Nevada
Historical Society Quarterly

Summer 1997

NEVADA HISTORICAL SOCIETY QUARTERLY

The *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly* solicits contributions of scholarly or popular interest dealing with the following subjects: the general (e.g., the political, social, economic, constitutional) or the natural history of Nevada and the Great Basin; the literature, languages, anthropology, and archaeology of these areas; reprints of historic documents; reviews and essays concerning the historical literature of Nevada, the Great Basin, and the West.

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The *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly* (ISSN 0047-9462) is published quarterly by the Nevada Historical Society. The *Quarterly* is sent to all members of the Society. Membership dues are: Student, $15; Senior Citizen without *Quarterly*, $15; Regular, $25; Family, $35; Sustaining, $50; Contributing, $100; Departmental Fellow, $250; Patron, $500; Benefactor, $1,000. Membership applications and dues should be sent to the Director, Nevada Historical Society, 1650 N. Virginia St., Reno, NV 89503. Periodicals postage paid at Reno, Nevada and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly*, 1650 N. Virginia St., Reno, Nevada 89503.

Nevada

Historical Society Quarterly

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Volume 40 | Summer 1997 | Number 2

Contents

Front Cover: Forum Casino, Caesars Las Vegas (*Caesars photo*)

Book Reviews:

A Note to Our Readers:

The Nevada Historical Society apologizes for the lateness of this issue of the *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly*. A number of unforeseen events have caused delays. The editorial staff are working hard to catch up with the normal schedule.

THE POLITICS OF SCRIPTED SPACES
Las Vegas and Reno

Norman M. Klein

Last week, after the graduation ceremonies at Cal-Arts, where I teach, a student who was a third-generation resident of Orlando, Florida, began to tell me about his fascination with Las Vegas. "I feel completely at home there," he said. "Everyone I know from Orlando feels like it's right next door somehow."

I asked him why. He had taken one of my classes on special effects-environments. So I tried some of the terms on him.

"You said that the artificial look of Vegas feels entirely natural, strangely comforting."

"And not just because I'm used to being near Disney World," he replied. "It's the feeling of a scripted space." By *scripted* he meant a space designed to be walked through as a narrative, a story where the audience is the central character.

We reviewed how a scripted space is set up, what I call Happy Imprisonment. The layout controls choices, but has to hide this control. Otherwise, people feel too manipulated. Laboratory rats don't enjoy gambling; they just run for their lives.

And the phony effects put people at ease. A cute machine has replaced nature, rather like the old TV commercial for Allstate Insurance, the good hands people, where a building, say New York New York, sits in the palm of a hand. Nature is under glass, no winds off the East River, no angry cab drivers—no surprises except those that fit into the narrative.

It's like vacationing in a southern plantation in 1850. Or admiring the turf on a golf course. Or the dome over an air-conditioned sports arena. The machine that gives you the illusion stands in for the power of Disney, or Caesars World. It is a people-friendly feudalism, a magic kingdom where consumers have the freedom to invent their own story.

There is a paradox certainly: The economic power feels people friendly—diffuse—but very thorough. It watches everywhere; it is a catholicity. And yet you almost never meet a cop with a gun, much less a director who runs things. No bank managers on call here. You can't see who's running what. Really. You're not

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supposed to. It is a gentle slope that seems to have your best interests at heart; it advises you to slide, but not to jump off the cliff. And be sure and come back again.

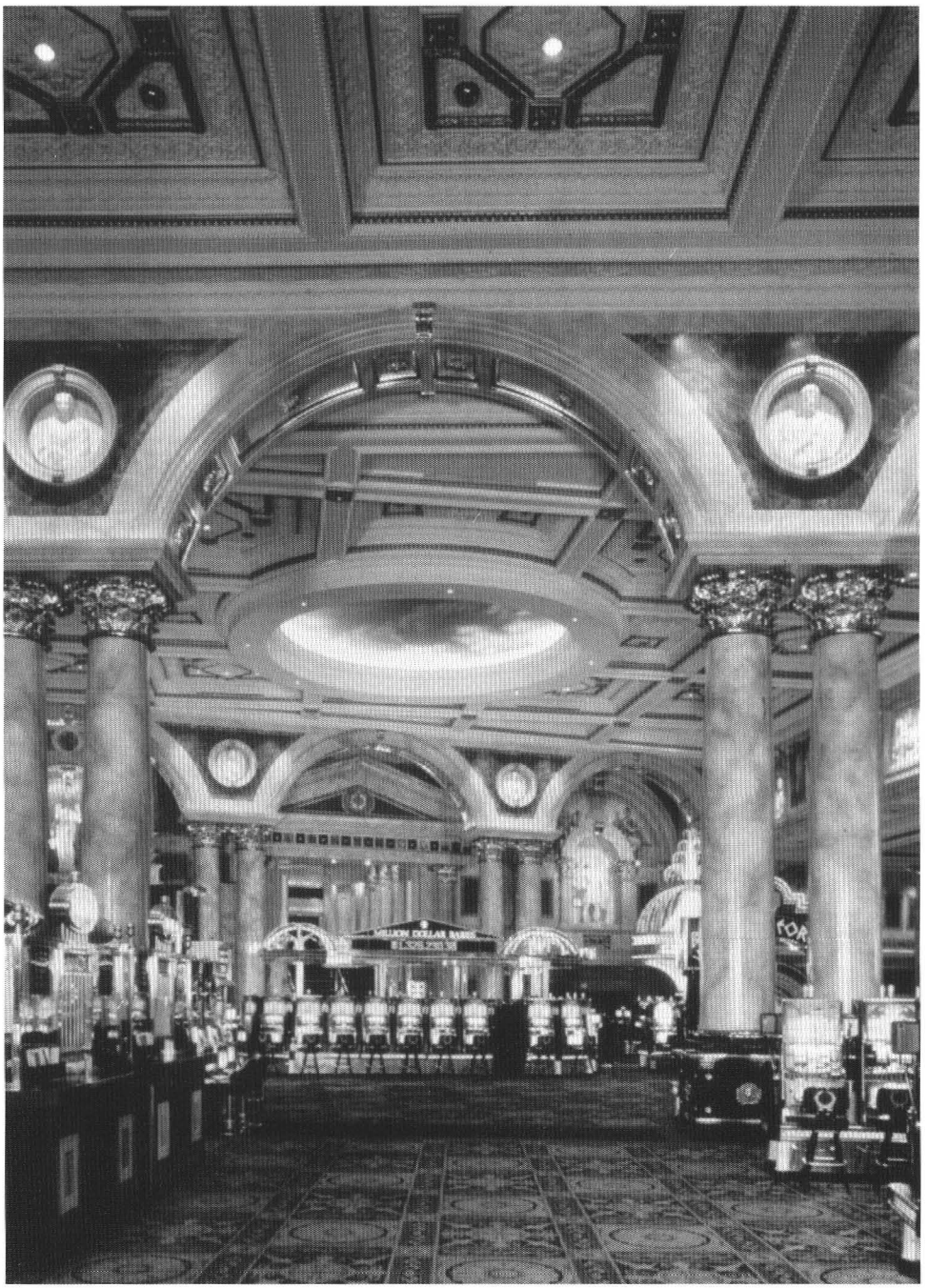
The term feudalism is a reminder for me about the history of scripted spaces. This kind of political narrative has been built thousands of times over the past five hundred years (if not earlier). Locating scripted spaces has been a project of mine since 1994, and even during the 'eighties actually. I have taught the subject of simulated worlds at least fifteen times since 1994, and found varieties that seem as vast as species of mammal, going back to about 1450, with the convergence between mathematical theories of architecture and the use of forced perspective in painting. In other words, the Renaissance did not lead only to the industrial revolution; it also led to Disneyland and Las Vegas. Let me present some of the keys that have emerged out of all this, so we can discuss the politics and aesthetics of the scripted space. First of all, how is a space cybernetic? And how is it ergonomic? How does the design make the artificial controls feel natural?

Some time in 1998, these case studies will become a manuscript entitled *The Vatican to Vegas: The History of Special Effects*, to be published a year later I suppose. I have cited designs that resemble Vegas or Orlando inside Baroque churches, Renaissance theaters, amusement parks and rides since the sixteenth century, world's fairs since 1851, shopping malls since 1800, urban planning as a broad paradigm, and of course, computer games, special effects films, trick films, animation. Now when I say *resemble*, I am talking about the narrative more than the painting inside a lunette, or the tower above a parachute dome.

The first rule is not to stare formalistically at the walls and façade. Follow the spectator. The journey is the place; the trick lies in the walk-through or play-through narrative. It migrates. It is a highly animated form of illusionism, always in motion, like a movie finished by the viewer.

To double-check my evidence, to be certain that my assumptions do not make a joke of practice on the casino or the church floor, I have lectured on scripted spaces in as many venues as possible, from Microsoft headquarters in Seattle, to the Film Institute in Stockholm; and met dozens of specialists in digital effects, animation, park design, mall design, architecture. In every talk, one question comes up very early on—not about the word *scripted*. That seems self-evident. Instead, the audience always asks precisely what I mean by the *politics* of a scripted space. And I answer that however escapist the fantasy, from Disneyland to the cutest computer game, the story always is about power. Then, as a verbal shorthand to clarify what I mean by power, I mention casinos and Vegas. Just the word alone—casino--and immediately, the audience nods, as if I were quoting scripture.

What are they nodding about? No one votes or goes on strike on the casino floor. Outside perhaps. But of course, you already know what they see in their mind's eye, when I ask. They tend to replay their collective imaginary about the mob, the cynical profiteering, the corporate finagling—in short, the noir romance



The Forum Casino at Caesars Las Vegas (*Photo courtesy Caesars*)

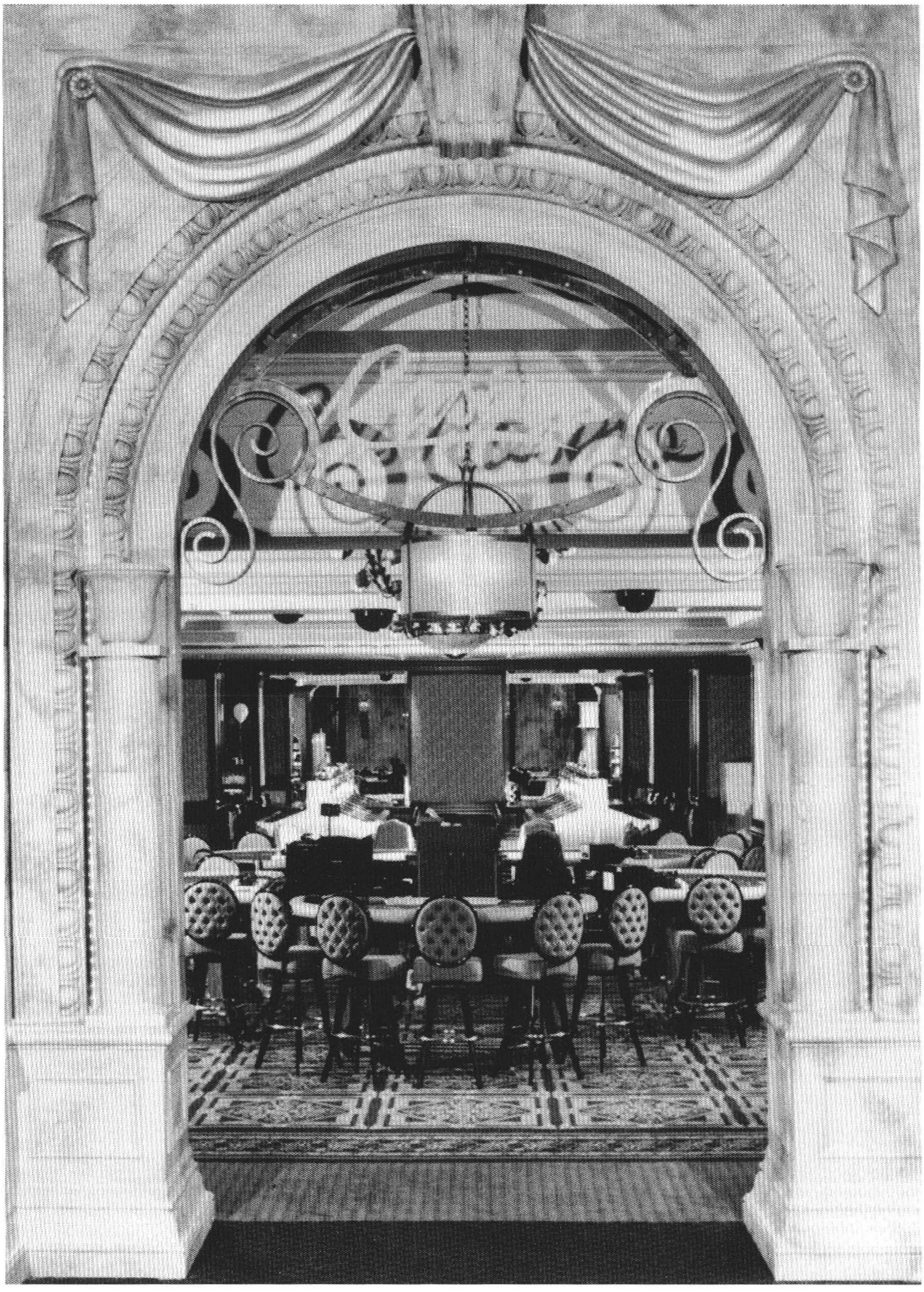
of the casino, that mob muscle lies hidden behind the jingle and flourish, guys with bad skin moving bags of money in the opening sequence of Scorcese's *Casino*. The fact that casinos are owned now by corporations far slicker than mobsters skimming from the top does not shake the sense many still have that everything is still a front. Somewhere, behind all this, Sicilian Americans in dark rooms are checking the books.

This is a first step, and a first fiction. In other words, no matter how escapist and cute the bars and the slots are. No matter how many simulated disasters are drawing crowds: sim-volcanoes, sim-earthquakes. Or stylized simulations of New Orleans, Egypt, Manhattan. Behind all these scripted spaces is a story about power. The hand pulling the lever is merely a symbol of signing a contract. What sort of contract I ask them. It isn't a mafia oath. It is humbler, and much sillier, of course. I ask those who go to Vegas why they sign away some of their rights, knowing the odds always favor the house. The most frequent answer: Sure, it's artificial, cynically controlled, the odds and so on, but I know how to *lose* more slowly than anybody else. I get my money's worth. So let the goons turn everything into glitz, the desert climate, the time of day, the cities of the world with gimmicks. They can stop the sun in its tracks, for all I care. I willingly release myself into their maze, because—to coin a phrase, and then dump it into a slot machine—I have a system. I can be subversive inside the maze. I know which slots are loose, which game has better odds. If I didn't know, I'd be an idiot. That always is followed by silence, then clarifications, not really an idiot, it's fun to get lost inside the maze, et cetera.

From your response, it is clear that you have met some of the same people. Let's concentrate on the narrative itself. The terms to remember are *cybernetic* and *ergonomic*. It was true of walks through Renaissance domes, and it is true of casinos. Like cybernetics, the gaming world is a feedback system like an oven thermometer, buzzing at 325 degrees. Slot machines are cybernetic, if you keep score long enough. But they are ergonomic too, like a fully loaded dashboard inside a car trapped in gridlock, crawling along. Playing the slots is indeed like being caught in traffic, waiting for the sneaky exit around the freeway. But in the meantime, if I have to wait, most of all, I have a superior CD player.

You get my point. I won't belabor the obvious. You have seen it very clearly in Reno, and perhaps even more clearly in Vegas. It is a game about pretending to subvert the power that gives you the illusion. Let me review more of the keys that repeat over the past five hundred years. Please bear in mind that the public holds many of the answers that will help shape a new modernity about the themed consumer spaces that are rapidly shrinking public life on streets throughout the world. People in Europe and the United States are fascinated about Vegas, not simply because of its expensive casinos, but because it has advanced the narrative of the consumer space to baroque proportions.

Of the four separate narrative categories we will discuss only one. But the four are—first, architecturally masterplanned spaces; second, narratives that are



The Mezzanine Casino at the Eldorado, Reno (*Photo courtesy the Eldorado*)

walked through from the Vatican to Disneyland to casinos, what I call scripted spaces; third, social imaginaries, places or events that have not occurred, but someone builds them anyway, a false Paris, a ruin, what landscape architects in the eighteenth century called a folly, even Freud's model of the unconscious. (My book *The History of Forgetting: Los Angeles and the Erasure of Memory* discusses how social imaginaries erase aspects of collective memory, even when the ruins, or the facts, are still in plain view.) The fourth category is special-effects narrative on the stable screen, from film to video. And the first three categories apply directly to the building of environments on computer. That is why a walk through a postmodern shopping mall feels very much like navigating a computer space. It is what the philosopher Foucault called epistemic similarity, when systems of knowledge resemble each other, and transfer like bacteria from one object to the next.

The experience is similar, which brings me back to my student, who this week is traveling back to Orlando to study how the Disney micro-city of twenty thousand people, called Celebration, is a bald reenactment of a chain that includes the Disneyland of 1955, and the computer of today. Celebration promises to be the most wired city in the world, built in, like flush toilets and underground conduit.

But how does this experience work in a scripted space? Three elements operate in a chain of production starting at the time a casino is imagined to the moment the players are imagining that they are subverting the system (and yet knowing that there is no way to cheat the father. Besides, if you did, the game might simply pack up and leave you with no entertainment).

Based on my conversations with various specialists, in terms of the casino, the three are:

(1) Program (ways that corporatized profit strategies are kept out of the direct experience of the consumer). The Program is vaguely similar to what film theorists call the apparatus, the patrimonial force—not simply the owners or "the system," (pit bosses, etc.) that the customer senses, but the comfort zone that makes the consumer enjoy having the Programmers around, perhaps even finding them exotic. The Program is a mostly hidden agenda; it is the full diegetic, the bottom line.

(2) Design—including "script" (how the space is built to be navigated according to a program). That can involve details like lighting, locating slot machines near elevators, as well as landscaping, ornamentation, position of surveillance—and finally, most essentially, the architectural suture between entertainment and gambling. How is the customer presumably to be channeled to spend $350 on average in a weekend, and leave satisfied?

(3) Reception by the customer. This is always the hardest to identify, the elusive signified. It is hoped that some marketing models exist, to balance against interviews or observations of customers. Presumably the fact that we never know entirely how the player will navigate the space—that ergonomic shopping catalogue—is what makes the entire process democratic. This democracy by way

of VISA card is the strange myth of our age, in many ways. Since we have a thousand choices, rather than five--even though we have no power to program these choices ourselves--we are free, and are acting on the world. But it is also an evasion. We make our own fictions. Conversations stand in for political dialogue.

I also should point out that I have limited my examples of scripted spaces to those that use fantasy effects in some way. Otherwise, I would be scavenging every park and piazza on earth for the next forty years. Also, the effects are so easy to spot, because, as I remind my students, the virtual is always relative. If the player cannot sense a seam out there, a place where the slots are looser, then half the fun is gone. There is no way to pretend that you can be subversive. The narrative works only if you think you have caught up.

Also, the sense of the effect—the apparatus as film theorists like Christian Metz called it—reminds the viewer who runs things. For example, in my book, *Seven Minutes: The Life and Death of the American Animated Cartoon*, I use the term *machine versatilis*, from the seventeenth century, for the most part. It referred to the audience's awareness of the cogs and cranks in a Renaissance theater. Ben Jonson found the impact of these theatrical machines unsettling. They kept reminding the audience that this is, in his words, "a mean mechanic age." But instead of feeling annoyed, or manipulated, the audiences were fascinated. They felt in the know. They felt dwarfed.

On the actual design of scripted spaces, I found three models that repeated the most often over the past five hundred years. They were domes (immersive, curvilinear spaces), arcades (shoppers' pathways), and, most fascinating of all, labyrinths. The labyrinth has generated the most excitement by far, the most e-mail, the most examples, the clearest impact on those working in various effects and digital industries.

What is a labyrinth? Imagine a space that you can enter, but never escape. The sensation is strange. You seem to have infinite choices, but none of them leads to an exit. And yet you stay, because you have a system. Or you somehow feel safe anyway. It is a happy prison, the way in fact that Jeremy Bentham's panopticon in 1799 might work: a humanistic system of surveillance with no way out. It is existence without essence, only navigation.

In practical terms, there is no labyrinth. Every labyrinth eventually maps out as a kind of map. It is how you feel inside a maze that you cannot decipher yet.

In cinematic terms, this is the flythrough at first used in the *Star Wars* starfighter climax. It suits the computer extremely well, to zip into an alley no wider than a keyhole.

In a casino, bathrooms, bars, clocks— many of the usual landmarks in a space— are removed, not only, I believe, to flatten out time, but also to generate the pleasure of the labyrinth for the players. Why? Because the labyrinth always requires that the players agree to the rules first, to accept the power that built the labyrinth.

I hope my taxonomy isn't beginning to sound a bit like taxidermy. Let's see:

scripted spaces, game of power, program, design, reception. That covers most of it. But consider what this implies:

Any form of simulation is a narrative where the spectator is a central character. And all of the narratives are about power, the spectator relinquishing to the apparatus that makes the magic, but pretending to be able to subvert the system. Meanwhile, the system is generally designed to set off the experience of a labyrinth, even though in fact it is merely a maze (though a maze on more than one floor could be called a labyrinth, like the designs for computer games from Super Mario onward).

As a result, a few assumptions about our emerging themed consumer spaces need revising.

The virtual is always relative, certainly in a space you walk through. There is no way to get the illusion to catch up, and if you did, the audience would be bored, would have no way to enter and make a story of it. (I believe that the same is true of special effects in movies as well, but that topic cannot be handled here.)

The player enjoys surveillance because it suggests a world where the artificial is natural, that the apparatus, which stands in for the corporate power that delivers magic, is a safe service, is people friendly. Unlike theories about fortress L.A., about the hazards of the panoptical, the player in a scripted space likes Big Brother, will even pay a hefty fee to have Big Brother to kibbitz with.

The politics of the scripted space is an emerging narrative vocabulary that will restructure practically every aspect of our public life, since for the next twenty years most public spaces will be redesigned to look more like theme parks, or simply will be built from scratch as theme parks.

I am convinced that novels and films, which trace our journey from the public to the private, will have to engage what this political narrative is about. Much is at stake, even for historians, who may be presuming traumas in public life where they do not exist, and therefore miss where the crises really lie. But of course, it is still early. We have the privilege of watching what labyrinth awaits us.

I am struck by the seventeenth-century Spanish definition of labyrinth: a final point. There, the piazza was a labyrinth, because it represented the collision of multitudes onto a single space, the confusion of losing your way in a dense crowd. Perhaps there is a chaotic madness locked somewhere inside this cybernetic slickness. I'll be looking for that, for the self-reflexive break in the maze, where suddenly one sees behind the two-way mirror above the casino bar.

