Nevada
Historical Society Quarterly

John B. Reid
Editor-in-Chief

Hillary Velázquez & Frank Ozaki
Production & Design

Juliet S. Pierson
Manuscript Editor

Joyce M. Cox
Proofreader

Volume 57 | Fall/Winter 2014 | Numbers 3-4

Contents

Front Cover: Nevada Centennial Celebration cake cutting, 1964.
(*Nevada State Library, Archives and Public Records*)

Book Reviews

Editor's Note

> History and commemorating are both forms of mediation between present and past, but history has rules about constructing the past. Our historical standards are clear. We can add to existing historical accounts with new and neglected evidence, but not subtract from them. We can interpret, but only within strict professional rules. We are a discipline. These rules do not apply to commemorating, as any Fourth of July speech, college commencement address, or centennial celebration will demonstrate.[1]
>
> —Richard White

A sesquicentennial event is a strange thing. The word itself is quite a mouthful; in fact, I substitute "Nevada at 150" whenever possible. And it is almost impossible, it seems, to utter the word (or centennial, for that matter) without following it with the word celebration. It seems to be a given that a centennial (or a sesquicentennial) should celebrate the nation or state or institution. For example, Governor Brian Sandoval promised that Nevada's Sesquicentennial would be "the grandest celebration our state has ever experienced." This is exemplified by one of the most popular events of Nevada's anniversary celebrations in 1964 and 2014—a huge birthday cake. The 1964 cake ceremony is pictured on the cover of this issue, and the ceremony was replicated in 2014. This is not a criticism; who does not enjoy a lovely cake, especially a room-sized one?

That we should celebrate centennials seems to be taken for granted as a natural practice. The first sentence of Nevada's Sesquicentennial Commission's Final Report reads "States have long celebrated anniversaries of statehood," a true statement if a bit vague. A centennial or sesquicentennial is no ordinary anniversary, and this type of major anniversary celebration does not seem ancient in origin. The first use of the word "centennial" as an event marking the hundred-year anniversary of a political entity dates to the 1870s. "America has been very much centennialised—that is the word in use now since the great celebration of this year," wrote the *London Daily News* in 1876. "Centennials have been got up all over the States." A previous usage was "centenary," but its first use is not much older, marking the hundredth anniversary of Britain's Glorious Revolution in 1788. A "Jubilee" as a major anniversary of a British monarch—perhaps a forerunner to the centennial—was first marked in a formal

way in 1809, in George III's fiftieth year on the throne. Sesquicentennial was first used in 1880—notably, just four years after the first centennial celebration, and as a marker of the one-hundred-fiftieth anniversary of Baltimore, Maryland—a state just fifteen years removed from its slave-state past and some of the most horrific combat of the Civil War.[2] These dates do not appear to be coincidental—all appear during or after significant challenges to the political entity, when affirmation and unity are urgently needed. George III's jubilee occurred in the midst of the Napoleonic Wars; the United States' first centennial occurred just nine years after the greatest crisis of the nation's history. As Barry Schwartz notes, the centennial celebration makes sense only when we understand the modern nation-state as an "imagined community" and the anniversary celebration as a way of establishing an origin story for this imagined community.[3] So, its "birth" takes on significance as a way to legitimize and enhance the unity of the political body. The legitimacy of the United States was challenged in the most aggressive way possible during the Civil War; nine years later, the origin of the nation—a story upon which almost everyone could agree—was widely celebrated.

For the *Quarterly*, though, this poses a bit of dilemma. The *Quarterly's* mission is to provide a home for scholarly inquiry, and while this does not preclude aspects that celebrate Nevada, scholarly inquiry must go wherever the historical questions and historical evidence lead. For me, the meaning of a sesquicentennial, from a scholarly perspective is that it provides a chance to pause our scholarly investigations and take a moment to reflect on Nevada's history as a whole. What have we learned about Nevada's history? Where does the scholarship in key areas stand today? Perhaps this reflection can provide some guidance as we move forward in the twenty-first century.

