas Valley, at Leadville, lasted in until 1961.

Fell does well describing and emphasizing the perennial problems the highly competitive smelting industry faced during its years in Colorado. Early on the most significant of these was probably the cost of transportation. Later the main issue became how to turn a profit processing ores increasingly refractory and of ever lower grade. A constantly reoccurring problem was smelters' inability to acquire sufficient fluxing ores, especially those rich in lead, shortages so critical as to require importing fluxing ores from Canada and Mexico.

Fell also astutely observes that the smelting industry's progression in many ways mirrors that of other great industries in the nineteenth century. Once the earliest companies had established an industry, competition quickly burgeoned, resulting in either overproduction or excess capacity, which, in turn, led to chronic instability in prices and production. Companies then attempted to reduce competition, either through price wars, by create pool agreements of limited duration and success, or by consolidating as much of the industry as possible into a massive trust that either bought out or drove out competitors. Thus the pattern in Colorado's smelting industry, from Leadville's fifteen smelters of 1880 to the ASARCO trust of 1900.

Ores to Metals: The Rocky Mountain Smelting Industry is not quite as comprehensive as its subtitle suggests. Smelters located in Montana and Utah only come into the story as they pertain to events in Colorado. Within the state, Fell makes no mention of the smelters at Florence and at Colorado City that sustained the Cripple Creek District during its first two decades, the latter being the flash point for the notorious Cripple Creek strike of 1903–4. Still, Fell's mastery of the intricacies of the industry, from the furnace floor to the board room, means that *Ores to Metals* retains its value in mining literature and is an important addition to the Timberline series.

Eric Clements

Southeast Missouri State University

Jan MacKell. *Red Light Women of the Rocky Mountains*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2009; 458 pp., 81 b&w illus., append., notes, ind., cloth, \$35. ISBN: 9780826346100.

Put your Stetsons on, sit back in a comfortable chair, and get ready for a great read! Storyteller and lecturer Jan MacKell's *Red Light Women of the Rocky Mountains* is a rousing story of a topic often ignored and tabooed. However, this is not a book that tells tales of debauchery or shows racy photographs. It is based upon years of research for her first book—*Brothels, Bordellos, and Bad Girls: Prostitution in Colorado, 1860–1930* (University of New Mexico Press, 2004)—and expanded to cover the entire Rocky Mountain region. It is a well-written book about women's history, U.S. history, and western lore, not a rehash of other books.

MacKell explains that at different times prostitutes had an important economic role in a community, exerted political influence, and, in ways not acknowledged or much studied, contributed to the growth and stability of the locale. The changing acceptance, visibility, and influence of prostitutes in the territories and states during

the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries added a new dimension to the development of the Rocky Mountain region.

Many of these women hid their true identities in an effort to protect themselves and their families. The amount of stories and sources that MacKell has uncovered is remarkable. At the same time, one must caution the reader that some of these "tales" may indeed be tales, oral histories that have been embellished. This does not detract from MacKell's efforts to conduct a well-research and extensive history of prostitution in the West. In the preface she calls attention to around-the-table discussions with old timers in many locales. If you doubt a madam's story, research it for yourself and write a book! Her vignettes are compelling, filled with emotion, respect, and history. It is a book well worth the time to read.

Dawn Bunyak

Littleton, Colorado

Jonathan H. Rees. *Representation and Rebellion: The Rockefeller Plan at the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company, 1914–1942*. Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2010; 344 pp., 12 b&w illus., append., notes, bib. essay, ind., cloth, \$35. ISBN: 9780870819643.

Colorado's coalfield war of 1913–14 has attracted much attention from historians. In fact, the Mining History Association's 2009 Clark Spence Award went to Thomas G. Andrews' *Killing for Coal*, which dealt with that topic, as well as with the half century of labor difficulties that led up to the Ludlow Massacre in 1914. In part, Jonathan Rees' *Representation and Rebellion* continues that discussion as it looks at the Rockefeller Plan for labor representation, which John D. Rockefeller, Jr. instituted in the aftermath of the coalfield disaster.

As with the coalfield war, authors have explored the Rockefeller Plan before, and most have been critical. Ben M. Selekman and Mary Van