What is missing most of all in illusionistic scripted space is its own critique in the way it is designed. I am utterly unconvinced that postmodern copy and appropriation is self-reflexive, because the subject is not the facade, or Venturi's decorated shed. It is the spectator locked in its embrace somehow. It is the unexamined journey, not the unexamined building. It is not whether the Strip goes pedestrian or back to neon car fantasy. It is the contract that the driver or walker

makes with the apparatus of power. It is the softcore, happy imprisonment that globalized entertainment capital offers us. It won't hurt; it won't make you lonely; it won't make you wonder. It simply will take you through, not to the other side, simply to another labyrinth. Grab your remote controls, and good luck. The future will not be nasty, but it will be diffuse and feudalistic. But behind all the games and gaming, the story is still about power, and how to find the human content inside the spectacle.

There is just a new twist on the equation: The virtual has become more solid than the steel industry; and we still treat it like a novelty act on a late-night variety show. To say that the virtual is a hell of a ride, or doesn't tell a story right, or costs too much, or looks too patriarchal, or seems awfully like what the philosopher Derrida said about grammatology is close to useless. We need to take it apart like a clock, and learn how to make anti-clocks and novels like clocks, and scholarship about clocks, until we have a new vocabulary that gets to the bottom of all this more clearly. Otherwise, we're simply paying subscribers, not critics.

NEVADA BY AIR , 1910-1945
"Blueprint for a New Frontier"

Roger D. Launius and Jessie L. Embry

During the nineteenth century, Nevadans, and all westerners, faced the challenge of finding effective, easy, fast travel. Raw distances and the added obstacles of deserts and especially mountains slowed movement. Trails and wagon routes and eventually railroads and highways helped, but some places were still unreachable. Then, in 1903, the Wright brothers flew, and the pilots at the 1910 Los Angeles Airshow showed the West the possibility of transportation by air. With the development of practical aircraft during 1910-1920, many western community, state, and business leaders embraced aviation as a way to overcome their persistent transportation dilemmas. As Nevada's powerful senator Patrick A. McCarran explained in 1943, flight was a "blueprint for a new frontier."[1] This article will examine aviation in Nevada to 1945. As in other parts of the West, a combination of federal involvement and community competition and boosterism helped shorten travel times in the Silver State.

FLIGHT IN THE WEST BEGINS

The 1910 Los Angeles Airshow excited westerners. Reporters from throughout the region watched as aircraft soared overhead, and they sent glowing reports to their home newspapers. After the show, everyone wanted the aviators to come to their towns and cities, but only larger cities could raise enough money to pay their fees. Other areas, including all of Nevada, had to wait.[2]

Just the possibility of planes passing overhead made the news in some parts of the state. In 1916 a Las Vegas newspaper bragged that E. H. Lewis, a "millionaire sportsman of New York," would make a transcontinental flight from San Diego to New York, transiting Las Vegas. Unfortunately, Lewis crashed after fewer than

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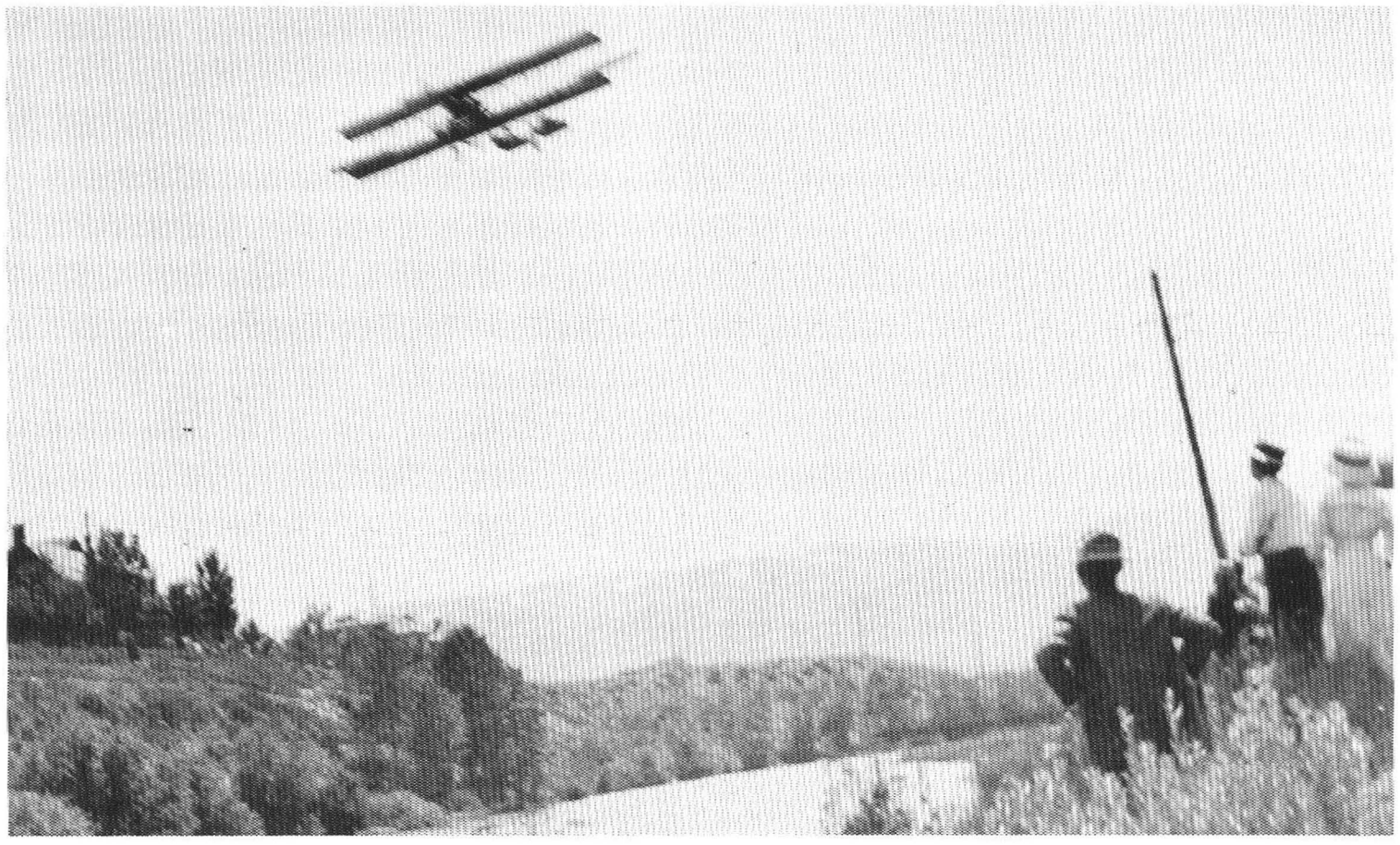


Eugene Ely's barnstorming flight along the Truckee River in Reno, July 4, 1911. (*Nevada Historical Society*)

125 miles, dashing hopes for the promised transcontinental flight. Although Las Vegas residents were not able to see a plane, they did for the first time read articles about aviation. The planned flight was front page news throughout April 1916, and the local press used it to highlight the possibilities of aviation in a broader context. For instance, an April 22 article discussed the growth of the nascent Aero Club of America, its sponsorship of a contest for a transcontinental flight, and the need to move beyond the general backwardness of air travel in the United States.[3]

MILITARY AVIATION FOLLOWING WORLD WAR I

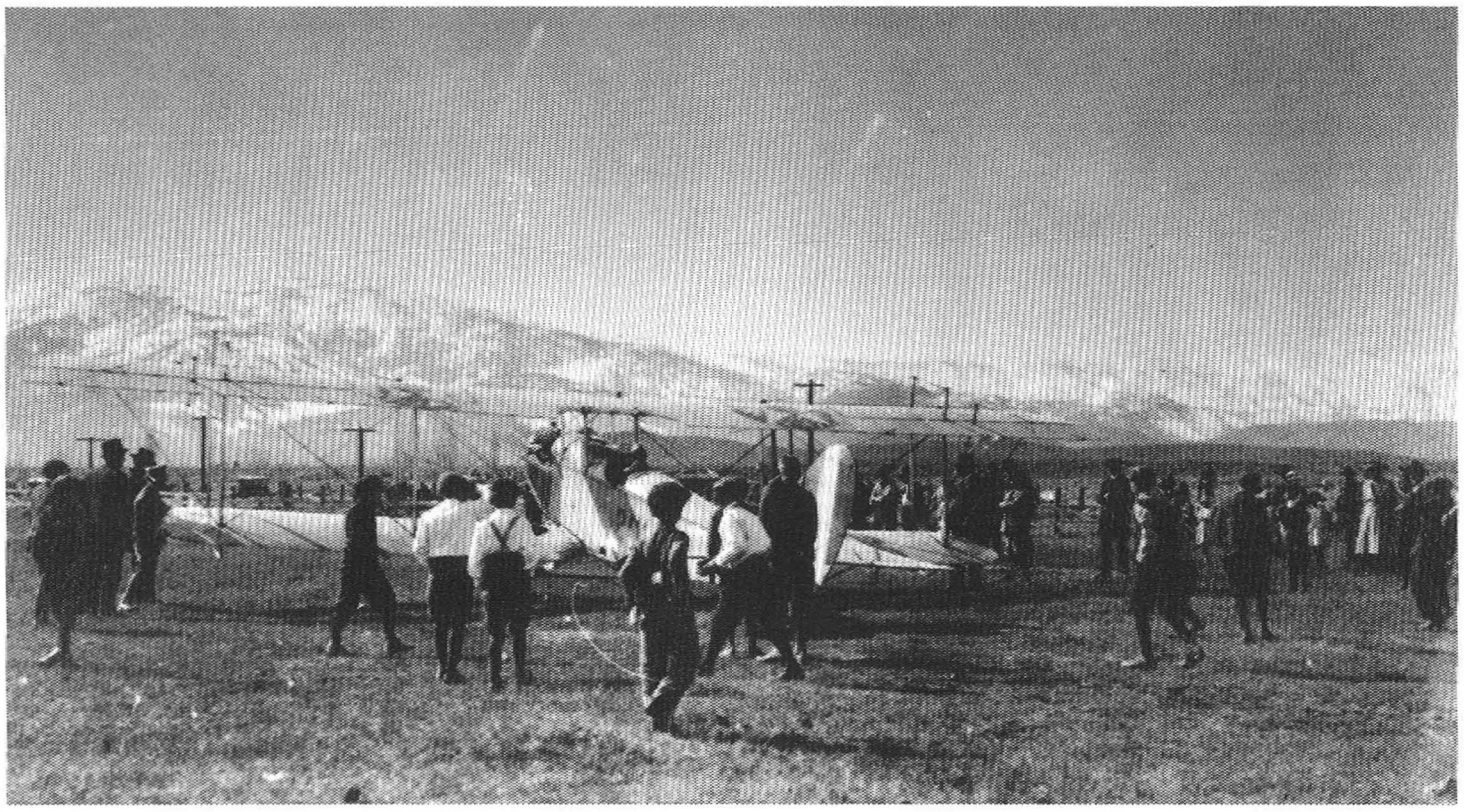
Initially air travel was too expensive and complex for individual entrepreneurs. As with railroad and highway transportation, it took the power and resources of the federal government to develop aviation. Eugene P. Moehring appropriately refers to "the federal trigger" pulled in preparation for World War I.[4] During the war, the Army Air Service established sixty-nine air fields in the United States, twenty-nine located in the American West but none in Nevada. These bases became part of a nationwide network of airways and landing fields permitting rapid movement of units across the country for military purposes.

Following demobilization, the Army Air Service worked with civilian leaders interested in aviation. It helped develop municipal airports that could also serve as transit points for military flights. In 1919 Captain Henry H. Arnold, later the World War II general commanding the Army Air Forces, sent second lieutenants

Ralph M. Kelly and Leland W. Miller from March Field, California, to advise community leaders throughout the West on airport construction.[5] Then in 1921, not long after taking the post as chief of the Air Service, Major General Mason M. Patrick directed his far-flung bases to send flyers to investigate the emerging airway system and base infrastructure. Using DH-4s, Captain Lowell H. Smith and Sergeant William B. Whitefield carried out this task in Idaho, Wyoming, Nevada, Utah, Oregon, and Washington. Their information appeared in a booklet, *Airways and Landing Facilities*, first published on March 1,1923, and regularly after that. By 1925 there was a nationwide structure for military aviation that was especially critical to the safe and efficient operation of military pilots over the American West.[6]

The Army Air Service also pioneered transcontinental air routes throughout the West, and which crossed Nevada in late 1918 and 1919. For instance, in October 1919 the army held the First Transcontinental Reliability and Endurance Contest with flights leaving each coast on a transcontinental race. Lieutenant Colonel Harold E. Hartney, who planned the contest, laid out a course from New York and San Francisco by way of Buffalo, Cleveland, Chicago, Omaha, Cheyenne, Salt Lake City, and Reno. The 2,071 mile route had twenty-nine control stations.

The seventy four army fliers left the two coasts on Wednesday, October 8, 1919. They faced harsh weather from the beginning, and several of their fragile aircraft cracked up. The eventual winner of the contest, First Lieutenant Belvin W. Maynard, left Roosevelt Field in New York at 9:00 A. M. and arrived at the Presidio in San Francisco at 1:12 P. M. on Saturday, October 11. His flying time had been 25 hours, 16 minutes, and 47 seconds, and total time had been 3 days, 6 hours, 47 minutes,



An Army Air Service DH-4 lands near Reno after making the first air crossing of the Sierra Nevada, March 23, 1919 (*Emmet Boyle Collection, Nevada Historical Society*)

and 11 seconds. The planes, no longer in a race, returned to their home stations via the same route.[7]

This Army Air Service contest gave Nevadans their first real look at airplanes. It also sparked a renewed boosterism about the possibilities of air transportation. One newspaper editor opined that aviation would improve travel "over the long mountainous stretches between towns in the southern section of Nevada" and would lead to "regular air routes for mail and passengers between Las Vegas and northern towns." There were no railroad connections between Las Vegas and Goldfield and Tonopah. As a result, passengers had to ride in automobiles for ten hours to travel only two hundred miles. "A regular air service would cut the time to three hours and insure a fast and reliable mail service and would have the advantage of being a much cooler and more pleasant trip." Traveling from Los Angeles to Las Vegas by air, moreover, would also be an easier way to cross the desert.[8]

But there were technical problems. "The heat, combined with the altitude of Southern Nevada," the editor added, "will decrease the lifting power of an airplane and necessitate larger fields for taking off. The heat is also apt to cause engine trouble, for while airplanes depend on low temperature of the upper air for perfect cooling, the desert heat reaches up for 3,000 or 4,000 feet. In the event of forced landings help would be difficult to get, especially away from the regular traveled routes." The editor concluded, however, that given time, the airplane would become the preferred method. When it did, it would "reduce the scoffers and the Missourians," a reference to the show-me mindset, who did not think flight was practical.[9]

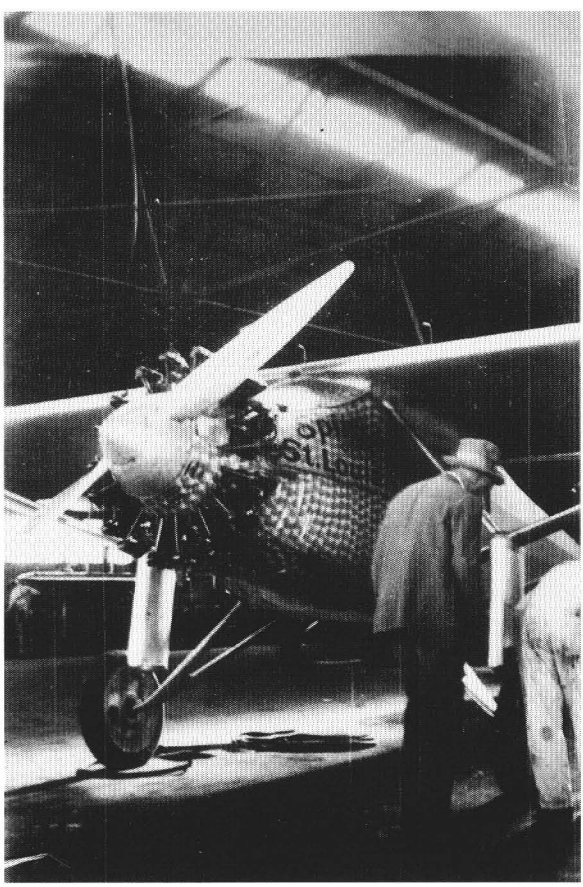
BARNSTORMERS AFTER WORLD WAR I

In addition to the army flights, barnstormers invaded Nevada after World War I. American pilots returning from the war wanted to continue to fly. They attempted to make a business of thrilling spectators with their flying prowess, always for a fee. They flew war surplus JN-4 "Jenny" or Standard biplanes and traveled throughout the country visiting county fairs and any other gatherings they could find. After displaying flight stunts, the flyers sold rides to the brave and adventurous. They were known as barnstormers because they flew low, presumably about the height of a barn, and tried to attract the attention and money of rural settlers.

Several important flyers visited Nevada in the 1910s and early 1920s, including Charles Lindbergh; the Stinson family of flyers, Marjorie, Katherine, and Eddie; Jack Frye, who later headed Trans World Airlines; and Oklahoma native and auto and air racer Wiley Post.[10] Those who flew in Nevada and neighboring states struggled to make a living. They were generally capable airmen, recognized as such by both the public and fellow aviators. Some made record-setting flights, others won laurels for airplane racing, and a few received high honors and public

acclaim for their aeronautical feats. Most, however, labored in relative obscurity, eking out a living on the barnstorming circuit. Speaking of their service in World War I, all of them agreed, "They gave us wings, then took away the sky."[11]

One barnstormer, Randall Henderson, arrived in Las Vegas from Blythe, California, in 1920 to demonstrate his airplane. Like many others, Henderson had been a flight instructor in San Antonio and flew a JN-4 Curtiss biplane. "The only difficulty experienced on the trip was the encountering of air pockets, which were frequently experienced across the open desert stretches and also encountered frequently in this altitude, " reported the local newspaper. "These pockets are a severe trial to the pilot, the utmost caution being required to prevent losing control of the machine." Henderson offered rides to the local residents. He also argued for the establishment of an airmail route through Las Vegas. He wanted to fly a line between California and the East.[12]



Charles Lindbergh checks out the Spirit of St. Louis in the hangar at Reno during his 1928 tour (*Nevada Historical Society*)

AIR MAIL BEGINS

With time, aviation became more routine and productive. The important early practical use was air mail. The United States Postal Service, under the direction of Assistant Postmaster General Otto Praeger, inaugurated air mail service between New York City and Washington, D. C., on May 15, 1918. Other routes followed quickly, linking cities along the Atlantic seaboard with Pittsburgh, Cleveland, and Chicago.[13]

Western bankers and other business leaders pressed for the extension of the routes to help reduce the float time of checks moving across the country. Postal officials agreed and laid plans for a transcontinental air mail route between San Francisco and New York via Reno, Elko, Salt Lake City, Cheyenne, Omaha, Chicago, and Pittsburgh.[14] The post office secured funding for a route to San Francisco via Chicago through a slight-of-hand for fiscal year 1921 (July 1920-June 1921). Specifically, a stretched argument about the air mail's ability to supplement rail transport enabled postal officials to take almost $1.3 million out of railway appropriations in 1921 to pay for airmail costs.[15]

In the process, the postal service searched for routes with decent airfields and pliant business communities that would be willing to build the necessary facilities. So John A. Jordan, a field operative, visited several western cities in 1920. On May 10 he held a meeting in Reno with the community leadership. As he had done in other western cities, he induced the local business community to spend $29,000 on suitable fields and hangars for the proposed airmail route. In the process, he threatened city leaders with moving the planned airmail stop to Carson City, the state capital and Reno's chief rival for Nevada's economic pursuits. With promise and intimidation, Reno officials agreed to provide a field.[16]

With major stops on the route established, Praeger, the postal service's Father of the Air Mail, fixed September 1 as the official starting date for transcontinental air operations. He appointed John Jordan to head the Salt Lake City-San Francisco section, which included the route through the heart of Nevada. Jordan was charged with ensuring that aircraft, pilots, spare parts, and other resources were ready to support the operation. [17]

In spite of these impressive efforts, Praeger's inauguration took place a week late. On September 8, Randolph G. Page took off in a DH-4 biplane from Hazelhurst Field, New Jersey, on the first leg of the east-west route. The pilots relayed the four hundred pounds of mail between aircraft like the Pony Express of sixty years earlier. They reached Chicago the afternoon of that first day and Iowa City that evening. Planes could not fly at night, so the flyer waited until morning to take off for Cheyenne, 686 miles to the west. The route continued through Salt Lake City to Elko, Nevada, where the equipment was changed. The mail finally arrived in San Francisco on September 11, 1920. Undeniably, some had been disappointed; the postal service had planned a coast-to-coast trip of fewer than fifty-four hours, but the first flight had taken nearly eighty-three hours. Even so, the reporting tone

The first air mail delivery at Reno from Salt Lake City, September 11, 1920. The pilot was J. P. Woodward (*Nevada Historical Society*)

was positive. *Aerial Age Weekly,* an aviation booster periodical, summarized the event best: "September 8, 1920, will go down in history as the great day when the epochmaking event, the first trip of the transcontinental aerial mail, took place."[18]

Air mail continued. But not without difficulties. Pilots flying the route across Nevada encountered many problems related to climate, geography, and weather. The route between the Utah capital and Elko passed over the Great Salt Lake, swamp land, and alkali desert. A pilot's chances of avoiding a fatal crash landing were no better than 50 percent. For instance, on February 22, 1922, during an attempt to set a transcontinental airmail record, William E. Lewis crashed on this route and died instantly.[19] And merely surviving a crash was not enough. The Great Salt Lake does not freeze in the winter because of the salt content and can drop as low as 20 degrees Fahrenheit. A pilot who fell there would quickly suffer hypothermia and drown before he could be rescued or swim ashore. A landing in the sparsely settled deserts was tantamount to being marooned on an island. Unless rescue workers found a downed pilot within a few days his chances of survival were slim, and without location transmitters or radios, finding an aircraft or pilot was nearly impossible.[20]

In spite of constant difficulties with equipment and weather, the early airmail pilots in the West developed a safer and more effective operation than in the rest of the nation. During the period that the postal service ran the route, 1920-27, only seven pilots died in the western sector and none died after 1923. In contrast, thirty-six pilots and others associated with flying the mail died through 1927 in other

parts of the country. The transcontinental route became more routine and less hazardous as the 1920s progressed. The lone pilot dressed in a leather flight suit who sat in an open cockpit battling the elements to deliver the mail was romantic but ineffective. To increase efficiency, the postal service emphasized safety and reliability and expanded operations. Its leadership added immeasurably to flying operations. After the first fitful months of operation, daily transcontinental flights both westward and eastward operated with relative routineness.[21]

NEVADA AIR MAIL OPERATIONS

Leaders of other Nevada cities also wanted airports and connections to the rest of the nation. None was more vocal than those seeking to make Las Vegas the most successful city in the state. When the barnstorming "first airship" visited Las Vegas in 1920, the pilot, Lieutenant Randall Henderson, told the *Clark County Review* "that a mail route from Los Angeles east is likely to be established in the near future and that the course will run so as to make this point a landing station. " In October the Aero Club of California also reported that the air mail route might come through Las Vegas. The route at the time to San Francisco via Elko and Reno went "over the high Sierras . . . considered impractical during the winter because of the intense cold and deep snow which makes rescue almost impossible in case of a forced landing." The article continued, "Until the new field was put in at Las Vegas the only alternative considered was by way of Albuquerque and through Arizona." If Las Vegas had an air field, a route could have a stop there. Then, the newspaper concluded, the post office would add a depot and repair shop. These "would be among the many beneficial results."[22]

The Aero Club of California, based in southern California, promoted air travel through Las Vegas because that route would direct air mail and other commercial air travel through the Los Angeles area instead of San Francisco. While strongly complementing the Las Vegas efforts, Los Angeles leaders identified Las Vegas's good fortune as part of their own. In 1921 George B. Harrison, the secretary of the Aero Club of California, wrote to the editor of the *Clark County Review*:

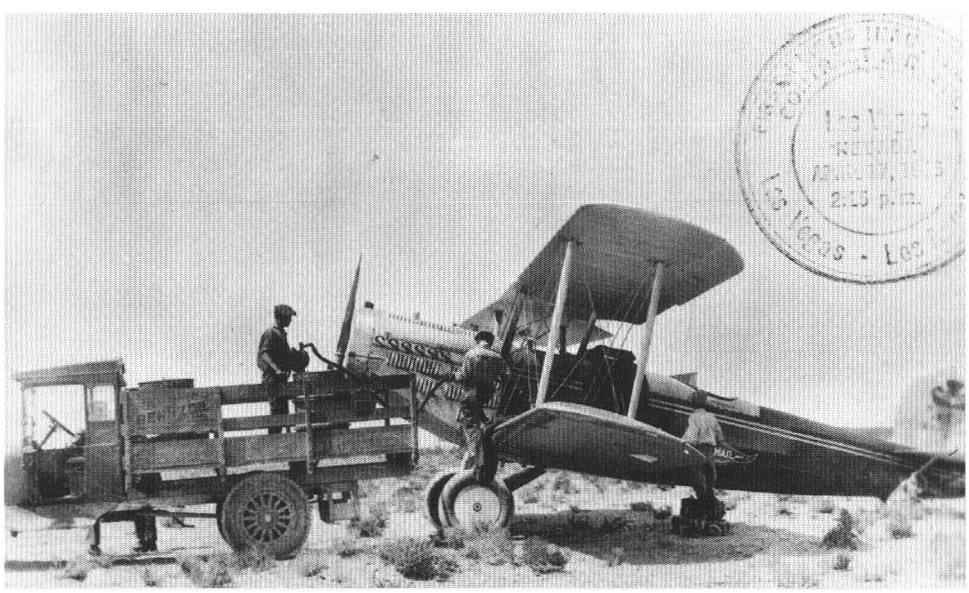
> We wish to commend to you and to other business men of Las Vegas the activity and interest shown by Mr. Bob Hausler in relation to flying in your vicinity and flying routes in Nevada. What we do at this time is important because in the next few years there will be a very rapid advance in aerial transportation. Communities may have large air terminals or may be passed up entirely because they are not prepared. This is just as important to Las Vegas as to Los Angeles or San Francisco for aviation will bring Nevada and Arizona towns as close to other commercial centers as the railroad now connects New York and Washington.[23]

A week later Harrison sent a letter to Hausler that showed why Los Angeles and the Aero Club of California were so interested in the Las Vegas airfield. According to Harrison, Los Angeles had refused to give Praeger everything demanded by

the postal service. Praeger was "reported to have said that he would never allow the mail to come into Los Angeles. It is better, therefore, for you to take this up on its merit, as a feasible cutoff, and this is an excellent opportunity for you to get Southern Nevada working for it." Harrison added that pilots wanted the southern route and did not want to fly over the Sierra. Hausler "enlisted the cooperation of the Chamber of Commerce and should have the encouragement and assistance of the entire community in taking whatever steps may be necessary in furtherance of this project."[24]

Hausler also attended the annual meeting of the Aero Club of Southern California. He came back designated the director of landing fields in Nevada and the official representative of the club, with headquarters in Las Vegas. The *Clark County Review* hoped army and mail planes would use the local landing field along with the Pacific Standard Airplane and Supply Company, the Mercury Aviation Company, the Bluebird Air Lines Corporation, and several other companies. The Pacific Standard company, incidentally, was flying over Death Valley taking aerial photographs for eastern magazines.[25]

To assist the city in acquiring the air mail route, the Rockwell brothers of Las Vegas donated the land for an air strip. They had originally objected to their land being used for the airport because they thought the property had greater value than the amount offered. The Chamber of Commerce set up a committee to raise funds to clear and equip the field. The city also enticed Western Air Express, Inc., to use the field, offering free rent for one year. The airline company agreed to build



Fueling the plane for the first air mail flight from Las Vegas to Los Angeles, Rockwell Field, April 17, 1926 (*Nevada Historical Society*)

a hangar. After explaining these details, a writer for the *Clark County Review* concluded:

> The value of the air mail to Las Vegas cannot be overestimated, aside from the convenience of the service, the inauguration of this new route will bring a vast amount of publicity for this city which could not be purchased at any price. It is in the interest of every business man of this city that he avail himself of the new means of communication at every opportunity.

The writer then bragged, "Las Vegas will be the only regular intermediate stop on the new commercial airway, which will place Las Vegas importantly and definitely on the air map of the country."[26]

Las Vegas business leaders also asked surrounding communities to establish landing fields to support air transport. Early airplanes had short flying ranges and required emergency landing fields. It was not enough for Las Vegas to have a landing field; as it pushed to be "the flying center of Nevada," it needed to promote other communities. Hausler wrote to the Chamber of Commerce in Beaver, Utah, in 1921 and asked them to build a landing field, explaining, "Do you realize the publicity Beaver City will receive when airplanes can land there and take on gas and oil?" He added, that all that was needed for a landing field was a flat area near town. But it was necessary that cities provide the landing fields.[27]

This encouragement unleashed a torrent of intercommunity rivalry in Nevada and surrounding states throughout the early 1920s. For instance, Caliente and Pioche, as well as Ely were all interested in being included on the hoped-for southern transcontinental route and threatened to nose Las Vegas out. According to Colonel Swen Laetsew of Los Angeles, "It is up to Las Vegas to prepare the airplane mail route by having a landing field and by building a hangar. It is impossible to consider any city as a landing place that does not offer adequate facilities." Soon Las Vegas built a modern landing field, and other southwestern communities quickly followed. Finally, in 1926 the postal service announced mail delivery from Salt Lake City to Los Angeles with Las Vegas as a stopping point.[28]

PASSENGERS AND AIRLINES

On the first Los Angeles-Salt Lake City flight via Las Vegas, Ben F. Redman, chairman of the Aviation Committee of the Salt Lake Chamber of Commerce and a major stockholder in Western Air Express, used all his influence in the company to secure for himself a seat as a passenger. Redman made that first airline reservation with a $20 check as a deposit on the $90 one-way ticket. Another Salt Lake City resident, John A. Tomlinson, accompanied Redman on the flight. Outfitted in coveralls, leather helmets, goggles, and parachutes, they climbed into the open compartment atop a bag of mail on a Douglas M-2 biplane behind pilot Charles N. "Jimmy" James. They received box lunches and portable toilet facilities—a tin can.

The first terminal building and hangar at the old Reno airport, on the present site of the Washoe County Golf Course, c. 1928 (*Nevada Historical Society*)

The aircraft took off at 9:30 A. M.. and after a short stop at Las Vegas arrived by 5:30 P. M. at Los Angeles.[29]

The existence of the Las Vegas route for air mail and passengers created important new possibilities for aviation in the West. Charles R. Colt of Las Vegas vowed to operate a daily passenger service throughout Nevada. "Such service would be a great boon to lawyers, legislators, and business men who have transactions with Tonopah, Carson City and Reno firms," he commented, and "it is anticipated that once started it will be generously patronized."[30] Colt was unsuccessful; his venture collapsed in a few months. But others succeeded. By July 1927 a Las Vegas newspaper pointed out that more than 250 airplanes had landed at the Las Vegas field in addition to the Western Air Express airmail planes. These were often planes manufactured on the West Coast and shipped to purchasers in the eastern United States.[31]

Several airlines established routes in Nevada. J. L. Maddux, founder of Maddux Air Lines in 1928 bragged on providing "The ability to carry on urgent business negotiations . . . whether personal or parcel express" at only a slight increase in cost. His company's flights from the West Coast to the east transited Nevada for a time, but Maddux Air merged with Western Air Express in 1929.[32]

Nevada Air Lines lasted longer and was more important to the regional air transportation system. Offering daily flights from Los Angeles, Las Vegas, and Reno, the line assured its passengers that it operated on time, offered luxury at an affordable price, and "an abundance of scenic grandeur combined with safety and ideal flying conditions."

From Grand Central Terminal, Los Angeles, each morning on schedule Nevada Airlines planes quickly climb north across the beautiful Sierra Madre mountains. Mt. Lowe and Mt. Wilson with their observatories soon fade into the blue haze of the Pacific, and the vast expanse of the great Mojave Desert spreads like a gorgeous oriental rug as far as the eye can reach. From the cabin of the Nevada Airlines plane one is afforded an opportunity to appreciate in comfort the alluring beauties of the desert.

Cruising at 135 miles per hour the plane soon crosses the Mojave, and snow-mantled peaks of the high Sierra Nevadas loom majestically on the horizon ahead. Below are the extinct craters of many volcanoes, and black lava flows stretch far out onto the desert sands where they are seen today just as they cooled and hardened thousands perhaps millions of years ago. Traveling level with the tops of highest peaks the plane enters the Owens Valley with Mt. Whitney and Death Valley, the highest and lowest points in the United States on either side . . . .

Almost at the moment of entering Nevada, its romantic history and picturesque frontier days are recalled as the deserted mining camps of Bodie and Virginia City are pointed out nestling in the rolling hills from whose honeycombed depths have been taken fabulous riches.[33]

Varney Air Lines, established by Walter T. Varney in 1926, operated for years over some of the roughest territory in the state. Varney had been a flyer since 1916 and had already gone bankrupt with a flying school in San Mateo, California, and an air-taxi service in San Francisco. But this time it was different. He opened an air mail route between Elko, Nevada, and Pasco, Washington, extending the air mail to the Pacific Northwest. With his contract with the postal service, Varney built a successful base and expanded into passenger flying in May 1930. Through a series of complex mergers, Varney Air Transport became part of United Air Lines on July 1, 1931, while the new firm maintained its essential route structure in the region. United used the Varney name during the first years but dropped it after 1934. The pioneering company became a footnote in the history of the region. After Varney's demise, United Air Lines provided a feeder service from Nevada to other parts of the route structure in the West throughout the 1930s.[34]

In the early years, airplanes were mostly used for sport and tourism. Flights over the Silver State were considered picturesque although desolate. According to a United Press correspondent, "Its very bleakness makes it extremely picturesque and scenic. Many passengers make the trip just to see this region from the air as railways, highways, and homesteaders have never been able to penetrate into the forbidding vastness of desert, plateau, and mountain." In fact, Boeing Air Transport reported that it had picked up unscheduled passengers in Reno in 1928 who were "not so much" interested in the speed but in the scenery. A promotion for Nevada Air called the route from Las Vegas to Los Angeles "Americas's most scenic airline." While Switzerland may have her majestic snowcapped mountains, " these were nothing compared to "Death Valley or craters of extinct volcanoes." The Reno paper encouraged "the people of Nevada" to "show their appreciation by patronizing the air lines in their travels. A delightful surprise awaits them."[35]

In 1933 more than 200,000 visitors visited Las Vegas, principally to see Hoover

Dam construction. Similar numbers came to other parts of the state, and airplanes provided a modest but lucrative percentage of the transportation needed to support this travel. For example, businessmen from California flew to Reno to go fishing at Pyramid Lake, and Nevada's liberal marriage and divorce laws attracted people to the amenities of Reno. The Boeing newsletter noted that most Reno-bound passengers in July 1928 were going for marriage and suggested making Cupid the airline's insignia. There were also "divorce specials" from Los Angeles to Reno, made attractive by the state's requirement of only three month residency to qualify for divorce under Nevada's lenient divorce law (reduced to six week residency in 1931).[36]

Other, less obvious airplane uses also gained acceptance. Some enterprising industrialists used them to prospect for minerals. The *Nevada Mining Record* boasted that a miner could have breakfast in Los Angeles and then be in Nevada to look for precious metals. This was a "luxurious departure from the time honored methods of the men who blazed the first trail across the burning deserts of Southern Nevada." Abandoning burros, pack mules, stage coaches, and even cars, "the new Argonaut spurns the earth and is wafted to his destination with the thunder of whirlwind motors that cleave the thin air with the swiftness of the eagle." Roscoe Turner laid out an airport at Placeritos, between Rosebud and Scossa, to help the American Milling and Mining Company develop the mining area in Scossa.[37]

DEVELOPMENT OF EARLY AIRFIELDS

Communities built airfields and improved them to encourage air mail and passenger transportation. Newspapers, business leaders, and city officials especially promoted the efforts. For example, once the new landing strip was built in Las Vegas in the early 1920s, the *Clark County Review* announced plans to establish an aviation club in Las Vegas. This club wanted to purchase two airplanes, build a hanger, and put a gasoline station at the field. With the planes, the club planned to offer "passenger service between Las Vegas and Salt Lake City, Los Angeles, Tonopah, Goldfield, Reno, [and] Carson City." Through these efforts, the editor enthused, "it is considered certain that Las Vegas will become the aviation base of the state, on account of the superior flying conditions existing here. With the rapid advancement of aviation there is nothing that can compete with the airplane in the transportation business and the success of the venture for the local organization seems assured."[38] This organization, according to the paper, "would mean as much to the community as to those directly interested in aviation."[39] After two weeks the club proclaimed that it would teach flying and provide all aspects of commercial aviation. The newspaper heroically concluded, "The aeroplane is forging its way to the front."[40]

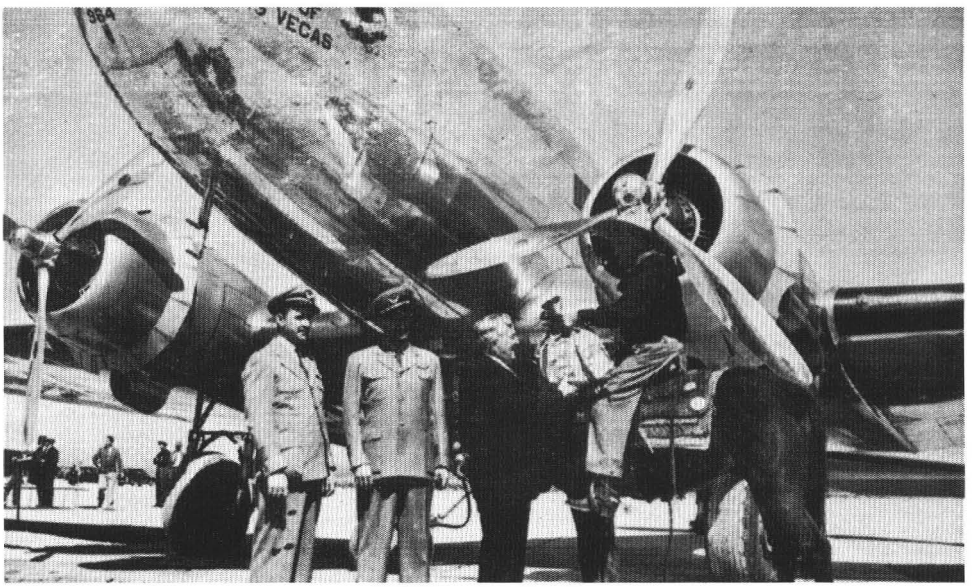
Despite glowing airline promotional literature and the efforts of Nevada communities, flying in the state was primitive until the 1930s. Many flyers complained that the airfields were not up to the standards of other parts of the

Reno Airport in the winter of 1929-30 (*Nevada Historical Society*)

country, and this disturbed aviation boosters in the state. One military pilot criticized the airfield at Reno, saying it was "dangerously small for a Liberty engined ship. It had a line of trees along the Northern end, an electric trolley line on the East side and an irrigation ditch on the South and West boundaries." Pilots continued to have trouble with this field until the city replaced it in the 1930s.[41]

Persistent fog at Elko made takeoffs and landings difficult throughout the 1920s. Rudimentary navigational aids, lights, and other traffic control equipment sometimes even compounded the difficulties. In 1927 an airmail pilot waited until there was "moonshine" to fly by before starting to Reno from Salt Lake City. It was a cool night, so when the plane reached Elko "it was necessary to remove the frozen pilot from the cockpit and thaw him out before the trip could be continued." Two years later, in January 1929, a plane crashed in the mountains near Elko. After thirty-eight hours the pilot and the two passengers were rescued. The passengers were unhurt and took a train to Salt Lake City, but the pilot had suffered a concussion. The terrain was so rough it was impossible to recover the plane until the spring.[42]

It took the intervention of the federal government during the New Deal to improve these airfields. Communities applied through programs such as the Works Project Administration (WPA) for federal funds to help in the construction of airports. The agencies set strict rules that not all cities could or would comply with, but those that did so found they became aviation centers. Soon most communities pursued federal monies for airport improvement. The WPA always asked community leaders to acquire a site for the airports that was acceptable to



Senator Patrick McCarran hands the air mail delivery to a "Pony Express" rider during the dedication of McCarran Field, Las Vegas, 1941 (*Nevada Historical Society*)

the federal government. All air traffic had to have equal access to the field. One airline, for example, could not have exclusive use. City councils passed resolutions emphasizing these points as they requested federal funds. As with other WPA efforts, a sponsor—frequently a city or county government—had to match the federal funds. In so doing, the national government hoped to stretch its money and require local governments to support relief programs that would provide construction jobs during the Depression. The WPA, for example, paid for the lighting at the Elko airport. The mayor described the work there as one of the "finest" WPA projects in the state. An Elko newspaper also reported in 1938 that Winnemucca would get an airport, and not long after that the WPA became involved in projects to improve airports at Reno, Carson City, Tonopah, Las Vegas, Boulder City, Pioche, and Ely.[43] Other attempts to get money for Nevada airports were not as successful until the beginning of World War II. In the 1930s, the airports were not considered necessary for military operations. That changed in late 1941.

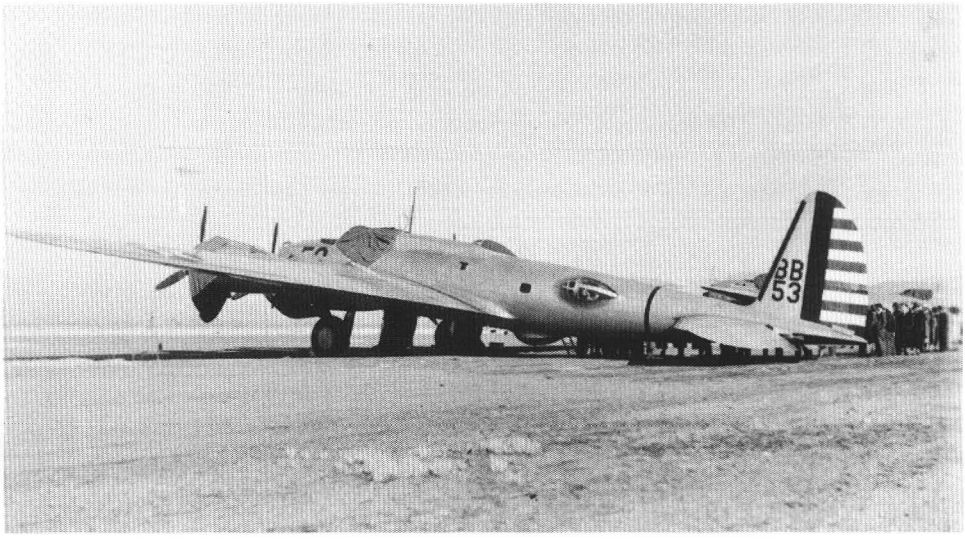
MILITARY AVIATION AND WORLD WAR II

The process of expanding western military air bases in anticipation of war officially began in 1935 when the United States Congress passed the Wilson-Wilcox Bill (Public Law 263). During the World War II years, the government spent a total of $3.2 billion on air installations in the nation. It seemed to establish a base at nearly every major crossroads. While many were on the West Coast, the military created additional bases in parts of the West such as Nevada for training,

transcontinental movement, resupply, and repair depots.[44]

During the summer of 1940 the Civil Aeronautics Authority (CAA), put $340,000 toward the purchase of the old Western Air Express landing field outside Las Vegas. The CAA developed it into a commercial field and a military installation. Along with investments from the local business community, this upgrade enhanced the attractiveness of the community for a permanent military installation. The Army Air Forces also invested $25 million to build hangars, infrastructure, and two new runways. General H.H. (Hap) Arnold, commanding general of the Army Air Forces, ordered the base to be used for training and logistics. The airfield at Las Vegas, later renamed Nellis Air Force Base, became operational in 1942. The immense federal reserve surrounding it became a bombing and gunnery training range. The vast open territory, unique landscape, and proximity to other military facilities all contributed to the creation and maintenance over the years of this major training facility.[45]

Nellis, of course, survived the war, as did forty-two other installations in the region, including Reno's military field. Decisions as to the future of each of these installations during the middle and late 1940s were based on strategic considerations, economic factors, and political necessity.[46] That was not true for two other army fields in Nevada created during World War II. In 1942 the War Department established an Army Air Forces field (named Stead Air Force Base after World War II), as a site for training radio operators and navigators for bombardment crews. A small base at Tonopah also served as a transit point throughout the war. Both installations were all but shut down by 1946 (left with only a skeleton crew) in the postwar demobilization.



An Army Air Forces B-17 Flying Fortress on tour in Nevada (*Nevada Historical Society*)

Many other bases did not survive the war. For example, the Second Air Force started training heavy bomber crews in the American West in January 1942, initially employing only four installations for this purpose, three in Oregon and Washington and a fourth at the Salt Lake City Airport. When Major General Robert Olds took command of the Second Air Force in May 1942, he asked for responsibility for training all bomber crews, and expanded training sites in the region. To fulfill this training requirement, the Second Air force soon activated additional airfields near several western cities including Wendover, Utah, on the Utah-Nevada border. This expansion sought the capacity to train 273 bomb groups for the war effort.

Olds's expanded training program involved specializing certain segments of the course in a two-phase program, each of six weeks' duration. The first phase was at bases in Arizona, Idaho, Washington, and Oregon, with the second part taking place in Utah and Nevada. In May 1943 this two-phase program became three phases of four weeks each, with basic bomber training being conducted in Idaho, Washington, and Oregon; the second phase was in Utah and Nevada; and the remainder at bases on the Great Plains.[47] The program took a gradual sweep from west to east across the nation. Most bomb units then went to Europe. The result was constant movement to and from military bases throughout the West. Not only did this training approach require many instructional locations, but support facilities were saturated with aircraft flying about the region.[48]

Military leaders wanted to build bases in Las Vegas and other parts of Nevada because they feared a Japanese attack on the West Coast. The Japanese navy had already struck 6,000 miles east of its traditional sphere of operations and crippled the American fleet in Hawaii. Would it extend that sphere? No one knew in the early days of the war that the Japanese could not extend such power, in spite of what their desires might have been. While some paranoia did surface in this quest for security, the military precautions were generally reasonable; the expansion of air fields on the coast to guard against attack was a prudent move.

As the situation stabilized later in the war, these same coastal bases became good jumping off points for moving units to the Pacific. Several installations sprang up on the West Coast during the first months of 1942. On December 9, 1941, General Hap Arnold directed that all aircraft west of the Rocky Mountains be dispersed so that a single attack could not destroy significant military capability. In such an environment, decisions to locate training and other support facilities for the Army Air Forces to inland areas were reasonable. The greater security of bases located in the western interior ensured that enemy attack would not impede training efforts. The open spaces available in the West also made it attractive for training operations. Moreover, the weather in the region provided excellent flying conditions most of the year, enabling more efficient completion of training schedules than was possible in most other parts of the country.[49]

The activities of western air bases such as Nellis in World War II were significant. Whether a defense site on the coast or a training or logistics facility,

most often located inland, the distribution of these airdromes changed the makeup and structure of the region. They also provided an economic boost. They brought social transformation and closer ties to the national economy and culture than ever before. With airplanes, a military aviator could leave from California in the early morning and be in the nation's capital for a meeting and be back home by late night. Unprecedented opportunity for movement was manifested in this system. It tied the nation together in ways that became apparent only later.[51]

Finally, there was a long-standing relationship between military aviation leaders and western community leaders. In part this was the result of city and regional fathers seeking government funds that would benefit their constituencies. But there was also an air-mindedness present among many westerners that did not appear elsewhere. Nevada's political master Patrick A. McCarran epitomized it as much as anyone in the region. An able and powerful exponent of aviation in the West before and during World War II, he sponsored the 1938 Civil Aeronautics Act that reordered the nation's aviation business. And he was a driving force behind several Nevada air bases in the early phase of the war.

McCarran also developed a far-ranging plan for the region which he called "the blueprint for a new frontier. " A central point of it was the fostering of air transportation. "Huge cargo planes will become commonplace, and millions of tons of cargo will move by air," he wrote to Utah's governor Herbert Maw in 1943. He added, "The skies will be filled with cargo vessels, plying the true course through that greatest sea of all—the Aerial Ocean . . . . The inland regions of the west will not be inland, so to speak, because every airline and every airport facility brings these inland regions to the coast." McCarran glimpsed aviation's possibilities for the West in the 1930s. He saw much of it fulfilled during the war and expected even more in the postwar environment.[52]

McCarran and others who supported military and civilian aviation believed that it placed modern technology in the service of traditional values. When aircraft took off on military purposes—from transporting people and cargo to bombing and strafing an enemy—it represented use of modern America's most recent technology to defend its most long-standing and cherished principle: national sovereignty. At the same time, development of air power was an avenue that allowed defense of traditional institutions at less cost and with less chance of the militarism that they saw in Europe. In this regard, the twin American aversions to large standing armies and hefty defense expenditures came together to prompt support of military aviation.

C. Vann Woodward has suggested that Americans have often "disavowed the engines and instruments of the power they did not need and proclaimed their innocence for not using them, while at the same time they passed judgment upon other nations for incurring the guilt inevitably associated with power."[53] Fostering military aviation was a means of continuing this process by enabling the nation to maintain small armies and large air force components for defense. Hap Arnold recollected that support for military aviation was for most Americans not an

advocacy of war and massive destruction but "the death knell for weapons. To hell with all armament; to hell with everything to do with war!"[53]

These were not exclusively western nor Nevadan arguments, but residents of the area placed their own unique twists on them. Wrapped up in the development of air power was a very western set of values that made it attractive. If the West were perceived to breed self-reliance and other virtues, then military aviation cateredto all of these preconceptions. The lone fighter pilot dueling an enemy is about as individual as one can get despite the large support base on the ground making that dogfight possible. The air mail pilots, it can be argued, had more in common with the Pony Express riders of seventy-five years earlier than many realize. The coordination and cooperation of bomber crews recalled the cooperative ventures of the frontier. In addition, flight represented the triumph of humanity over its environment—a frontier mind-set—as well as over the modern machinery that threatened to dictate to Americans their life-styles. John William Ward, in analyzing the significance of Charles Lindbergh's 1927 solo Atlantic crossing, makes a vital point that is applicable to western military aviation. The ability to fly celebrated "the complex institutions which made modern society possible," and it could be affirmed that the technology and organization then emerging reaffirmed the western "escape from institutions, from forms of society, and from limitations put upon the free individual."[55] Although these virtues may have lived more in perception than reality, they may have been important to the West's support of military aviation.

There was perhaps one final area in this relationship. Twentieth-century historians have long been aware of the link between Far West urbanization and the war effort of the 1940s and after.[56] Nevada and the entire American West, as the most urban part of the nation, with more than 75 percent of its population living in communities, was more attuned to this connection than other regions. This was an important ingredient of its support for military aviation. Even if western cities "did not promote the use of weapons, they certainly encouraged stockpiling them, and stood ready to benefit from the necessities of war." Roger W. Lotchin has established this for San Francisco, and studies of other western cities and the air bases created near them have verified it. In the case of Las Vegas, for instance, the city fathers courted the Army Air Forces and manipulated the political process to secure creation of the base. They even acquired the land and offered it to the Army.[57]

CONCLUSION

The development of air routes, infrastructure, and travel in Nevada began between 1910 and 1920. In that decade developments in aviation technology combined with popular conceptions to spark an interest in aviation and air-mindedness in the state. Air racers, barnstormers, and other itinerant flyers performed a variety of services from daredevil tricks to rides for neophytes.

Airlines and local community leaders capitalized on them in the 1920s, forming partnerships that led to the development of the present system of air routes and structures in the region. By the early 1930s a nascent air system and improved aeronautical technology allowed rapid and sustained expansion of aviation in the region.

The early air mail and passenger transportation systems were not, however, sufficient to support a change in perspectives on flight in the state. That came only with World War II. By the end of the war, Nevada was an important component of the nation's military aviation capability. Its major air base, Nellis, was critical to the welfare of military aviation and would continue to be, a circumstance that brought aviation a vitality in the state that might not otherwise have been present. There was no other part of the country that could have provided the types of sites needed both for pilot training and for aircraft and weapons testing.

Local influences were also present in less tangible form among those involved in military aeronautics. The concerns of westerners, impeded by vast spaces and the problems of long-distance transportation, created a greater air-mindedness. Pat McCarran is a good example of the western mind-set. During this era, flight became a common means of transportation, and the resulting acculturation was significant and brought a whole generation of Americans to the expectation of rapid transit throughout the nation. Military flyers, especially those of the 1930s and 1940s, who saw technology bring such goals to realization, thought nothing of traveling by air all over the nation in a day. They carried that mentality over to the postwar environment when commercial flight from the East to West coast in the space of a couple of days for business or pleasure was not unusual. A generation earlier it would have been dismissed as pure lunacy.

This essay represents a modest beginning to efforts to explore themes present in regional aeronautical development. While the story is broader than any particular state, larger even than the contribution of any one nation, the regional construct is a useful lens through which to analyze the development of aviation and how it affected and was affected by one part of the country. Nevada's contribution to aviation was significant in the development of the nation. In that sense, aviation in the state may well have represented the "blueprint for a new frontier" of transportation in the twentieth century.

NOTES

[1]This quotation is from the plan Senator Patrick A. McCarran developed for fostering aviation in the American West. See Patrick A. McCarran to Governor Herbert Maw, 9 April 1943, containing the "Blueprint for a New Frontier, " in Patrick A. McCarran Papers, Nevada Historical Society, Reno.
[2]See Roger D. Launius and Jessie L. Embry, "The 1910 Los Angeles Airshow: The Beginning of Air Awareness in the West," *Southern California Quarterly,* 77 (1996), 329-46.
[3]"Aero Artist to Pass Las Vegas," *Clark County Review* (Las Vegas) (25 March 1916), p. 1; "Las Vegas Station Cross-continent Air Flight," *ibid.* (1 April 1916), p. 1; "Says Flight Is Not Abandoned," *ibid.* (22 April 1916), p. 1.
[4]Eugene P. Moehring, *Resort City in the Sunbelt: Las Vegas, 1930-1970* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1989), 13.
[5]*Air Service News Letter* (Washington, D. C.) (February 1919), p. 5; (10 June 1920), p. 16;(19 June 1924), p. 22;(13 August 1920), p. 16; (21 September 1920), p. 8.
[6]Captain Burdette S. Wright, Airways Section, Army Air Service, "Progress Report, May 1922," USAF Historical Research Center, Air University, Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama; *Air Service News Letter* (12 June 1922), p. 11; (26 July 1925), pp. 2-3; (10 August 1922), pp. 15-16; (16 August 1922), pp. 3-4; (6 September 1922), p. 6; (13 September 1922), p. 3; (27 September 1922), pp. 6-8; *Annual Report of the Chief of the Air Service* (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1925), p. 71.
[7]Air Service, "Report on First Transcontinental Reliability and Endurance Test," in *Air Service Information Circular* (Heavier-than-Air), 1 (5 February 1920), preface; "Coastal and Trans Continental Flights," *U.S. Air Service,* 2 (September 1919), 20-22; *Aircraft Year Book* (New York: Manufacturers Aircraft Association, 1919), 336, 343; *Aircraft Year Book* (New York: Manufacturers Aircraft Association, 1920), pp 269-70; *Air Service News Letter* (23 September 1919), p. 2; (8 October 1919), pp. 2-4; (18 October 1919). pp. 1-3; (31 October 1919), pp. 1-4; (7 November 1919), pp. 2-4; (15 November l919), pp. 1-2; (18 November 1919), pp. 9-12; (25 November 1919), pp. 14-15; (13 December 1919), p. 1; First Lieutenant Belvin W. Maynard, "Most Dramatic Incident in My Flight," *U.S. Air Service,* 2 (November 1919), 26; Ray L. Bowers, "The Transcontinental Reliability Test: Aviation After World War I," (M.A. thesis, University of Wisconsin, 1960; Mauer Mauer, *Aviation in the U. S. Army, 1919-1939* (Washington, D. C.: Office of Air Force History, 1987), 29-35.
[8]"Flight Plans Are Completed," *Clark County Review,* (8 June 1919), p. 1.
[9]*Ibid.*
[10]Charles Gilbert Reinhardt, "Gypsying the Jennies," *Saturday Evening Post,* (9 January 1926). 26; Ruth M. Reinhold, *Sky Pioneering: Arizona in Aviation History* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1982), 53-55; John W. Underwood, *The Stinsons: The Exciting Chronicle of a Flying Family and the Planes that Enhanced Their Fame* (Glendale, Calif.: Heritage Press, 1969); Claudia M. Oakes, *United States Women in Aviation through World War I* (Smithsonian Institution Press, 1978), 30-35; Martin Caidin, *Barnstorming* (New York: Duell, Sloan, and Pearce, 1965); K. C. Tessendorf, *Barnstormers and Daredevils* (New York: Atheneum, 1988).
[11]Bill Rhode, *Bailing Wire, Chewing Gum, and Guts: The Story of the Gates Flying Circus* (Port Washington, NY: Kennekat Press, 1970), 151-52.
[12]"First Airship to Visit Here," *Clark County Review,* (8 May 1920), p. 1.
[13]*Flying,* 5 (March 1916), 53-59, 62-63; *Annual Report of the Postmaster General, 1916* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1917), 46; *Congressional Record* (Washington, DC), 65th Cong., 2d Sess.(13 May 1918), p. 643; *Aviation,* 4 (15 April 1918), 389; "Report on Actions Taken by the Flying Branch in Regard to the Aerial Postal Route," 11 April 1918, Army Air Force Central Decimal Files 311.125, Records of the Army Air Force, Record Group 18, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C.; *Air Service Journal,* 2 (23 May 1918), 727-43.
[14]The air mail has been discussed in several fine books. The best of these is William M. Leary, *Aerial Pioneers: The U.S. Air Mail Service, 1918-1927* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1985). See also Roger E. Bilstein, *Flight Patterns: Trends of Aeronautical Development in the United States, 1918-1929 (Athens:* University of Georgia Press, 1983), 29-53.
[15]See Post Office Department, "Amount Expended for Air Mail Service by Fiscal Years," 17 September 1924, Records of the House of Representatives, Select Committee of Inquiry into Operations of U.S.

Air Service, Record Group 233, National Archives and Records Service, Washington, D.C., hereinafter referred to as National Archives.

[16]U.S. House of Representatives, Subcommittee of the Committee on Post Office and Post Roads, *Hearings: Claims for the Construction of Hangars and Maintenance of Flying Fields, Airmail Service,* 67th Cong., 4th Sess. (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1923), 9-27.

[17]Otto Praeger to C. A. Parker, 23 June 1920, Personnel Files, Howard M. Garney, Division of Air Mail Service, Records of Post Office Department, Record Group 28, National Archives.

[18]*Aerial Age Weekly, 12* (13 September 1920), 5.

[19]*New York Times,* (23 February 1926), (24 February 1921); Otto Praeger to Albert Sidney Burleson, (24 February 1921), Air Mail Service, General Classified Records, 1918-1925, Record Group 28, National Archives.

[20]A.K. Lobeck, *Airways of America: Guidebook No. 1 (New* York: Columbia University, The Geographical Press, 1930), 108-15; William M. Leary, ed. *Pilots' Directions* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1990), 21-27.

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[22]"First Airship to Visit Here," *Clark County Review,* (8 May 1920), p. 1; "May Route Air Mail Via Vegas," *ibid.,* (23 October 1920), p. 1.

[23]Quoted in "Aero Club Commends Work of Bob Hausler in Las Vegas Field," *Clark County Review* (5 February 1921), p. 1.

[24]"Air Mail May Come This Way," *Clark County Review* (12 February 1921), p. 1.

[25]"Hausler Busy on Air Routes," *Clark County Review* (5 March 1921), p. 1.

[26]"Arrangements Are Completed for Air Service," *Clark County Review* (2 April 1926), p. 1.

[27]"Aviation Aided by New Fields," (23 April 1921), p. 1; "Boosting New Flying Route," *ibid.* (22 December 1922), p. 5.

[28]"Hangar Will Assure Action," *Clark County Review* (30 December 1921), p. 1; "Boosting New Flying Route," *ibid.* (22 December 1922), p. 5.

[29]"Plane Conveys Human Freight," *Salt Lake Tribune,* (24 May 1926); Robert J. Serling, *The Only Way to Fly: The Story of Western Airlines, America's Senior Air Carrier* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1976); Wain Sutton, ed., *Utah: A Centennial History* (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Co., 1949), 15-16.

[30]"Reno-Vegas Air Route Is Certain," *Clark County Review* (27 August 1928), p. 1.

[31]"Growth of Aviation," *Clark County Review* (26 July 1927), p. 2.

[32]"Maddux Air Lines: California, Mexico and the Southwest" (Los Angeles: Maddux Airlines, 1929), brochure in Roscoe Turner Papers, American Heritage Center, University of Wyoming, Laramie.

[33]"Nevada Airlines: World's Fastest Airline" (Los Angeles: Nevada Airlines, 1929), brochure in Roscoe Turner Papers.

[34]Frank Taylor, *High Horizons: Daredevil Flying Postmen to Modern Magic—The United Air Lines Story* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1951), 46-47, 105, 110-12, 194; Arthur A. Hart, *Wings Over Idaho: An Aviation History* (Boise: Historic Boise, Inc., 1991), 71; Henry Ladd Smith, *Airways: The History of Commercial Aviation in the United States,* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1942), 108-9.

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[36]*Boeing Air Transport, Inc, Weekly Newsletter* 31 (19 May 1928), p. 2; 36 (7 July 1928), p. 1; *Los Angeles Record* (1 5 May 1929), copy in Roscoe Turner Papers; John M. Findlay, *People of Chance: Gambling in American Society from Jamestown to Las Vegas* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 115; Earl Pomeroy, *In Search of the Golden West: The Tourist in Western America* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1957), 18-88; Russell R. Elliott, *History of Nevada* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1973), 279-80.

[37]*Nevada Mining Record* (Reno) (4 May 1929), "Leasers Develop Ore for 1,000 Foot New Vein, Scossa," and "American Milling Co. Plans Completion of Custom Mill, July 15," *Nevada Mining Journal* (5 June 1933), copies in Roscoe Turner Papers.

[38]"Aviation Club Now Planned," *Clark County Review* (12 March 1921), p. 1.

[39]"Aviation Club Meeting Held," *Clark County Review* (19 March 1921), p. 1.

[40]"Aviation Club Sees Success," *Clark County Review* (2 April 1921), p. 1.
[41]"Lt. Col. William V. (Bill) Morgan," *Air Mail Pioneers News* (September, October, November, December, 1974), Merrill K. Riddick File, American Heritage Center; "Planes Miss Field; Wander 4 Hours "Mail Plane Out of Gas; Crash Results," *Clark County Review* (15 July 1927). p. 1.
[42]*Boeing Air Transport, Inc., Weekly Newsletter,* 9 (10 December 1927), p. 1; "Stirring Tale of Rescue of Snowbound Air Party Is Told," *Clark County Review* (25 January 1929), p. 1.
[43]*Elko Free Press* (24 March 1938), p. 1; (2 December 1938), p. 4.
[44]*Army Air Forces Statistical Digest* (1945), 313, USAF Historical Research Center; Robert G. Miller, *USAF Bases* (Washington, D.C.: Office of Air Force History, 1989).
[45]Portions of this story are told in Elliott, *History of Nevada,* 312-13; Moehring, *Resort City in the Sunbelt,* 31-33; Roger D. Launius, "Home on the Range: The United States Air Force Range in Utah, a Unique Military Resource, 1941-1991," *Utah Historical Quarterly,* 59 (Fall 1991), 332-60.
[46]State and local business and political leaders played key roles in this process. This was best seen in the efforts of Coloradans to ensure that Peterson and Lowry fields remained operational. But strategic priorities were also central. For instance, Mountain Home Air Force Base remained operational because it was a logical place to station long-range bombers from the Strategic Air Command for attack over the pole into the Soviet Union.
[47]Wesley Frank Craven and James L. Cate, eds., *The Army Air Forces in World War II,* 7 vols. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948-1956), VI:601; "Brief History of Wendover Air Force Base, 1940-1956, " USAF Historical Division (July 1957), 6, typescript located in Ogden Air Logistics Center Office of History, Hill Air Force Base, Utah.
[48]Craven and Cate, eds., *Army Air Forces in World War II,* VI:154-56.
[49]Minutes of Army Air Forces Staff Meeting, 9 December 1941; memo of Colonel E.P. Sorenson, Assistant Chief of Air Forces, to Chief of Air Forces, 13 December 1944, both in USAF Historical Research Center.
[50]On the economic benefits of World War II in the West, see Gerald D. Nash, *The American West Transformed: The Impact of the Second World War* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985); Elliott, *History of Nevada,* 312-15; Leonard E Goodall, "Phoenix: Reformers at Work," in *Urban Politics in the Southwest,* Leonard E. Goodall, ed. (Tempe: Arizona State University Press, 1967), 113-16; Bradford Luckingham, *Phoenix: The History of a Southwestern Metropolis* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1989), 144-47; James L. Clayton, "An Unhallowed Gathering: The Impact of Defense Spending on Utah's Population Growth, 1940-1964," *Utah Historical Quarterly,* 34 (Summer 1966), 224-42; Leonard J. Arrington, *The Changing Economic Structure of the Mountain West, 1850-1950* (Logan: Utah State University Press, 1963); Ralph Roske, *Las Vegas: A Desert Paradise* (Tulsa, Continental Heritage Press, 1986); Moehring, *Resort City in the Sunbelt,* 20-44; Eugene P. Moehring, "Las Vegas and the Second World War," *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly* 29 (Spring 1986), 1-30.
[51]This is a very difficult contention to prove, and I have no wish to overstate my case but the following support these contentions and in some cases go much further: Louis Wirth, "The Limits of Regionalism," in *Regionalism in America,* Merrill Jensen, ed. (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1951), 381-93; William F. Ogburn, *The Social Effects of Aviation* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1946); J. Parker Van Zandt, *America Faces the Air Age,* 2 vols. (Washington, D. C, Bookings Institution, 1944); Hall Barlett, *Social Studies for the Air Age* (New York: Macmillan, 1942); George T. Renner, *Human Geography in the Air Age* (New York: Macmillan, 1943).
[52]McCarran to Maw, 9 April 1943, "Blueprint for a New Frontier," in Patrick A. McCarran Papers. See also "McCarran Press Release," 9 April 1943, *ibid.* McCarran's career has been traced in Jerome Edwards, *Pat McCarran: Political Boss of Nevada* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1982).
[53]C. Vann Woodward, "The Age of Reinterpretation," *American Historical Review,* 58 (October 1960), 7.
[54]Henry H. Arnold, *Global Mission* (New York: Harper and Row, 1949), 121.
[55]John William Ward, "The Meaning of Lindbergh's Flight," *American Quarterly,* 10 (Spring 1958), 3-16, quotation on p. 15.
[56]On this subject see the significant works of Roger W. Lotchin, *Fortress California, 1910-1961: From Warfare to Welfare* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992); Norman M. Klein and Martin J. Schiesl, eds., *20th Century Los Angeles: Power, Promotion, and Social Conflict* (Claremont, Calif.: Regina Books, 1990); Blake McKelvey, *The Emergence of Metropolitan America, 1915-1966* (New Brunswick, N. J. Rutgers University Press, 1968); Carl Abbott, *Portland: Planning, Politics, and Growth in a Twentieth-Century City*

(Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1983); Gunther P. Barth, *Instant Cities: Urbanization and the Rise of San Francisco and Denver* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1975); Stephen J. Leonard and Thomas J. Noel, *Denver: Mining Camp to Metropolis* (Niwot: University Press of Colorado, 1990); Goodall, ed., *Urban Politics in the Southwest;* Luckingham, *Phoenix;* Roske; *Las Vegas;* Moehring, *Resort City in the Sunbelt*; Lewis Mumford, *The City in History: Its Origins, Its Transformations, Its Prospects* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and World, 1961).

[57]Roger W. Lotchin, "The City and the Sword: San Francisco and the Rise of the Metropolitan Military Complex, 1919-1941," *Journal of American History* 65 (March 1979), 996-1020, quotation on p. 1020. On Nellis, see Moehring, *Resort City in the Sunbelt,* 32-34.

THE 1960s REVOLUTION: UNLV STYLE

Dona Gearhart

In 1964, when Berkeley activist Mario Savio exhorted American university students to put their "bodies upon the gears and upon the wheels, upon the levers, upon all the apparatus" of the machine "to make it stop," it became clear that he and the radical left had declared war on America's universities. At that point in the revolution, shutting down the machine seemed the only way to institute changes in the university system. The radical student movement, represented by the ideas of the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), eventually sought to remake the university system into a more democratic institution, and that would require a restructuring of the power arrangements. To Savio, the system exercised authoritarian power over the *oppressed* student, and that is what made it so odious.[1]

The University of California at Berkeley was ground zero for the student movement and the model of how to do a revolution. Berkeley became symbolic of the quintessential multiversity—too large, too impersonal, too closely tied to the military-industrial complex. Like other established, high quality institutions, Berkeley attracted middle- and upper-middle-class students, not particularly radical but self-described as liberal Democrats. What set many of them apart from the mainstream was their willingness to break the law to protest injustice. The campus population also contained an overrepresentation of political activists fresh from voter registration drives in the South and eager to apply their protest methodology in the service of the oppressed student. In addition student activists were drawn to potential civil-rights activities caused by the changing racial composition of the city of Berkeley. Students were alienated and, as W. J. Rorabaugh has argued, ripe for revolt. All that was needed was an incident and an eloquent spokesman like Mario Savio to set off the explosion. The impersonal, arbitrary power of the university system must be stripped away and a new force allowed to flow from the bottom up.[2]

Students from across the nation responded to Savio's impassioned plea, but his words failed to resonate for thousands of students. Most college campuses did not experience Savio's revolution, and some—like Nevada Southern University—achieved the goals of the revolution without its students putting their bodies against the gears and grinding the system to a halt. Still in its infancy, the college reflected

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the culture of the booming city of Las Vegas, which partially explains its divergence from a revolutionary experience. But to examine Nevada Southern's history during the turbulent 1960s using traditional explanatory models is perhaps too restrictive and essentially not very helpful. If Nevada Southern University missed the revolution as experienced at Berkeley, Columbia, or Wisconsin, then it can too easily be dismissed as merely conservative and not very interesting. The lack of sustained and violent protest at the Nevada university might suggest that, since most colleges had no incidents of violent protest, NSU (soon to become UNLV) represents a normative model of campus unrest and institutional change.[3]

By the time Nevada Southern became the University of Nevada, Las Vegas in 1969 it had evolved into the type of institution that radicals like Savio longed to create on older, more established campuses. NSU experienced extraordinary revolutionary development without the occupation or burning of a single building or the arrest of a single student in part because of the timing of its establishment. Founded in 1951 as a regional campus of the University of Nevada, Nevada Southern produced an infrastructure that militated against protest and filled its classrooms with working-class students. To add to the mix, faculty posts were filled from a pool of young, often radicalized, professors fresh out of graduate school and eager to export the revolution to the Nevada desert. The result was a rather unique mixture of liberal administration policies governing a conservative student body, a juxtaposition that suited the unique culture of the university's host city of Las Vegas.[4]

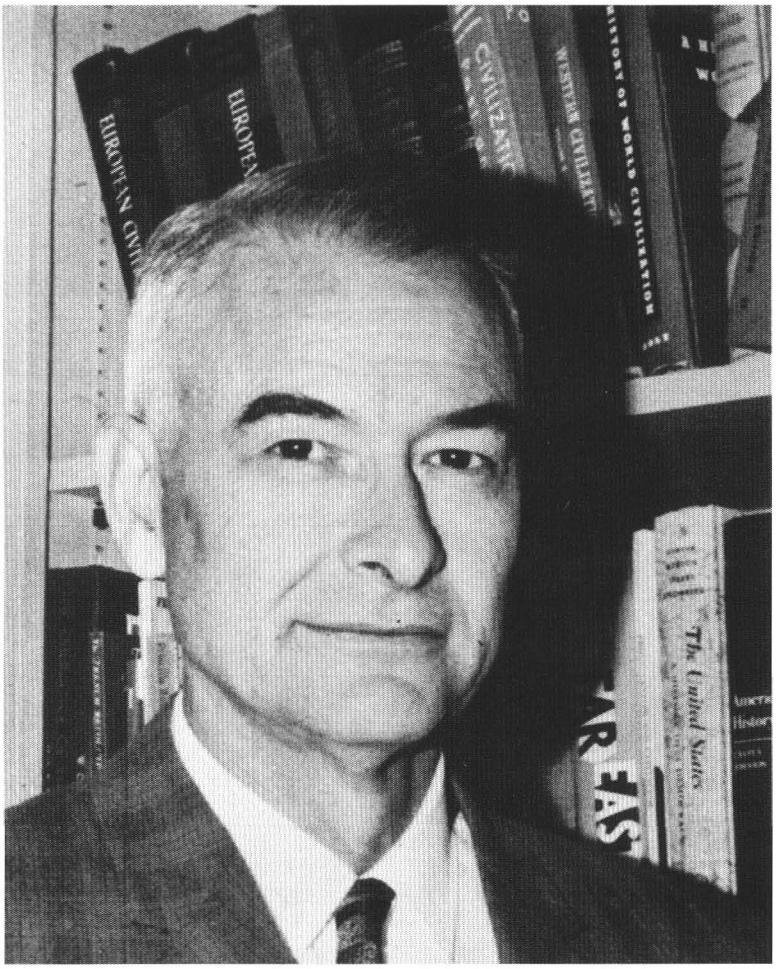
Like the alienated youth of the 1960s, postwar America has enjoyed its share of social and psychological critique that attempt to make sense out of consensus and conformity in the 1950s. When considered in the context of John Kenneth Galbraith's *The Affluent Society* and C. Wright Mills's *White Collar: The American Middle Classes,* Las Vegas represented much that was manipulative and diabolical about postwar-corporate America, luring suckers to its gaming tables to relieve them of some of their new-found affluence. John Findlay sees postwar Las Vegas as not merely an escape from a bland, suburban society but also a magnet to an artifact of American cultural transformation. Middle-class tourists self-consciously disengaged themselves from the restraints of everyday convention to participate in the liberating atmosphere of Las Vegas. Local residents could do this at will, although most chose to exercise restraint. But they knew they could. Children growing up in Las Vegas during these years lived not only under the real, visible cloud of the atomic mushroom rising from the nearby test site, they lived in the shadow of truly liberating influences. Las Vegas produced an environment that proved less alienating than the upper-middle-class suburbs that nurtured future radicals. Living within the parameters of this escapist paradise, Las Vegas youngsters growing up in postwar America may have had a greater sense of personal autonomy and were thus less willing to characterize themselves as alienated.[5]

Postwar American society struggled to adjust to a new world of rapid and continual change while at the same time producing and nurturing a bumper crop of offspring. It was this coming-of-age cohort that began flooding college campuses in the 1960s. Kenneth Kenniston emphasized the significance of American culture to student dissent in the 1960s. In fact, many observers regard American culture as essential, if not central, to the student movement. The radical cells that inflamed the movement broke themselves against the peculiar resilience of American cultural and political traditions in the late 1960s. On the surface it appears that the 1960s did not happen to NSU, yet they did. They happened in a very American way, untouched by the glamour and noise of the revolution.[6]

The University of Nevada, located at Reno, created Nevada Southern as a regional division in 1951, and early classes were conducted in the local high school. Once a campus was established in 1956, NSU immediately began to form a distinct personality and style that reflected its nontraditional, working-class student body. The college attracted many students who worked full time in the gaming industry, and classes were structured around the irregular shifts of an industry that operated twenty-four hours a day. Working students had little time or energy to devote to political activities or traditional campus life. In the unlikely event that the small group of student radicals might attempt to create spontaneous, or even planned protest, students rarely made themselves available to organize into demonstrations. Because NSU was not a residential campus, students did not linger once classes were over. During most of the decade of the 1960s, virtually all students lived in the Las Vegas area, and until Tonopah Hall was constructed in 1967 and an emerging athletic program began to attract out-of-state students, it remained an infertile breeding ground for student unrest.[7]

Lack of student-organized activities did not mean that the university community ignored the issues that spurred protest on older, larger campuses. The many young professors often brought these issues to the attention of students, thereby appropriating the role of the student radical. The new college began hiring faculty at a time when there were more jobs than people to fill them. The young faculty immediately established close contact with the students as the emphasis was on teaching, not research or publishing. The emphasis did shift slightly once a tenured faculty became reality. Many of the newly-hired faculty did not expect to stay more than a year or two, and some characterized Las Vegas as an outpost, lacking culture and amenities. Even though many of these short-timers considered NSU less than a serious institution, most enjoyed their roles, in developing a university and establishing a community of scholars and students. John Wright, professor of History and dean of Social Sciences, fostered this sense of community and was able to generate a spirit of intellectual and political awareness among his students. He exemplified the motivating effect that many NSU professors had on their students in the early 1960s.[8]

A group of four professors, including Wright, was instrumental in organizing



John S. Wright, Professor of History and Head of the Socieal Sciences Division, Nevada Southern University, 1964 ('64 Epilogue [*Las Vegas: Nevada Southern University, 1964*], *8*)

the first debate on the Vietnam War in 1965. This was in keeping with Wright's desire to encourage students to channel their energies into productive protest activities. A memo from the group to the university chancellor expressed hope that NSU's first teach-in would help clarify some of the misconceptions about American foreign policy in Vietnam. The idea sparked a debate in the community, and United States Senator Howard Cannon dismissed the effort as the work of "kooks" and questioned their right to use university facilities as a public forum. The political atmosphere of Nevada absorbed this squaring-off between two members of the same political party. Democrat John Wright, amused by Democrat

Cannon's remarks, suggested forming a group called "Kooks for Cannon." The teach-in took place and is noteworthy because it demonstrated a pattern of activist expression that existed at Nevada Southern during the middle years of the decade.[9]

The expression of dissent appeared monthly through the traditional voice of the university community, the student newspaper. The *Rebel Yell* contains ample evidence of the activities, debates, and issues that arose on campus throughout the 1960s. Its contents illustrate how students, faculty, and administration explored alternative ideas on national concerns. News stories, editorials, and reader comment often focused on Cold War issues during the early years of the decade. A student editorialized in 1961 that the best way to prevent student indoctrination by the Communist Party was to teach communism in schools. An editorial in 1962 pointed out the danger of leaving unquestioned the right-wing rhetoric of the John Birch Society. The radical Right seemed to be of primary concern during the early 1960s. Political Science instructor Charles Sheldon offered a theoretical explanation for the philosophy of the radical Right in a 1963 issue of the *Rebel Yell.* Although the newspaper's content clearly shows a lack of radical dissent on a Berkeley scale, NSU students and faculty struggled with complex national issues and expressed their ideas through the press. But the revolution demanded action.[10]

Research on radical youth in the 1960s supports the claim that, although many students held deep ideological beliefs, not all acted on those beliefs. By 1966 one group of NSU students crossed the line between expression and activism. Naming itself Students for Political Action (SPA), the group became Nevada Southern's SDS writ small. As was typical of student political activity on the Las Vegas campus, the SPA enjoyed a certain legitimacy from its cover of faculty sponsorship. The SDS organized a chapter at the University of Nevada in Reno but was unable to generate interest on the Nevada Southern campus. NSU students simply created their own political action group. Drawing on the time-honored American pamphlet tradition, the SPA began aiming modern broadsides at the system from their official journal, *Polis.* Its literary and editorial attacks focused on the conduct of the Vietnam War. One such effort angered many Las Vegans: *Polis* published a poem suggesting that if a Vietnamese child must be cooked with napalm, "nailed to a platter," it should be accompanied by "[Lyndon] Johnson's gall bladder." But the lack of political courage on the part of the NSU concerned SPA members almost as much as the war itself. They urged students who had recently taken part in an antiwar demonstration to declare themselves publicly a majority of NSU students. The following issue of *Polis* encouraged students to express their antiwar opposition publicly without fear of reprisals.[11]

Obviously stymied by the lack of will on the part of the NSU student body, the political action group expressed frustration at what continued to baffle would-be radicals during the remainder of the decade. If only the student body would stand up to the oppressive system, then NSU might have a revolution after all. One explanation rested on the possibility that NSU students did not consider themselves

oppressed by the system. Another stemmed from the fact that they had a more important political battle closer to home, one that the limited resources of working class students might effectively address. The growing battle for university funding between northern and southern Nevada energized the entire campus community throughout the decade and siphoned student interest from the war, student oppression, and the SPA.[12]

Beginning in the early 1960s, NSU's status as inferior to the university in Reno created a tradition of protest that later served as a foundation for antiwar activities. Throughout the decade NSU struggled to achieve parity with the University of Nevada at Reno (UNR). Nevada Southern originally functioned as a program to prepare students to complete their degree requirements at UNR, but it quickly became clear that the southern campus would be much more. The campus community bristled at the attachment to Reno, contributing to a sense of cohesion among students, faculty, and administration. Reno became a common enemy that could unite NSU's constituent parts in a way the Vietnam War could not. Above all NSU demanded autonomy as a university, but that did not come until UNLV received its first separate legislative appropriation in 1971. So the 1960s became a civil war in Nevada.[13]

Protesting against the inequity between the north and the south provided the theme of the *Rebel Yell* that became a source of pride at the university. A parody of UNR's mascot Wolf Pack seemed an appropriate way for NSU to define itself. The result was the creation of NSU's Beauregard, the fanged caricature that is the school's official mascot. Dressed in Confederate grey and carrying a Confederate flag, Beauregard presided over sporting events accompanied by the song "Dixie." The Confederate theme was intended only to symbolize the intrastate rivalry between NSU and UNR, and it served a unifying purpose until its more onerous implication began to hold meaning for the campus. As a commuter college, NSU had only minimal African-American enrollment through the early years of the decade. The possibility that the symbols might be offensive to some students did not arise until the college began recruiting athletes for its growing football program. When a group of black football players made it clear that being associated with the Confederate South offended them, the acting-president, Donald Baepler eliminated what he considered the inappropriate features of the Dixie theme. Although a political battle with the north was not without controversy on campus, the struggle became a unifying theme around which the university community formed in a symbolic sense, and it also inspired the students to stage the type of political activities the SPA would have been proud to sponsor.[14]

A 1963 issue of the *Rebel Yell,* its masthead proudly displaying the Confederate-capped Beauregard, reported the staging of a massive demonstration to protest the state Senate's actions to kill funding for construction on the Southern Regional Division campus. Students hanged the governor and a state senator in effigy, and the University of Nevada president, Charles Armstrong, was forced to apologize

Governor Paul Laxalt hung in effigy in protest on the Nevada Southern University campus (Epilogue [*Las Vegas: Nevada Southern University, 1967*],*81*)

to state officials on behalf of the university system. But NSU students would not be distracted. Later in the month a disgruntled, radicalized student hanged the editor of the UNR student newspaper in effigy. In 1968, NSU faculty members established an organization called Students to Remove Upstate Domination (STRUD) and in December of that year a *Rebel Yell* columnist acidly charged Governor Paul Laxalt with favoring the north over the south. It appeared that NSU could generate radical activity after all.[15]

The faculty was proud of their politically energized students. History professor Robert Davenport characterized them as lobbyists, doing the "yeoman work" for faculty and administration in the struggle for funding and autonomy during the

Robert W. Davenport, Assistant Professor of History (Epilogue 1965 [*Las Vegas: Nevada Southern University, 1965*]. *39*)

1960s. The faculty assumed that the legislature would listen to the students, whereas their own pleas as state employees might seem self-interested. The students appeared willing to place their bodies upon the wheels of the state government while displaying reluctance to tackle national issues like civil rights or the Vietnam War. The 1960s represented a tug-of-war, not between youth and a system that oppressed them, but between the north and south. According to Davenport, "We knew who the enemy was. It wasn't Vietnam, the enemy was Reno." Protests against the Vietnam War began very timidly in 1966 led by the SPA and a handful of professors, but the battle between the north and the south occupied the student body throughout the entire decade.[16]

By 1968 NSU had entered a more mature phase of its evolution and began to assume the characteristics of a modern university. Even the name change, in 1969, reflected its elevated status, with the name UNLV at least suggesting parity with UNR, although the battle for equal status was far from over. The coming of age was also marked by the appearance of what some might consider the revolutionary trademarks of a reconstituted university. The campus community in Las Vegas might have considered its evolution as merely innovative. Rapid growth and community support ensured an expanding UNLV infrastructure. The student body joined faculty and administration in formulating democratic policies and procedures that transformed the university at a time when activism and protest became an ongoing and vital feature of university life nationwide.[17]

Throughout the early 1960s, the University of Nevada at Reno provided the infrastructure for Nevada Southern. Appropriations were distributed unequally between the two schools, sparking the outpouring of protest on behalf of the infant school in the south. The inequity also taxed UNLV's ability to expand physically and meet its growing needs. As late as 1968, allocation per student at Reno was four times larger than the allocation to the Las Vegas campus. There were only three or four buildings on UNLV's desert landscape, which prompted students to construct a mock campus out of shipping crates and scrap plywood to draw attention to the school's plight. They named their creation Tumbleweed Tech. Students, faculty, and administration later found themselves in a position of creating a vision for the university that would remove the stigma created by the sight of plywood, shipping crates, and blowing tumbleweed.[18]

The University of Nevada, Las Vegas, grew at a faster rate, in terms of enrollment, than its booming host city and during 1969 experienced a significant infusion of new faculty. In the eyes of some observers this new group proved even more daring and creative than the earlier arrivals. The young faculty were constantly organizing and experimenting with new ideas; change and innovation seemed to be what they were about. Considering the close relationship between students and faculty that already existed and the fact that not many years separated the ages of the two groups, the probability of a shared vision of goals and priorities must have been high.[19]

The original goal was to organize a university modeled after Reno, but eventually UNLV began to develop its own model. Donald Moyer, former chancellor and later president of the Las Vegas university, received much of the credit for this shift. A *Rebel Yell* editorial praised Moyer for changing the school's image from Tumbleweed Tech to one that deserved the respected title of university. Moyer also gained the respect of faculty by making them a vital part of structuring a viable university. He established early on that the administration did not intend to institutionalize a top-down approach. An administration dedicated to an inclusive deliberative process would be an ill-considered target for student or faculty protest. The fundamental pattern that exists at UNLV today was thought

Donald C. Moyer, Chancellor of the Nevada Southern campus (Epilogue [*Las Vegas: Nevada Southern University, 1967*], *19*)

through during those years.[20]

The slow development of UNLV's physical infrastructure also acted to thwart protest activities. By this time only one residence hall existed to tie students to campus full time. Most still commuted from off campus, and by two o'clock in the afternoon it resembled a morgue. The student union, traditional magnet for milling students, opened only in 1969, and until then there was no convenient place for students to congregate. Even more disappointing to would-be agitators, UNLV had no administration building on which to focus protests and demonstrations. Administrative offices were scattered throughout the campus, and had students been inclined to attack administration policies, they lacked this one focus of protest

that proved so attractive on other campuses. Instead, administration officials were surprised that students generally directed their energies on their course work and on establishing a credible university. Disruptive activity on other campuses made administrators like Acting President Baepler uneasy; he hoped for continued cooperation from students but expected the worst. In 1968 a group of students headed by the student-body president approached Baepler to discuss administrative issues. His previous experience at a large West Coast university had taught him that when a student-body president headed a mission such as this, a list of demands followed. These students, however, wanted to know on what kinds of issues Baepler thought the student body should concentrate during the coming year. To Baepler, UNLV's students were truly remarkable.[21]

A 1968 nationwide presidential election poll of college students revealed that most UNLV students preferred Eugene McCarthy and Robert Kennedy to Richard Nixon, and most believed that military action in Vietnam should be reduced and that bombing should cease. A 1971 poll of Tonapah Hall residents indicated that freshmen had taken the time to register to vote, wanted the United States out of Vietnam, and supported Edmund Muskie for president in 1972. Sophomores and juniors tended to be more disillusioned about UNLV and disinterested in politics. Seniors, the pollster decided, had become cynical and did not think the United States would ever leave Vietnam. The surveys were not legitimate academic research and were not presented as such, yet they provide some insight into the UNLV student body.[22]

Graduates of the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, are also a valuable source of information. Salvatore Gugino occupied several posts at the university in the 1960s that allowed him to observe all of its activities closely. In a recent interview, Gugino, a self-described liberal, characterized the 1960s UNLV students as well educated compared to current college students. He described them as not particularly radical or liberal but middle-of-the-road kids intent on becoming educated. He admits that students were not disinterested in events outside the university and that some may have been radicalized by them. During the planning session for a 1970 demonstration, one student suggested he was willing burn down campus buildings to protest chemical spraying of foods. Others, according to Gugino, volunteered to burn their draft cards.[23]

Gugino and others present during those years commented on the cooperative relationship among students, faculty, and administration. For the most part, protests and demonstrations during the late 1960s and early 1970s focused either on the Vietnam War or the north-south controversy. Because of the cooperation on campus, issues concerning university policies and procedures were resolved without the threat of strikes or coercion by students or faculty.

On older, larger campuses nationwide student and faculty protest that was not specifically related to Vietnam or civil rights usually concerned issues of power. Historical analyses of the 1960s, often citing Berkeley as an example, argued that

the turmoil of the decade was really a struggle over power. College students consistently demanded that power flow from the bottom up rather than the top down. Many universities like Berkeley, exhausted after years of dissent and violence, entered periods of reconstitution in the early 1970s in an effort to reform what was identified as a rigid power structure within their institutions. At UNLV a process to achieve similar results had been ongoing throughout the 1960s as part of the university's development. This is not to imply that students, faculty, and administration ever existed as equals during this process, but the idea of sharing power within reasonable limits was always present.[24]

Power sharing could not have occurred without pressure from UNLV students. They were certainly aware of student demands nationwide and took upon themselves the goal of establishing a voice in administrative and curriculum decisions, pass-fail grading, and experimental courses. They were also determined to become a presence on the Board of Regents. In October of 1968, the SPA held a free-speech forum designed to draw attention to just such issues. Campus radical Sid Goldstein, SPA member and assistant editor of the *Rebel Yell*, announced the forum's intent to offer solutions to student grievances on those issues. Later that week the student-body president, John Cevette, petitioned the Faculty Senate for greater student representation on faculty and departmental committees.[25]

Dr. Jack A McCauslin, Dean of Students; Dr. Roman J. Zorn, President; Dr. Donald H. Baepler, Vice-President for Academic Affairs, University of Nevada, Las Vegas (Epilogue 1970 [*Las Vegas: Confederated Students of the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, 1970*], 47)

Cevette also pleaded his case before the local press. He assured them that the campus was unusual because it had never been associated with hard-core radicalism, that in fact the most liberal elements on campus would be considered moderate by Berkeley standards. At UNLV the students were capable of acting in

an intelligent and orderly manner, he said, and would not "go before the Faculty Senate to argue with them or to demand students rights." They had come to expect cooperation from the administration and faculty in return for the reasonableness of their demands. Such was the case on the issue of student participation. The university president, Roman Zorn, established a Campus Committee on Student Rights, Grievances, and Responsibilities in October of 1969. He proposed a roster that included equal representation of faculty, students, and administration. In response to Zorn's action, SPA's president, Bruce Adams, promised that if the committee provided a truly open forum for these grievances then the administration could be assured that violent confrontations would never occur on campus.[26]

The students were not always immediately successful. In 1970 undergraduate students spearheaded a move to significantly increase student representation in the University Senate to gain greater power over the decision-making process. Equal representation in the University Senate gave faculty members a glimpse of what they might have created, and several members of the Faculty Senate attempted to apply the brakes to a process that could easily get out of hand. In a scathing attack on those guilty of foot-dragging, a *Rebel Yell* columnist writing under the byline Suzy demanded that the Faculty Senate relinquish some of its power. The column was signed, "Power to the people, Love, Suzy." Unmoved by the attack, the faculty rejected the proposal for equal representation in the University Senate. Since the Faculty Senate had promised to study the matter further, students revived the proposal six months later. The second proposal suffered the same fate as the first, but the students discovered that opposition originated from the colleges of Business, Humanities, and Social Sciences.[27]

Although the students lost ground on the University Senate issue, they gained power at the department level. Student participation in university governance occurred on a department-by-department basis. The College of Mathematics and Sciences had included students on its committees as early as 1966. In the Social Science Division students became involved through the urging of John Wright, and he did not want to limit their participation to curriculum decisions. At Wright's urging, the faculty decided to get the students involved in everything. Robert Davenport remembered that "we gasped and then we voted for it." While the History Department made an unprecedented power-sharing agreement with its students, the Political Science faculty began eliminating requirements, leaving the choice of which courses to take entirely up to the student. The department also instituted a pass-fail policy, virtually eliminating grades. The concept of the "N", or non-grade, was introduced. The non-grade was designed to help male students maintain their draft deferment status. Political Science professor Gary Jones viewed these actions as progressive yet in retrospect came to believe that they may have represented an abdication of responsibility. They may have created a situation in the university that "allowed students to approach their education like they [would] approach a cafeteria." After stunning successes at the department level, students

eventually succeeded in gaining the power they sought in the University Senate. Jones commented that it took faculty and administration several years to "dismantle the edifice."[28]

In addition to issues concerning student power, the late 1960s on the Las Vegas campus saw a marked increase in dissent over the Vietnam War. Protest activities by students and faculty increased. Cooperation within the campus community continued and acted as a moderating influence throughout the most tumultuous years of the student revolution. But by 1968, UNLV students had appropriated from the faculty the leadership role in protest activity. The Students for Political Action aggressively sought and maintained that leadership.

In response to what they believed to be an effort to limit protest, the SPA initiated a campaign against the Board of Regents in October of 1968. In typical UNLV fashion, the campaign proved moderate by Berkeley standards. An SPA position paper proposed the revocation of Board of Regents Faculty Bulletin no. 853. That document, dated September 1962, contained conditions under which "a full and frank exchange of ideas" would be tolerated. The SPA charged that the Board of Regents directive was a vague and "obnoxious affront on [*sic.*] free speech and academic freedom" and an attempt by the board to deny the use of university facilities as a forum for dissent. Acting President Baepler, no doubt anxious to steer student activism in an appropriate direction, advised the students to petition for removal of the offensive document. The SPA instead demanded that the UNLV administration itself take immediate action to rescind document no. 853. Students were becoming bolder and might be less anxious to seek administration counsel on what issues they might protest. In December of 1968 the SPA sponsored a Panel on Campus Militancy to discuss activities occurring on other campuses. The attendance of law enforcement officers lent a new sense of drama to UNLV campus activities. The liberating influence of Las Vegas culture seemed to have limits. The *Rebel Yell* responded with a headline that somewhat giddily announced, "Heat's on NSU Radicals." The headline was a subtle forecast that the nature of student protest at UNLV was beginning to change.[29]

Protest was changing on the national level as well. Despite newly-elected President Richard Nixon's assurances that a Vietnamization of the war would ease America's commitment in southeast Asia, by 1969 protest on the nation's campuses had become more violent as student antiwar activity increased. Three major antiwar protests occurred at UNLV in 1969. On October 15 the Student Mobilization Committee, in cooperation with the Confederated Students of the University of Nevada (CSUN), organized the "Vietnam Day Moratorium." In Las Vegas the moratorium remained peaceful although the local press considered it to be the largest protest gathering in the school's history. The most popular speaker at the event was UNLV professor Leonard Storm. The press described Storm as a bearded professor known for counseling students on avoiding the draft. Political Science professor Gary Jones spoke on the war's political dimensions, labeling the

Vietnam Day Moratorium, 1969 (Epilogue 1970 [*Las Vegas: Confederated Students of the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, 1970*], *68*)

administration's domino theory "hogwash." Turnout for the event can be attributed in large part to the cooperation of the UNLV administration. Several days prior to the moratorium, President Zorn issued a statement proclaiming the event "compatible with campus policy supporting open forum discussion." Despite the qualified endorsement, the SPA criticized Zorn for not publicly condemning the war during moratorium activities. In the language of the 1960s, radical students may have discerned some co-option on the part of the administration. Or they may have simply become bolder.[30]

Subsequent antiwar demonstrations in November and December of 1969 varied little from the one in October. Scorn for Zorn's failure to condemn the war outright mirrored frustration among the student Left nationwide, but criticism failed to crack community spirit on the UNLV campus. Prior to the November moratorium, even Sid Goldstein emphasized that there had never been a violent demonstration

Vietnam Day Moratorium, 1969 (Epilogue 1970 [*Las Vegas: Confederated Students of the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, 1970*], 69)

in the history of the university and he saw no reason why upcoming activities should break that precedent. Faculty members participated in all the demonstrations, and administration cooperation, as benign as it may have seemed to radicals, contributed to the absence of violence. The December demonstration, even larger than the one in October, remained peaceful, and the administration, along with the local press, breathed a collective sigh of relief because the potential for violence increased with the growing participation in these events. Ironically, UNLV students were being initiated into mass demonstrations, which had led to violence elsewhere, at a time when these demonstrations were beginning to reduce the effectiveness of radical protest.[31]

Following the orgy of antiwar activity, UNLV students settled into a semester of normal campus activities in 1970. Antiwar rhetoric began to decline somewhat, and counter culture jargon increasingly filled the pages of the *Rebel Yell.* But activists stepped up their campaign to aid students in resisting the draft. A brisk dialogue appeared in the student newspaper concerning Vietnam, and anti-antiwar sentiment began presenting its side of the debate. *Rebel Yell* humor columnist Mac MacDonald expressed in 1970 what later puzzled other UNLV observers: UNLV students represented either right-wing liberals or left-wing conservatives, and the Las Vegas community could never be sure where students stood on anything.[32]

On the Las Vegas campus, ambivalence characterized the reaction to the deaths of four Kent State University students during a May 1970 protest against military involvement in Cambodia. At first, UNLV students chose not to participate in a

nationwide strike on May 5 to protest the Cambodian action, but strong support for the Kent State students motivated participation in a subsequent strike on May 7. Faculty and administration agreed that students wanting to participate in the strike not be penalized for missing classes. The May 7 observation occurred without violence. Reacting to the escalation of mindless violence, nonviolent moderates became more active in campus protest nationwide. Fearing that continued demonstrations would create additional violence, moderates began to act more assertively within campus activities.[33]

Once the draft ended and troops began returning from Vietnam, the student movement nationwide began to splinter, signaling the emergence of blacks and women in the vanguard of the rights revolution. Oddly, of all the issues that energized UNLV's students during this period, civil-rights debate and protest lay dormant until after 1970. Racial issues dominated those of gender after 1970 at the Las Vegas campus but neither became divisive enough to shatter its cooperative community spirit. The racial issue as expressed in campus debate began to surface in 1969 with the establishment of the UNLV Black Student Union (BSU). The group listed as priorities a black-studies program, a completely autonomous college, recruitment of black students, lower college-entrance requirements for black students, improved access to financial aid for black students, and "getting rid of the rebel mascot." A black-studies program appeared to be most immediately achievable, and by May of 1969 administration officials had begun the process of implementing a series of black courses. Their efforts were instructive, as UNLV's struggle with racial issues began concurrently with efforts in the wider community to erase the stereotype of Las Vegas as the Mississippi of the West.[34]

University officials attempted to raise their own collective consciousness in order to adapt to the changing racial philosophy on campus, a process with which they were already familiar. In a letter to the director of the Cultural Studies Program Sub-Committee at UNR, Donald Baepler, then vice-president for academic affairs, made clear the criteria by which UNLV's black-studies instructors would be chosen. According to Baepler, the Curriculum Committee would insist on hiring black people to teach these courses. He noted that a distinction had come to exist between being a Negro and being a black person and the "criterion for these courses is that the person must be ideologically black rather than just being a Negro." Even after the student revolution had spent itself and UNLV had emerged as an enlightened, liberal institution, the administration continued to use the philosophy of deference and cooperation in dealing with controversies.[35]

Students at UNLV continued to respond in much the same way as they had throughout the 1960s. The decade had altered their appearance and their language but their methods and tactics had changed little. The physical campus changed, yet it retained a sense of community. A number of factors affected UNLV's calm passage through the most violent, chaotic era in the history of the American university system. Certainly the timing of its establishment meant that it could incorporate innovative policies and procedures without first dismantling traditional

Student demonstration on the UNLV campus, 1969-70 academic year (Epilogue 1970 [*Las Vegas: Confederated Students of the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, 1970*], 242)

ones. But timing, in this case, was not everything. UNLV's evolution must be viewed within a regional and local context.

Regionally, UNLV symbolized the expansion of higher education in the postwar

West that spawned numerous start-up colleges that were forced to compete for scarce appropriations. Two patterns emerged from this expansion. First, students who focused on the intrastate struggle to help their university thrive were less attracted to radical student organizers. Second, older, established universities escaped the explosive growth that was siphoned into start-up institutions, like UNLV. The new southern Nevada university acted as a safety valve for the exploding student population. Without these new campuses the incidence of violent student activity might have been higher. Locally, social characteristics of the UNLV student body acted to militate against radical, violent dissent on the one hand, while social characteristics of its faculty encouraged student activism and intellectual awareness on the other. A working, middle-class, nontraditional student body under the nurture of a young, innovative faculty and flexible administration, consistently achieved their educational goals, shared power within the system, and helped create an autonomous university—achievements requiring revolutionary reconstitution on other campuses.

Some found UNLV's experience quaint and amusing, perhaps even embarrassing. Recently retired History professor Paul Burns recalled a conversation with a professor who came to UNLV just prior to the 1970 demonstrations. The professor remembered that, after witnessing the first demonstration, he went home and said to his wife, "We've got to get out of here, they can't even mount a decent demonstration." The perception of what constitutes a proper protest lies at the heart of the current inadequacies in historical analysis of the 1960s. The young professor's reaction might explain why so little has been written about campus communities whose students rejected revolutionary goals and tactics and whose administrators and faculty rejected reactionary methods. Unfortunately, the valorization of the New Left and SDS has dismissed campus experiences that fell outside the radical model as unrepresentative of the romantic spirit of the 1960s. In so doing, historians are missing the opportunity to examine modern social change taking place within the context of an American tradition that has consistently rejected revolutionary impulses. Las Vegas and UNLV existed within that context.[36]

The university reflected the larger Las Vegas community. The city's casino-driven growth did not make it an oasis of high culture certain to attract an intellectual elite, nor was Las Vegas a likely site for the recreation of a longed-for traditional past. As John Findlay has noted, Las Vegas embodied what may have been an aspiration to create "a new way of life in an unprecedented setting," capable of restoring a "reassuring sense of individual dominion." Las Vegas casinos could certainly relieve patrons of money, but the liberating atmosphere of the city could also promote innovative accommodation to what many have characterized a postmodern world. The University of Nevada, Las Vegas, was shaped by that atmosphere.

Paul E. Burns, Assistant Professor of History ('64 Epilogue [*Las Vegas: Nevada Southern University, 1964*], 46)

NOTES

[1]Todd Gitlin, *The Sixties: Years of Hope, Days of Rage* (New York: Bantam Books, 1993), 291; David Horowitz, *Radical Son: A Generational Odyssey (New* York: The Free Press, 1997), 113-14.

[2]For a comprehensive examination of Berkeley in the 1960s, see W. J. Rorabaugh, *Berkeley at War: The 1960s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989). For profile analysis of the alienated student activist, see David Westby, *The Clouded Vision: The Student Movement in the United States in the 1960s* (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 1976); and Kenneth Kenniston, *The Uncommitted: Alienated Youth in American Society* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1965).

[3]The President's Commission on Campus Unrest found that of the more than 2,500 colleges in the nation's university system, as few as 100 campuses experienced acts of violence. Most campus protest consisted of orderly manifestations of dissent, making Nevada Southern's experience appear typical. The commission also found that universities flexible enough to make changes concerning power sharing were the ones whose students were more likely to be there because they genuinely wanted to be. *Report of the President's Commission on Campus Unrest* (Washington, D.C.: Commerce Clearing House, Inc., 1970), 1, 6-20.

[4]UNLV is probably typical in the involvement of faculty in student-movement activities. Robert Nisbet argues that without faculty advice, stimulus, financial contribution, and other forms of assistance the student revolt could never have happened. The difference at UNLV lies in the faculty's involvement in protest prior to its discovery by students. Robert Nisbet, "Who Killed the Student Revolution?" in *Rebels or Revolutionaries? Student Movements of the 1960s,* Dean Albertson, ed. (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1975), 150.

[5]John M. Findlay points out the limits of social critique of postwar America and Las Vegas in "Gambling, Las Vegas, and American Culture: Chance and Change in the Mid-Twentieth Century" (paper presented at the meeting of the Organization of American Historians, Reno, Nevada, March 1988), 2-5, and in his *People of Chance: Gambling in American Society from Jamestown to Las Vegas* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986). See also John Kenneth Galbraith, *The Affluent Society* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1958); C. Wright Mills, *White Collar: The American Middle Classes* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1951).

[6]Kenneth Keniston's bibliography is a comprehensive source on student vulnerability to alienation and other important research on the student movement. *Radicals and Militants: An Annotated Bibliography of Empirical Research on Campus Unrest* (Lexington, Mass.: Lexington Books, 1973). For Keniston's analysis of the significance of culture to student dissent see *Young Radicals: Notes on Committed Youth* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and World, Inc., 1968), 288.

[7]Profiles of student radicals reveal that most did not hold jobs during their campus experiences. Working students remained less willing to participate in protest activities. See David Westby's elaboration on this theme, *Clouded Vision,* 240-55. Robert Davenport, interview by author, tape recording, Las Vegas, Nevada, March 1994; Donald Baepler, interview by author, tape recording, Las Vegas, Nevada, March 1994.

[8]Davenport, interview; Tom Wright, interview by author, tape recording, Las Vegas, Nevada, April 1994; Charles Sheldon to Donald Moyer, memorandum, December 1965, President's Files, Special Collections, James R. Dickenson Library, University of Nevada, Las Vegas, (hereafter referred to as UNLVA); *Las Vegas Sun,* 20 November 1965.

[9]Charles DeBenedetti, *An American Ordeal: The Antiwar Movement of the Vietnam Era* (Syracuse, N. Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1990), 108, identified the teach-in as the student activist's most useful method of communicating moral discontent with United States policy in Vietnam. He also argued that it was more of a protest than a debate and the shrewd means of energizing the university without disrupting it; Tom Wright, interview.

[10]*Rebel Yell,* 13 October 1961, 27 February 1962, 19 December 1963.

[11]Kenniston, *Radicals and Militants,* xi-xiii; *Polis,* 1 (February 1966), 1-2, 12, and 1:2 (March 1966), 3-5; Vice President for Academic Affairs Files, UNLVA.

[12]Movement leaders nationwide continually sought ways to energize the student population. Rorabaugh suggests that one of the reasons for Savio's success was his ability to express the frustrations and anxieties of his generation with an undertone of anger, pushing himself to the brink of losing

control. Rorabaugh, *Berkeley at War,* 22. The SDS was the only national organization that attracted widespread media attention. Their attempts to organize a chapter in Las Vegas failed. See David Myers on methods employed by the SDS: *Toward a History of the New Left: Essays from Within the Movement* (New York: Carlson Publishing Inc., 1989), 5-14.

[13]Baepler, interview.

[14]The lack of a significant black student population may have limited protest activity on the UNLV campus during most of the 1960s. To many students, civil-rights issues represented a more concrete vanguard than student oppression. See Nisbet, "Who Killed the Revolution?" 143, and the Michael Rossman article in *Rebels or Revolutionaries,* 76-78; Mark Wallington, "Old Rebel Logo Has Museum Patrons Crying Wolf;" *Runnin' Rebel Basketball Illustrated, 32:* 4 (17 January 1994), 24; Baepler, interview.

[15]*Rebel Yell,* 10 April 1963, May 1963, March 1968, 2 December 1965; *Las Vegas Sun,* 11 April 1963.

[16]Davenport, interview.

[17]Nevada Southern became the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, in 1969.

[18]At Berkeley, Rorabaugh found that faculty in general, although sympathetic to student perspectives on power, were reluctant to act on that sympathy. The movement's strategy was to mobilize student support, paralyze normal operations of the campus and force the faculty to act. Rorabaugh, *Berkeley at War, 30-38.* Davenport, Baepler, interviews; Gary Jones, interview by author, tape recording, Las

[15]*Rebel Yell,* 10 April 1963, May 1963, March 1968, 2 December 1965; *Las Vegas Sun,* 11 April 1963.

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Vegas, Nevada, March 1994.

[19]Davenport, Jones, interviews.

[20]*Rebel Yell,* 21 May 1968; Davenport, Jones, and Baepler, interviews.

[21]Baepler interview.

[22]*Rebel Yell,* 21 May 1968; 29 September 1971.

[23]Salvatore Gugino, interview by author, tape recording, Las Vegas, Nevada, March 1994.

[24]W. J. Rorabaugh, *Berkeley at War,* ix; and for a comprehensive analysis of reconstitution, see Richard E. Peterson and John A. Bilorusky, eds. *May 1970: The Campus Aftermath of Cambodia and Kent State* (Washington, D. C.: Carnegie Commission on Higher Education, 1970) 168.

[25]*Rebel Yell, 27* October 1968.

[26]*Las Vegas Sun,* 19 October 1969; Roman Zorn to Dean McCans; memorandum, October 1969, President Files, UNLVA; Bruce Adams to John Cevette, letter, September 1969, CSUN Files, UNLVA.

[27]Analysis of student and faculty participation in university reconstitution suggests that persons drawn to humanities and social science were most liberal and most likely to favor a more inclusive power sharing, and those associated with the hard sciences generally aimed at some form of technical manipulation of a problem situation. At UNLV, at least tacit approval of student participation existed in most departments but broke down at the University Senate issue. Westby, *Clouded Vision,* 236-0; Kenniston, *Young Radicals,* 288; *Rebel Yell,* 6 May 1970, 3 October 1970; Las *Vegas Sun,* 3 October 1970.

[28]Rorabaugh spoke to this issue when he made the point that Berkeley faculty who identified too closely with student attacks on the administration weakened not only the power of the administration but their own as well. Rorabaugh, *Berkeley at War,* 37. Davenport, Jones, and Burns, interviews.

[29]SPA Position Paper, October 1968, Vice President for Academic Affairs Files, UNLVA; *Rebel Yell,* 7 January 1969.

[30]*Las Vegas Sun,* 13 November 1969.

[31]*Las Vegas Sun,* 16 October 1969; Jones, interview; Presidential news release, 10 October 1969, President File, UNLVA; *Polis,* 4(31 October 1969), 4.

[32]New research on the 1960s has brought to light the existence of a significant student movement on the Right whose bases for organization found certain common ground with those on the Left. The media paid little attention to conservative activity on campuses nationwide, and this might account for what appeared to be local ambiguity on some campuses. Rebecca Klatch, "Where '60s Right a nd '60s Left Overlapped," *The American Enterprise,* 8:3 (May/June 1997),45; *Las Vegas Sun,* 14 December

1969; *Rebel Yell*, 8 April 1970.

[33]*Las Vegas Sun*, 5 May 1970, 6 May 1970, 7 May 1970; *Report of the President's Commission on Campus Unrest*, 1-40.

[34]Nevada passed a 1965 civil-rights law, but it failed to address adequately school, unemployment, and housing inequities in Las Vegas. A voluntary school desegregation plan was adopted in 1969, a 1971 court-ordered consent decree mandated affirmative-action requirements for hiring blacks in the gaming industry, and an open-housing ordinance was passed in 1971. Las Vegas footdragging and subsequent media attention earned Las Vegas the designation Mississippi of the West. Historian Eugene Moehring considers the comparison a bit overdrawn, arguing that Las Vegas was no worse a town for blacks than other sunbelt cities. But to a city dependent on goodwill of tourists, the characterization held significance. Eugene P. Moehring, *Resort City in the Sunbelt: Las Vegas, 1930-1970* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1989), 195-202; Proposal for Black Studies, Priorities of Black Student Union, Memo to Faculty Members from Donald Baepler, May 1969, Academic Affairs Files, UNLVA.

[35]Donald Baepler to Robert Mayberry, memorandum, 1969, Academic Affairs Files, UNLVA.

[36]Burns, Interview.

[37]Findlay, "Gambling, Las Vegas, and American Culture," 10-11.

NOTES AND DOCUMENTS

WILD HORSES AND OTHER PHANTOMS

Steven W. Pellegrini

Mingo closed his eyes and sucked water through moss slime that covered the spring at Butler. He took a breath then stuck his nose back into the thick liquid that lay like an emerald in the parched desert soil. Late afternoon sun blazed over the Pine Grove Range and reflected like polished brass off bronco-grass-covered hills. Heat that tormented us since daybreak had eased but not enough to restore my appetite for anything but a cold drink. I eyed my ice chest in the shade of the pickup and hoped Mingo would hurry. He had nearly drained the water hole and was moving sand with his lips, probing for a deeper pocket. I held the reins in one hand and my hat in the other and hypnotically watched his hooves sink into wet sand. A fraction of an inch at a time, they disappeared as he readjusted his weight. I watched and was suddenly startled to see an easy solution to a most vexing problem.

I had spent that day, like a month of days before it, in the saddle in search of wild horses. Mustangs, broomtails, or ghosts, I had been enjoying the sport of chasing after them for ten years, but then the plot thickened. What had been a leisurely pastime had become a thesis project for a master's degree program at the University of Nevada. What had been a weekend and summer vacation diversion, I chose to become the cornerstone of my graduate degree in zoology, and I was in trouble. Daylight to dark, I had combed the Wassuk Mountains trying to glimpse what was, in 1968, the meager thirty-five head of wild horses that inhabited that region. Thirty-five roans, bays, blacks, and sorrels that the pinyon forest absorbed like fleas in a shag rug. A month of hard riding and I had caught no more than occasional ghosts of tails dissolving into pinyon shadows. Attempts to learn about their daily and seasonal routines had come to nothing, and that afternoon I was ready to accept defeat. But then I watched Mingo's hooves sink into the sand, and from that minuscule event came a revelation that saved my

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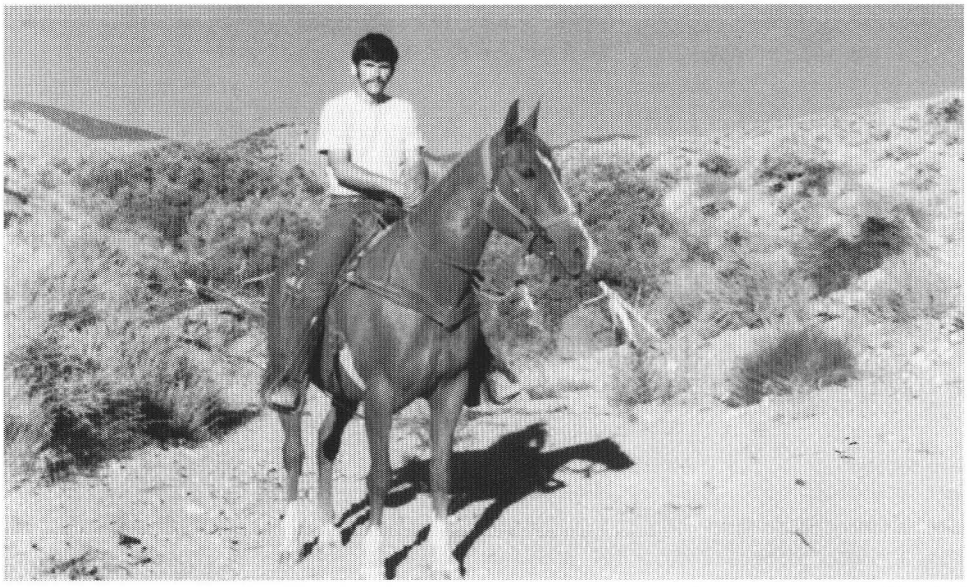


Steven Pellegrini on Mingo at the camp at Butler Creek (*Steven W. Pellegrini Collection, Nevada Historical Society*)

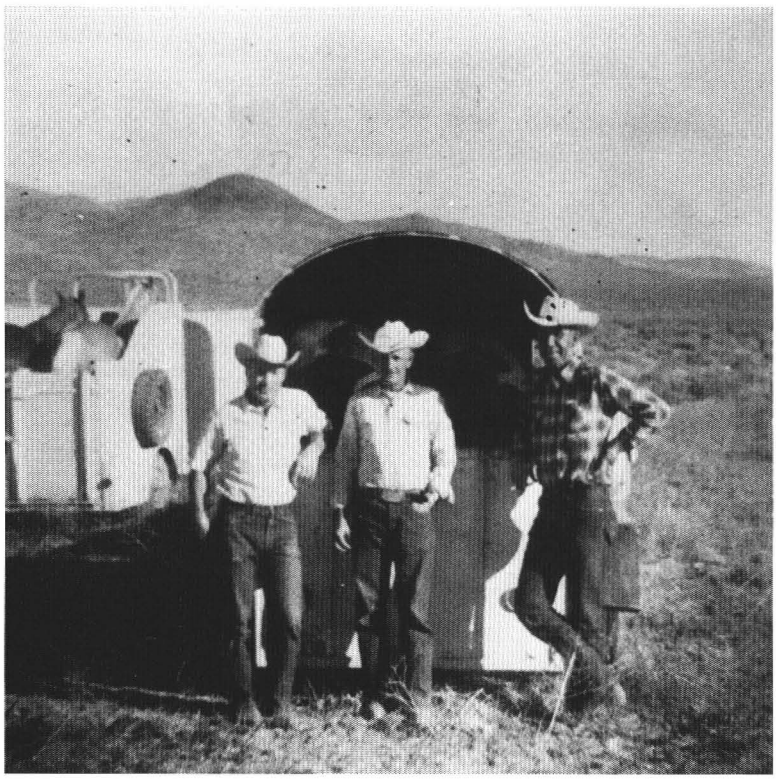
project. Mingo lifted dripping lips from the water and stood with eyes half closed. A dark sweat saddle patch matted his sorrel hide, and wet lines traced where his bridle had been. Around his feet a moonscape of hoof prints—wild horse tracks—dotted the draw. In post-sunset twilight I studied them. Hands-and-knees scrutiny. Some lay smooth and plate-like while others had well-defined frogs. Some were perfectly round, others were oval, and yet others were teardrop shaped. Most significantly, each appeared to be an individual, distinguishable from others around it. Mingo snorted and backed away as I crawled into the dusky evening, intent on one set of especially peculiar tracks to see if they might be followed. They could, and I knew I had found my ticket to a feasible project. Tracks became wires that connected me to horses somewhere out in the night. I ran a finger around the sharply defined edge of a particularly fresh print and studied others that were quickly fading in gathering darkness. Somewhere at the other end of the darkening trail stood the mustangs that made them. It didn't seem far fetched to believe if I touched the track I would form direct contact with the horse standing where the trail ended, standing three-legged in a grassy clearing in the pinyon forest, swatting flies, and allowing the evening breeze to lure gnats from his ears.

Early the next morning I drove Mingo home, assuming that following a track would be easier on foot than from the back of a horse. Armed with compass, drawing paper, a plastic ruler, my field journal, and great expectations, I returned that afternoon to my camp at Butler Spring. A campfire, a charred steak, a smoke-blackened pot of strong coffee, and time to relax. The next day serious work would begin.

Nights alone in the Nevada desert inevitably spawn contemplation. Crystal distances of daytime fold in upon themselves, and darkness jettisons a black velvet cocoon that embraces prancing campfire flames. The Milky Way stretches against the void like a smudge of diamonds, and silence thunders to the cadence of a million crickets. Unidentifiable sounds and the certainty of small nocturnal eyes, watching from beyond the glow of my fire, add mystery to the night. Wind whistles and conjures spirits desert Indians knew well. The fire sputters, and stars, an impossible profusion of stars, watch with an icy indifference that adds drama to the vast stillness. It was that kind of night. A shaman's moon hung like a bullet hole in smoked glass, and its silver light softened a landscape that had shimmered white hot in the sun's glare. The fire popped sparks skyward, and memories drifted vaporously on the moon's soft light. A coyote wailed staccato yelps, and I recalled other nights spent here.

With darkness pressing me to the security of my campfire, I sat on the flat rock that served as my table and listened to memory voices from other summer days and nights spent in this same place. Memories, palpable and poignant, transported me back to that long-ago time where horses, tied to trailers, stamped and blew beyond the fire's light. Four of them. Bays and sorrels we favored, their teeth making dull thumping sounds as they chewed hay we had thrown at their feet. Three men, ghosts now too, sat with me at the fire, their faces dark masks under the flame-orange glow on their hats.

Evan Baber, Aaron Dunn, and my father first brought me to the Wassuk Mountains when I was in high school. On borrowed horses, I followed those men over twisting miles of steep, rocky trails engineered by wild bands conducting mustang business. The Wassuk Mountains between Walker Lake and the East Walker Valley bristle with memories of days we spent there together. Cold mornings when even the tamest nag humped his back and soft gray evenings when purple shadows bled onto desert flats birthed memories that linger here in the smell of dust and in the angle of morning's first light. Memories. Like the afternoon Evan chased a band of mustangs, and the colt he rode panicked off into the trees, galloping away with mustangs in hot pursuit. I smile, remembering the morning they stuck me on a creature called Jack that made Ichabod's Gunpowder look like Sea Biscuit. The men mounted and rode carefully around camp to work kinks out of their tail-wringing colts. No fun to get piled on a cold morning. When all appeared under control, they told me to mount up and reined their horses up the trail. I swung into the saddle, and my geriatric cayuse tucked his head and roared through camp in a determined show of rodeo-style bucking. Through the fire and over beds, he nearly destroyed all our gear before winding down. The rest of the day he shuffled along like a rusty robot. We relived such memories on snowy nights over pinochle and dry sherry, and when nights lay frozen, we made a ritual of planning our next summer. Evan and Aaron nearly lived at my folks' house, and together we anticipated the coming of warm weather. We jabbered about horses



Aaron Dunn, Bill Pellegrini and Evan Baber at the Butler Springs camp, July 1963 (*Steven W. Pellegrini Collection, Nevada Historical Society*)

and canyons we hadn't yet explored and awaited the day when we would return to set up camp at Butler.

That life hasn't revealed its treachery is the joy and the sorrow of youth. In early May, when budsage greened the desert, my father called me at school to tell me Aaron had passed away. Four days later, on the morning of Aaron's funeral, Evan joined his friend on that journey. I still wonder, almost thirty years later, how such things come to be.

Wassuk nights hold spirits that whisper my name and encourage me to follow, and never have I seen sunshine there as golden as in that last day we spent together. Two years ago I carried my father's ashes to a small clearing in the pinyon forest above Butler Spring. I placed them beside a juniper where we had carved our initials one summer day when I expected my world would never change.

When I decided to study mustangs as a graduate student, my motives were unknown even to me. I returned to the Wassuks to find something I have never quite rediscovered despite all my years there chasing ghosts. I went back to recapture carefree days of honey sun and companionship. Just over the next rise, perhaps, those old times await. Do I hear voices? Did someone speak? I search on,

but they always call from beyond the next ridge, just out of sight. Always out of reach.

So Mingo's hooves sinking in the sand at Butler was an exciting event, the beginning of a new Wassuk adventure. I arose the next morning, found the most identifiable prints, and allowed them to lead me off into the pinyon forest above camp. I followed, and they led me to an adventure unimaginable before that day.

Those tracks opened a world of insight that had been hiding right under my nose. The stud horse makes the last track on the trail since he always follows his band. I found that he and other males in the band urinate in front of outstretched back hooves, thus confirming their sex. Mares urinate behind their back hooves. Oftentimes, individuals could be assigned to at least broad age categories by the size of their tracks. Crude estimates of body size could be found by heights of limbs horses either ventured under or chose to walk around. By following tracks to a roll or to a shade tree, body hair could be found that revealed coloration. Mane and tail hair provided additional information needed to determine exact coloration. Band size I learned by counting total number of prints in saddles where horses spread out to graze. Home ranges were plotted by following tracks made by a band over the extent of country it covered. Since front hooves make rounder tracks than the more elongated back hooves, each animal had what might be compared to a double set of identifying fingerprints.

Occasionally tracks found at high elevations in summer disappeared when winter arrived. Missing bands always turned up somewhere on shadscale flats at the lower elevations of their territories where golden tufts of ricegrass poked through winter snow. Tracks condensed to single file in well-defined trails where horses stepped in stair-like depressions on steep rocky slopes, thus revealing the likelihood that trails provide fast and easy access through rough country.

I became a dedicated sign hunter, inferring comings and goings of mustangs by small clues they left behind. From early morning until last light, I followed tracks and plucked hair from trees and rolls and stored it in coin envelopes. With a compass, I triangulated important locations and entered readings in my journal along with drawings and measurements I made of tracks. Nights I spent plotting locations on USGS maps until boundaries of home ranges emerged, etched in black lines between large canyons on slopes east and west of the Wassuk ridge. Lower elevations of these home ranges proved most variable, but even they usually formed naturally against land forms such as canyons or man-made barriers such as fences. I learned to walk with my eyes riveted to the ground, and oftentimes I found myself miles from camp at day's end. Tracks made by my study bands pulled me along like magnetic wires.

Study ended in 1970 with the close of summer. I wrote a thesis, defended it to a faculty committee, had a few anxious moments, and was awarded my degree early in 1971. Unable to shift gears out of mustang mode, I spent several idle weeks following tracks with no real purpose. Familiar ghosts called me to my Wassuk

A stallion investigates a band of horses in the Wassuk Range (*Steven W. Pellegrini Collection, Nevada Historical Society*)

refuge, but no practical reason emerged to heed their beckoning.

One friend I especially came to admire during my study was Velma "Wild Horse Annie" Johnston of Reno. A powerful lobbyist for wild horse protection, she was won over early in my study to the practicality of research, convinced by my persuasive professor, Mike Pontrelli. Annie called me in February, shortly after the completion of my master's project, to tell me she was going to Washington, D.C., in April to testify on behalf of a bill that would give wild and free-roaming horses and burros the status of National Heritage Species. She asked me to go along and report on my study which, at that time, was one of only two ever done on America's feral horses. Her phone call presented a wonderful opportunity that sent me on a two-month worrying spree. Was a Nevada desert dweller who had never been east of Ely up to such a daunting challenge?

My first jet ride whisked me over the Wassuk Mountains atop billowing clouds that resembled exaggerated boundary ridges and canyons. We landed in Washington in a dismal rain that obscured view of the city until we were but a couple hundred feet from the ground. Out of mist appeared the Washington Monument and brief glimpses of other shrines that sent shivers of awe along my spine. What could I possibly know that would be of importance in a city where world leaders were agonizing over the Vietnam War? Of what value could my track savvy be to deliberation that weighed the value of grass for cattle against the desire of many people to know that wild mustangs prospered in the American West? Apprehension grew.

A taxi carried us off to our hotel, and we settled down to a steady stream of

well-wishers and media personalities anxious to meet Annie. Wild horses were a novel phenomenon in this eastern city, and they no doubt inspired visions of open range, cowboys, and wild Indians. Despite the fact I wore my best suit, I felt conspicuously like a country boy from the backwoods of rural Nevada. Our telephone rang almost as often as our doorbell, and the evening kept Annie busy answering questions and greeting dignitaries. The evening swelled my head as people seemed anxious to learn what I knew about wild horses.

After brief, interrupted sleep, I was awakened by the metallic hoot of a strange alarm clock. Fear twisted my guts as I realized the big day had arrived. Annie had paid for the airplane ticket, wonderful meals, and luxurious accommodations, all so I could testify. In the depressing gray of that morning, I feared I was about to let her down. I read through my notes and panicked. Not enough information. Nothing worthy of mention. What if I choked and strangled on the witness stand? My suit didn't fit properly; no one in the entire city would be wearing a fifty-dollar suit. Seized by panic, I eyed the door and saw no escape. I remembered one of the first times I rode Mingo when he was a colt, and he bucked me off. I remembered thinking, if I don't get right back on, I'll never ride him again. I saw again his flattened ears, his white-rimmed, wild eyes, his twisting tail, and I relived how awful it had been to stick my toe in that stirrup. But I did, and my confidence grew, and we became partners. The best way out is through, so I showered and dressed and gathered my notes, and when Annie knocked on my door, I was ready to go. Calm on the outside, worm-tunneled within.

We approached the building where testimony was to be given; it loomed like a monolith near the Capitol. Our steps clicked on marble stairs that stretched upward almost out of view. Half-way up, it occurred to me they resembled a horse trail that winds up the south slope of Bald Mountain in the Wassuks. The thought calmed me. A massive door opened into an expansive hallway of elegant marble floors, friezes, and ceiling medallions. Voices boomed and rattled along corridors that brooded around our intrusion. An usher showed us to a door beyond which waited far too many people. At one side of the room a row of Congressmen sat lined up like a firing squad.

Ranchers, BLM specialists, and others gave testimony. I waited. I fought instincts that warned me to flee and reread finger-oiled notes that trembled like aspen leaves. And then my name was called. Somewhere between my seat in the audience and the witness table, I found the peace of a Wassuk morning. Memories of pinyon corridors and Nevada sunsets inspired images of horses enduring, butts to the wind, every adversity the cold desert of northern Nevada throws their way. I unfolded my notes, ignored them, and opened my mind to memories of ratted manes and mangled tails and hides that resembled butchered rugs. I described water holes that dry up at the worse times and grass that greens south slopes even when the air crackles with ice. I told them about boundaries and trails and how I plucked hair from dusty rolls. And all those days I followed tracks and wondered into my fire while coyotes tortured the quiet, snuggled close like warm, protective

friends. And then it was finished, sooner than I would have liked.

I contemplated, flying back to Nevada, ways I might continue my study. Of various possibilities I contrived, only one ever materialized. I managed to continue on my own, at my own expense, for my own gratification. I followed trails and plotted band movement on weekends and, after I became a teacher, during summers. Although it lost formality, my study remained enjoyable.

It took a long time to appreciate, though, that the source of my motivation had less to do with horses than it had to do with the Wassuk Mountains. That spring day I left my father's ashes at the camp we shared with Evan and Aaron marked my last tie with carefree days that first brought me there. Wild horses and the experiences they led me to had been but one small part of a much larger attraction that involved communion with a spirit that resides in soft winds and in eagles that ride them. Obsidian projectile points that litter Wassuk slopes lend evidence I am in good company. Others wandered these deep canyons, and what mystic voices did they follow? Whose hands placed rocks in circles on these lonely ridges, and did they sometimes hear moonlight calls that implored them to follow into the darkness? Why do arrowheads so abundant elsewhere suddenly become nearly impossible to find in the shadow of the Paiute's holy shrine, Mount Grant? Did the spirits warn away hunters whose desert savvy we can scarcely comprehend? Standing below its looming presence when winter winds rip slate clouds across its summit, I think I hear those voices myself. The spirit has moods; it welcomes me with yellow sun and unsettles me with frozen winds that cry in night-blackened canyons.

One evening at the end of my study, after returning from Washington, D.C., I camped at Butler Spring. An afternoon thunderstorm kept me in camp until shortly before sunset when the sky began to clear and the wind calmed. I walked out of Butler on a horse trail that crosses the Wassuk foothills to a place called Tank Spring. It was here I spent most days of my study cataloging trails and getting to know horses by their sign. Bays, sorrels, roans, and blacks composed the bands in various combinations. Family and stallion groups proved, over the course of my study, to be stable with no recruitment from outside the study area. I had not encountered even one white horse—until that night. He stood on a low hill back in a canyon where I had hiked many timesbefore. Late-day sun cast salmon spears through thunderheads highlighting with copper light ricegrass where he stood. Yet his coat seemed impossibly white, rain-washed white, and his mane and tail reflected red from the cloud-strained sun. He watched a moment and dipped his head. And then he was gone. I never saw him again.

Paiutes have a tradition of a Ghost Horse that roams the Wassuk Mountains and who appears only at select moments. Was I so blessed, or was he a specter of shoddy research? I tucked my journal away unaltered and experienced no apprehension I had missed a horse, a white horse, during my study. Gold light faded to crepuscular blue, and as I picked my way along the horse trail back to

A mare and her foal in the Wassuk Range (*Steven W. Pellegrini Collection, Nevada Historical Society*)

Butler, a coyote hooted its spirit song in the gathering gloom. Stars watched, and a light breeze fanned the sage. Night welcomed me with the sanguine light of a rising moon, and voices beckoned from somewhere in the darkness.

BOOK REVIEWS

The Mountain West: Interpreting the Folk Landscape. By Terry G. Jordan, Jon T. Kilpinen, and Charles F. Gritzner. (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997.)

In this study of traditional wooden structures of the Mountain West, the authors seek to "determine the mainspring cause" of western sectionalism. Using a combination of material culture studies and human geography to analyze log structures in twenty-five districts scattered throughout the montane regions of western Canada and North America, the authors offer insight into the debates over the West's cultural distinctiveness. They adopt a spirited tone, as well as a clear writing style that marks a refreshing departure from many material culture studies. Supported by hundreds of photographs and very detailed distribution maps, *The Mountain West* offers a very accessible introduction to the analysis of one western subregion's built environment.

The best descriptions and analyses focus on traditional wooden structures. Organized according to structure type, the chapters examine the variety of log dwellings, outbuildings, carpentry traditions, wooden fences, and the material culture of haymaking found in the West. The authors limit their detailed field research to twenty-five districts, stretching from Alaska and northwestern Canada to the Rio Arriba of New Mexico. In addition, they cite 500 other observation areas scattered throughout the intervening areas. By focusing on log structures, they are able to compare western samples to the eastern styles and draw conclusions about the degree of cultural importation, adaptation, and innovation represented in this built environment. It is argued that westerners adapted the traditional English-plan log cabin, which had a side entrance, to the Anglo-western cabin with a gable entrance, in response to the mountainous West's heavy winter snowpack. Their most persuasive arguments regarding Western adaptation and innovation appear when they discuss fences and the material culture of haymaking, which demonstrated significant evidence for regionally unique developments. In the final chapter, the authors identify four "montane innovation hearths," subregions that contributed significant innovative features to log structure construction throughout the West. In doing so, they offer an important model for both regional analysis and material culture studies in the West.

Not all of the arguments in this book are so powerfully made and supported. In discussing what they call "mountain shotgun" cabins, the authors acknowledge that a house type of "virtually identical" plan and name exists in the Tidewater

South, but argue that "this southern shotgun shack seems . . . an unlikely prototype for its mountain western counterpart. Innovative, indigenous development . . . seems more likely." (p. 23) This ignores the heavy nineteenth-century immigration from the South. The authors also make the tenuous claim that dirt roofs could *not* have come from the Great Plains, Scandinavia, or Hispanic New Mexico, simply stating that "we feel the western dirt roof represents another borrowing from the Indian tribes of the region . . . ." (p. 86)

What is most confusing about the book, however, is the vague nature of temporal developments. The authors define no time frame for their discussion of "traditional" log structures, although the recent revival of log dwellings (briefly mentioned) appears to be outside the purview of this study. Thus, structures dating from as late as 1929 and as early as the 1850s appear as part of the sample. At times, this lack of temporal framing causes trouble. The California gold fields are identified as an innovation hearth, while rejected as a study area. "Its cultural landscape today retains surprisingly few genuine artifacts of the early mining era . . . what meet the eye there today are the much gentrified artifacts of the later, hardrock commercial mining period." (p. 130) In this dismissal, the authors ignore the intensely commercialized and industrialized nature of hydraulic mining as it took shape immediately after the initial rushes. This points out one of the underlying assumptions of the book: "Real" westerners, we are told at the outset, are "out there on the land, not . . . inhabiting cities," yet intensely urban mining communities made up a significant proportion of nineteenth-century intermountain West communities. Such communities apparently offered significant contributions to western regional identity, as these authors tacitly admit in identifying the California gold country as an innovation hearth. Thus, while the study claims to be "devoid of myth," in its dismissal of the urban character of much of their subregion, the book serves to reinforce Frederick Jackson Turner's myth of western rural identity.

Finally, while *The Mountain West* does indeed represent an important contribution to material culture studies of the West, Jordan, Kilpinen and Gritzner occasionally undermine the solidity of their research with overblown claims and sarcastic potshots at historians. Historical archaeologists (especially the ones cited in the bibliography) will be surprised to learn that "relatively few students of the west have left the library and preceded us in field research." Archival research is anathema: "Dirty boots and wet socks go with cultural geography, and we know more about sunburn and sore feet than we do of hemorrhoids." (p. 8) Such claims not only mislead about the nature of material culture studies in the West, they spurn the very sources that comprise the very excellent bibliography of material and folk culture. Indeed, and perhaps ironically, while the authors have clearly done their western secondary-source homework, the majority of their arguments in the text concentrate on the presence or absence of *northeastern* building techniques in the West, while the possibility of regional influence from the South or Midwest

is usually dismissed without discussion.

The Mountain West offers important contributions to the historical discussion of western cultural distinctiveness. It provides a model for analyzing complex subregions west of the 100th meridian, as well as for exploring the question of innovation, adaptation and imitation in the development of the West.

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War Stories, Veterans Remember WW II. Edited by R.T. King with editorial assistance by Victoria Ford, from oral history interviews by Ken Adams. (Reno: University of Nevada Oral History Program, 1995. viii + 188 pp. index, illustrations.)

Let's Get Going: From Oral History Interviews with Arthur M. Smith, Jr. By Arthur Smith, Jr., narrative interpretation by R.T. King. (Reno: University of Nevada Oral History Program, 1996. xiii + 220 pp. index, illustrations, appendix.)

Tap Dancing on Ice: The Life and Times of a Nevada Gaming Pioneer. By Jack Douglass as told to William A. Douglass. (Reno: University of Nevada Oral History Program, 1996. xvi + 255 pp. index, illustrations, appendix.)

Rabbit Boss, The Survival of a Washoe Indian Tradition. Videotape production of the University of Nevada Oral History Program, 1995. 26.5 minutes.

The Oral History project of the University of Nevada has offered a great breadth of primary source materials for scholars interested in Nevada History. These primary source materials take the form of oral autobiographies of Nevada's leadership, whether in the realm of politics, gambling, finance, or business, and their contribution to Nevada scholarship has been considerable. Recently, the project has tried new approaches to heighten public interest and awareness in what it is doing. Of the four works reviewed here, two are traditional oral autobiographies, and two indicate new approaches and methodologies on the part of the project.

War Stores, Veterans Remember World War II illustrates a new approach. It focuses on a specific event, in this case World War II, and the memories of participants toward that event. Forty-six Nevada veterans were interviewed, mostly by Ken Adams and Vikki Ford in the summer of l995, regarding their war activities. From these, twenty-one narratives were chosen. The verbatim transcripts

of the twenty-one totaled over 1,800 typed pages, and these were edited down to the present book of less than two hundred pages. So there was considerable selection and editing of material in the completion of the final product.

The twenty-one interviewees selected tended to be Nevada leaders, people who were successful after the war. Most of these individuals were excited about the war after Pearl Harbor, they tended to volunteer for active duty. Most served as officers during the war. They are enthusiastic types, and were later to become leaders and people of note. The editing has also emphasized battles and other forms of military activity. These are crackling good stories; there is not much about the boredom which must have taken place in much of military life before and between battles. The grunt activities of the typical GI are not depicted. Within the book's chosen framework, however, there is a wide sampling of emotions and activities dealing with death, terror and heroism, life in prison camp (including the experiences of one individual who participated in the Bataan death march), descriptions of the confusion of battle, and the fact that many Americans who did die were accidentally killed by their own troops. There is discussion of the Nisei experience, and the segregation and discrimination against blacks and against females. There is a balance between those interviewees who fought in the Pacific and those who went to Europe.

Just about everyone interviewed believed that the war was an important event in their lives, and one that affected them deeply. Since they later became leaders, they tended to picture the effects of the war on them in a positive fashion. Jack Streeter, who, the editors note was "the most decorated Nevada soldier of World War II" stated that "after being in the front lines for more than six months, nothing else could really be stressful for the rest of your life, I don't think." (p.19) Grant Sawyer, later Governor of Nevada, said, "I came out of the service a different man—more mature, more understanding of the other person's point of view." The war gave focus to the people who fought it—again Sawyer: "the generation that came out of World War II was one of the most productive that this country has ever seen. We felt we had lost time, so we had to hurry. After we got home, we set out to accomplish things fast." (pp. 169-170) The war was also, in the unanimous opinion of the interviewees, a good war—one that was justified and well worth fighting despite personal inconvenience. There is none of the negative reaction which the Korean and especially Vietnam war brought about from the troops. And almost everyone who commented on the event was happy and relieved that the United States used the atomic bomb against Japan in August 1945—no second guessing here. The relief came from the fact that the war was thereby ended sooner than it would have without the bomb, and not particularly from reasons of revenge.

This oral history was an attempt at new approaches for the University of Nevada oral history project. Does it succeed? Decidedly yes. Granted that *War Stories* does not give an entirely representative depiction of the full range of military experience during World War II, it is quite evocative of the combat experience. In

the final analysis, it is an intensely moving work.

One of the oral histories using a more traditional approach is *Let's Get Going! From Oral History Interviews with Arthur M. Smith, Jr.* Art Smith had an important career in Nevada banking. He got a job with Bank of Nevada in Las Vegas in November 1945, after his service in World War II, and by 1959 became its president. Bank of Nevada, incidentally, had been founded as recently as 1941. In 1967, he was offered the presidency of Nevada First National bank, the state's dominant financial institution and situated in Reno. Both FNB and Bank of Nevada were part of Western Bancorporation which eventually merged the two. FNB became, along with other components of Western Bancorp, First Interstate Bank in 1981. In 1967 assets of FNB were $540 million; in 1984, when Smith retired as its President, they were $3 billion.

E. Parry Thomas's Bank of Las Vegas was the first bank anywhere to lend money for casino construction and development (It is too bad that the oral history project never did an oral autobiography of Thomas). As Smith puts it, "From the early 1950s on, if you had a casino or a club or wanted to do a gambling thing, you went to the Bank of Las Vegas and saw Parry Thomas." (pp. 82-83) By contrast the Bank of Nevada had another emphasis: "We were doing lots of residential financing—in a way, we were financing the housing industry in Las Vegas." (p. 83) So both of these banks were intimately involved with the spectacular postwar growth of southern Nevada. At Smith's insistence, Bank of Nevada also bought the first computer in the state. The Las Vegas section on Bank of Nevada is far more revealing and informative than the Reno section on the "conservative" First National Bank. Smith was a real missionary for Las Vegas, going out to lure outside business to move to the area. "A big selling pitch was that we had more churches per capita than any city in the world," (p. 91) a misleading pitch that apparently Smith swallowed along with every one else. By contrast, "We steered away from questions about organized crime." (p. 90)

Surprisingly little is learned from this oral history about the important banking industry in Nevada during this crucial time period. Art Smith simply does not have an eye for detail. We are told in R.T. King's introduction that the verbatim transcript from which *Let's Get Going!* "was composed" was over one thousand pages long; the final result is a big-type, small page, very modest book of a little over two hundred pages. There must have been considerable wastage in the transferral process. By the book's evidence, Smith is a competitive, hard working, smart, practical, goal-oriented (note the title) and personable individual. He has an acute sense of people and probably knows how to get the best out of them. But there is little sense of detail, and the little pieces which would have been quite useful to researchers are missing. The book is anecdotal rather than analytical or factual. Great gobs of his career (such as his considerable university service including a stint on the University of Nevada Board of Regents) are either too

laconically reported on, or just ignored.

A much more useful and illuminating traditional oral autobiography is that of Jack Douglass—*Tap Dancing on Ice.* William Douglass, a distinguished University of Nevada (Reno) professor of Basque Studies and Jack's son, did the interviewing and edited the final narrative. In his introduction, Douglass makes the telling point that his father represents a type of "old Nevada" which succeeded in the gaming industry, and that the senior Douglass's longevity in the industry (from the 1930s to the 1990s!) bridges both the old and the new.

> ...there is an entirely different history of Nevada gaming that is all but ignored: the small-scale, local variety that was prominent from 1931 through the end of World War II—which might be called the "pre-Las Vegas" era of modern Nevada gaming history. The present account by Jack Douglass, a Tonopah native who began his gaming career in the mid-1930s with a pinball/jukebox/slot machine route in central Nevada mining camps, affords unique insight into this early period.
>
> Jack went on to become a principal in several Reno, Lake Tahoe and Las Vegas casinos, and therefore possesses insider knowledge about the growth of the casino industry and some of its prominent players. But in this regard as well his story underscores the extent to which there was an "old Nevada" dimension (which continues) to the state's gaming history. (pp. xiv-xv)

Jack Douglass holds the oldest active gaming license in the state of Nevada. Born in 1910 and raised in Tonopah, his father Billy Douglass was an important figure there as were many of his relatives. His father's friends were Tonopah's elite. Although his father died almost penniless in 1929, his reputation opened avenues of opportunity for the son. "My father never left me a dime, but he gave me something that was much more important than money." (p. 83) With nothing much available in the way of employment during the Great Depression, Jack had the bright idea of "having" some pinball games in Tonopah. He received $500 in capital from his mother who had received a financial settlement from a streetcar fall. There were initially lots of problems but in time he dominated the pinball market in Tonopah, then went on to Hawthorne. Branching out he added jukeboxes ("In those little towns the jukebox was the main window on the wider world of entertainment" [p.54]) and then slot machines. Then came Reno, where he went into business with Louie Benetti, forming the Nevada Novelty Company. He never did much business south of Goldfield, but he developed a good business distributing and servicing slots throughout northern Nevada. During World War II the partners Douglass and Benetti branched out into liquor, and business boomed, abetted by military installations around Tonopah and Fallon. "The play was so good that the machines were jamming; they were so full of money." By the late 1940s, Nevada Novelty was making about $100,000 a year.

Although he bought out Benetti, he tired of the slot-route business by the 1950s. Previously he had never been in the casino business, but in 1959, he sold his interest

in Nevada Novelty and bought, in consortium with others, the Riverside Hotel. He sold out soon, in his words, "the beautiful Riverside was just overloaded with people drawing money and expensive floor shows." (p.149) By the 1960s and 1970s he was operating financially on a very sophisticated level and invested in many disparate ventures, founding Home Savings and Loan in Reno, being involved in the construction of the Maxim in Las Vegas, the Comstock Hotel in Reno, and, most important, being one of the owners of the Club Cal-Neva in downtown Reno from 1962 to 1987.

This is a wonderful oral history—traditional oral autobiography at its very best. The son-interviewer developed a close rapport with his father, but Jack Douglass, in his mid-eighties, is a sharp, acute observer who remembers the little details of what happened. With its rich sense of detail, the book provides grounds-up information and becomes a primary source of very high quality and usefulness to researchers in the history of gambling. It provides information regarding little known aspects of the Nevada experience. This is a fine addition to the growing literature on Nevada gaming.

Rabbit Boss, The Survival of a Washoe Indian Tradition is the first video released for the general public by the University of Nevada Oral History Program. Although only 26.5 minutes long, it covers a lot of ground. The rabbit boss, Marvin Dressler, is an elderly Washoe Indian who directs the hunt for rabbits, the traditional source of meat for the Washoe Indians, and still a staple for many. No dogs, no children, no drink are allowed on the hunt, although shotguns have replaced the old clubs and traps. The film also describes the making of a rabbit skin blanket (a baby blanket takes 50 skins, a double bed 150-160 skins, we are told). The film has respect for the subject, and Marvin Dressler himself has great natural dignity and a nice sense of humor. Part of the film is in the Washoe language; there is a lot of old footage, and some still photographs. It would be ideal for use in the classroom, and is an important document of past Washoe customs, one that probably could not have been put together in written form.

The University of Nevada Oral History program has become increasingly adventurous in recent years in attempting to reach a wider audience and still provide a service to serious scholars of the Nevada experience. These efforts are to be applauded, and the program has contributed in a major way, in increasingly varying formats, to our stock of primary materials on Nevada and its people.

William R. Rowley
University of Nevada, Reno

A Mine of Her Own: Women Prospectors in the American West, 1859-1950. By Sally Zanjani. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997. Ix + 375 pp.)

The stories of women prospectors are, as Sally Zanjani writes, "a lost piece of history" (p. 1) partly because the actions of prejudicial memory have obscured women in out-of-the-way places, but more important, because the stories themselves resist exposition. Prospectors were professional loners. To make a staked claim stick, they had to keep secrets and unflinchingly to lie when they talked at all about where they had been and what they did. "Never believe a prospector," Anna Rechel, one of Zanjani's subjects, says. "If they tell you to go that way, you go the other way." (p. 10) Add to these occupational characteristics the factors that most prospectors were working-class, and so not given to the keeping of diaries, and that the phenomenon of a woman prospector was sufficiently lurid to excite comment and the manufacture of myth, and you have an elaborate sedimentation that obscures whatever nugget of truth may exist.

Zanjani's principal sources are the newspapers of mining communities and oral histories. She sifts through deliberate exaggerations and rarefied community bias so the outlines of her subjects can emerge. In this process her own sensitivity to romantic and dramatic elements preserves the color of her raw material, and she makes use of her imagination and the subjunctive to fill gaps in stories that would otherwise necessarily remain patchy. The individual sketches accumulate to make a class portrait.

Her prospectors turn out to be neither wild women nor displaced domestic angels, but opportunists. They exploited the earth for the needs it could fulfill—not riches alone, and, when they were unlucky, not riches at all—but the joy of independent work in wide-open spaces. They were mainly women on their own (single, divorced, or widowed) who savored the promise of remote hills. If they struck it rich they might enjoy a spree in town and quite frequently a spate of younger boyfriends, but when the money was spent or (less often) invested, they returned to the wilderness and prospecting.

Although she carefully notes that her subjects were numerous enough to make an identifiable social type, and not so disconnected from their fellow creatures as to be hermits, Zanjani is ultimately writing about women who felt unconventional desires. Her prospectors were "obsessive" (p. 27), driven by a "hunger" (p. 84), a "consuming interest" (p. 160), or a "craze" (p. 291)—again, not particularly for wealth, but for the activity of prospecting itself. By focusing on admittedly unusual figures and endeavoring to plumb their motives, she emphasizes the usefulness of all kinds of frontiers, boundaries, and other edgy places to cultural historians: They allow the evidently uninhibited expression of what otherwise remains concealed.

Eric Rauchway
University of Nevada, Reno

Remember Reno, A Biography of Major General Jesse Reno. By William F. McConnell. (Shippensburg, PA: White Mane Publishing Co., Inc., 1966. viii + 104 pp., photos, bibliography, index.)

Most people, it might be safe to say, have little or no idea why Nevada's second largest city is named Reno. One man I know said facetiously that it might be an Indian word meaning divorce. Determined to correct misconceptions and to give Major General Jesse Lee Reno the recognition he has lost through the years, William F. McConnell has traced the life of this Union hero of the Civil War. Except for students of military history, he is all but forgotten or is often confused with the controversial Major Marcus Reno, who was with Custer at the Little Big Horn massacre.

The author, a retired military intelligence officer, spent seven years piecing together, often with limited sources, the details of Jesse Reno's life. Born in West Virginia in 1823, he was a fifth-generation American, who graduated near the top of his class at West Point just as the Mexican War had begun. The young lieutenant served with distinction as an artillery officer in General Winfield Scott's Vera Cruz campaign and later spent two years in the military action against the Mormons in Utah. It was in the Civil War, however, that he gained recognition as an outstanding commander who won the respect and admiration of his superiors and the troops he led.

Promotions came rapidly for Reno and other Academy graduates, since the Union desperately needed senior officers. One could be a captain one day and a general the next. In 1862 Brigadier General Reno was one of three brigade commanders in General Ambrose Burnside's successful North Carolina campaign. At one point he led a raiding party of 3,000 men. He later fought at Bull Run and did battle against the Confederate forces of Major General Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson, his old friend and classmate at West Point.

Jesse Reno was killed in the Battle of South Mountain in Maryland. He was only thirty-nine. A monument was erected in his honor at the site in 1889. About one thousand people, including many of his comrades in arms, were present for the dedication.

While this book gives basic details of Reno's military career, there is little about his family life, which McConnell attributes to the paucity of extant personal correspondence and other sources. The general and his wife, Mary, had four sons and a daughter, but only the youngest two children, Conrad and Jesse Wilford, lived to adulthood. They ultimately had distinguished careers as inventors. McConnell also says that they introduced tennis to the United States. Tennis historians, however, give this honor to Dr. James Dwight of Boston and the date as 1876, a time when the Reno brothers were teenagers.

Aside from its brevity, the book suffers from the author's unswerving admiration for his subject. His Reno is a man without a flaw. Reno is quoted very

rarely, and we are given little insight into his thought.

This biography will be of interest mainly to those who like military history. It was very much a labor of love, of which Jesse Reno is most deserving.

Robert W. Davenport
University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Winning the West for Christ: Sheldon Jackson and Presbyterianism on the Rocky Mountain Frontier, 1869-1880. By Norman J. Bender. (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press 1996. 265 pp., photos, notes, bibliography, index).

Sheldon Jackson was, by far, the most influential nineteenth-century Presbyterian missionary in the American West. Jackson was born in New York state in 1834. Three years later, his mother joined the Presbyterian Church and shortly afterward had Jackson baptized. She interpreted this act as a dedication of her son to the mission fields. Jackson graduated from Union College in 1855 and from Princeton Theological Seminary in 1857. Before graduation, he applied for a foreign missionary assignment, hoping for an exotic position in Asia or South America. Instead, he was assigned as a teacher in a school for Choctaw boys in the Indian Territory. Citing health as the reason, Jackson resigned in 1859 and was appointed by the Board of Domestic Missions to Southeastern Minnesota. As pastor of a church in LeCrescent, Jackson set out to organize new churches in the surrounding area. After a brief stint as a chaplain during the Civil War, Jackson and his family moved to Rochester, Minnesota in 1864. While leading the congregation in a building program, he began to focus more on the needs of missionaries on the frontier and created a network for raising funds and supplies to support these missionaries.

With the transcontinental railroad nearly completed, Jackson felt an urgent need to press forward with new missions. In 1869, Jackson was given an opportunity to fulfill this need. The Presbytery of Missouri River, meeting in Sioux City, Iowa, designated Jackson as "Superintendent of Missions for Western Iowa, Nebraska, Dakota, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, and Utah, or as far as our jurisdiction extends." (p. 15) At this time, there were no Presbyterian churches between Iowa and the Pacific Rim. Jackson accepted the challenge. After a decade of hard work and aggressive missionary activity, Jackson had asserted the Presbyterian Church's influence throughout the Rocky Mountains, the Great Basin, and the Southwest.

Following his appointment by the Presbytery of Missouri River, Jackson set out to expand his independent missionary network. He developed an enterprise, somewhat independent of the Presbyterian Board of Domestic Missions, which

recruited missionaries and raised money for their support. In order to inform Presbyterians across the country about events in the West, he started his own newspaper, *The Rocky Mountain Presbyterian*. He also aligned himself with women's auxiliaries throughout the East. The women raised money for his operations and recruited teachers for schools supported by the church. Jackson and his associates also pioneered the use of educational missions to reach the so-called "exceptional populations" of the West: Mormons, Native Americans, and Hispanics. Bender devotes a chapter to Jackson's work among each of these groups.

There is no question that Jackson operated beyond the realm of his responsibilities. His unorthodox methods of fund raising and new church development were often in conflict, and at times competitive, with the programs of the Presbyterian mission boards. Furthermore, Jackson's outreach into Native American communities put him at odds with the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions who, until 1884, oversaw the denomination's missionary activities on reservations. Bender does an exemplary job of describing the nature of the conflict and also explaining Presbyterian policy for those unfamiliar with it.

Bender's biography focuses on Jackson's work in the Intermountain West and provides only a brief overview of his activities after 1880, when his attention turned to Alaska. Today a college in Sitka bears his name. Furthermore, Bender only mentions Jackson's election as Moderator of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in 1897. Although Jackson often found himself in conflict with the church's bureaucracy, he remained a proud and strong supporter of the Presbyterian Church.

Bender concludes his study by briefly reviewing the careers and accomplishments of several of Jackson's associates, as well as by examining their effect on the West and within the Presbyterian Church. He challenges Walter Prescott Webb's thesis that as denominations moved westward, they became more radical. Bender finds that Presbyterians, in general, were supportive of their denomination and had a genuine desire to win the West for Christ. (pp. 198-99) A total victory, as some had hoped, was not realized. There were, however, successes and benefits to the missionary efforts of the denomination. Examples include educational opportunities for the region's youth and a recognition of the role women could play within the denomination. Bender also noted Jackson's interest in the emerging field of "cultural anthropology," a passion he shared with readers through articles on the West and Alaska.

Bender's biography is a welcome addition within the literature of Western religious history and continues the tradition of the University of New Mexico Press of publishing such studies. In recent years there has been a renewed interest in Jackson's work, and a few articles and books have discussed various aspects of it. Bender's biography, however, is the first to be published since Jackson's death in 1909. The only other full length biography was authored by Robert Laird Stewart in 1908, *Sheldon Jackson: Pathfinder and Prospector of the Missionary Vanguard in the*

Rocky Mountains and Alaska (New York: Fleming Revell Company, 1908). He has a tendency to be excessive in his praise of Jackson. Stewart does, however, provide greater detail of the local missionary activities of Jackson and his associates. Of interest to Nevada historians, Stewart notes Jackson's role in securing Presbyterian ministers for the town of Pioche in the early 1870s. (pp. 283-84)

I recommend Bender's biography of Jackson to those interested in the role Presbyterian missionaries and the denomination played in the Intermountain West during the second half of the nineteenth century. In addition to being a good reference source, with detailed notes and an extensive bibliography, the book provides an honest appraisal of Jackson's activities in the West.

Charles Jeffrey Garrison
Cedar City, Utah

NEW RESOURCES

Nevada Historical Society

During the past year, the Society has acquired a number of important collections which will interest researchers in various fields of history and related disciplines. Our holdings relating to environmental matters have been enhanced with the donation of records by Citizen Alert, the Reno and Las Vegas watchdog group whose focus is on environmental policies and politics affecting Nevada. These records, dealing with issues that range from nuclear waste storage and military flight zones to disputes over water supplies, document Citizen Alert's activities from the middle 1970s into the 1990s. They complement two other newly-obtained collections that address ecological concerns: records of the Friends of Mt. Rose, which was formed to oppose development of a ski resort at the base of the mountain; and materials from the Toiyabe chapter of the Sierra Club which detail efforts by that group to save wetlands on the Double Diamond Ranch in the Truckee Meadows and to stop the controversial Honey Lake Water Importation Project.

Notable additions to the Society's railroad records have included a volume of minutes of directors' meetings (1880-1882) from the Nevada and Oregon Railroad, and substantial groups of documents from the Nevada Copper Belt Railroad and the Eureka and Palisade Railroad. The last group is particularly significant for its scope and variety, containing correspondence between company officials, financial and operational records from the 1870s and 1880s, and materials relating to the affiliated Ruby Hill Railroad Company and Eureka and California Lumber Company.

Elements of the state's social and cultural history receive attention in scrapbooks kept by Virginia Hart Edwards (recording her activities as a Women's Army Corps nurse stationed at the Reno Army Air Base during World War II) and Starr Herrick (a participant in numerous dance marathons held in Reno and other western cities in the early 1930s), as well as in records of local organizations. Among these are Carson City's prominent Sagebrush Club; the Carson City Band; Community Welfare, Inc. (documenting the northern Nevada charitable organization's work from the early 1970s to 1990s, when it became known as Community Emergency Food and Services); the Green Thumbers Garden Club; the Ladies Auxiliary to the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Department of Nevada (1927-1993); the Reno Executives Club; and the Italian Benevolent Society of Reno. The last group's records include minutes of meetings, membership lists, and financial records from 1892 to 1987, as well as ceremonial banners, sashes, and ribbons—

these last mentioned items are now housed in the Marjorie Russell Clothing and Textile Research Center in Carson City.

Recently received materials pertaining to the state's mining history include a rare, oversized map from 1900 depicting the mine workings on the Comstock Lode, which was donated by Jim Schryver; papers of Edward Snyder, documenting operations of the Doris Mill and Mining Company at Pioche; additions to the papers of John T. Reid, which relate to his mining operations in Churchill and Pershing counties; a payroll record (1875-78) of the Ophir Silver Mining Company; papers of James McLaren Forbes, a mining company geologist who was at Kimberly in the early 1950s; a group of records from Tonopah's West End Consolidated Mines Corporation; and letters written by May Lambert, which describe her life in various mining camps of Nevada and other western states during the period 1902 to 1907.

Information on Nevada's mining history is also found in a large collection of research files acquired from Alvin R. McLane of Reno. The collection, compiled by McLane over four decades, contains a wealth of data on the state's history and natural history, noted personalities, anthropology, and geographic place names.

Eric N. Moody
Curator of Manuscripts

NEVADA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Founded in 1904, the Nevada Historical Society seeks to advance the study of the heritage of Nevada. The Society publishes scholarly studies, indexes, guidebooks, bibliographies, and the *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly;* it collects manuscripts, rare books, artifacts, historical photographs and maps, and makes its collections available for research; it maintains a museum at its Reno facility; and it is engaged in the development and publication of educational materials for use in the public schools.