With this in mind, I asked several of Nevada's most notable historians to write reflective essays for this issue. These are not new research essays (although several contain information and ideas not yet published elsewhere); rather, these are overview essays in some key areas of Nevada history. Together, they provide a snapshot of Nevada history at this point in time that is the first of its kind, and, I hope, a guidepost for the next generation of scholarship in Nevada history.

Our issue begins with a look at the practice of Nevada history itself—a history of Nevada history, if you will. William D. Rowley's "The Enterprise of Nevada History" charts the course of, in his words, "the ever changing landscape of Nevada's quest to sustain itself in an arid basin and range environment" from the beginnings of serious scholarship at the turn of the century to the present. The rest of the issue provides examination of particular topic areas. For example, Eric C. Nystrom and Ronald M. James examine Nevada's mining history in "Mining and Nevada: An Entwined History." No economic enterprise has shaped Nevada more than mining, from its origins in the 1860s up to the present, and Nystrom and James provide an overview of this industry's development in Nevada. They conclude with a reference to some

of the ambiguities of Nevada history, or, perhaps in other words, the conflict between history and collective memory in Nevada. And Nystrom and James conclude with a reference to some of the ambiguities of Nevada history, or, perhaps in other words, the conflict between history and collective memory in Nevada. Nystrom and James note that mining—an industrial enterprise—has shaped the history of the state from the beginning to the present, and this state is, contrary to the self-image created and sustained by many, actually the second most urban state in the United States (only New Jersey has a higher percentage of urban-dwelling residents).

This urban nature of Nevada is little understood or appreciated, but Eugene P. Moehring's "The Urban Impact: Towns and Cities in Nevada's History" focuses our attention on the urban nature of Nevada and the urban networks that have shaped the state. Despite the Hollywood image of Nevada as a land of wide open spaces and cowboys, Nevada's early history was "a thriving urban system" that was "Linked by a maze of pack trails, toll roads, wagon roads, rivers and even flumes, a thriving urban system [that] served the Comstock area during the early 1860s—even as civil war raged in the East."Rather than frontier territory, Nevada was very early composed of "a number of small and large urban networks" that "fragmented the Nevada wilderness into hundreds of big and small chunks."

Moehring notes that the gambling industry is an urban enterprise, and certainly no activity short of mining has shaped Nevada as much, especially since 1931. David G. Schwartz's "Good Luck if You Do: Nevada's Long Relationship with Gambling" takes an in-depth look at this history. Many aspects are little known, such as the strong anti-gambling stance of the territory and the early state (including Governor Henry G. Blasdel's attempt to veto the legalization of some gambling in 1869—a practice he called an "intolerable and inexcusable vice")—to the period between 1910 and 1931 when most gambling was made illegal in Nevada. Schwartz then explains the key elements of the gambling industry's expansion: the pioneering efforts of Raymond Smith and Bill Harrah in Reno, the resort-casino innovations that were driven by the arrival of "an aggressive group of erstwhile bootleggers who brought expertise in the business of gambling, and the post-1969 emergence of another group of aggressive entrepreneurs who ushered in the era of the corporate-owned mega-resorts—Howard Hughes, Kirk Kerkorian, and Steven Wynn.

Our overview of Nevada history at 150 ends with Michael S. Green's "The Nevada Political Tradition at 150." Green divides Nevada's political history into three major eras: The Comstock Era and the Long Nineteenth Century, The Mining and Reno Era, and The Modern (post 1954) Era. While different political figures, parties, and economic interests dominated each era, Green identifies continuities not easily visible to the non-specialist. In fact, he argues that "Nevada has evolved economically, politically, and socially, but the changes have not been so drastic that they represent a complete break with the past.

Finally, with this issue we resume a practice that many of our readers have requested—book reviews. Our goal will not be to review every manuscript published on Nevada history, but rather to focus on scholarly works that are of particular interest or importance. In this issue we feature Michael Hittman's review of *At Pyramid Lake* and Eugene Moehring's review of *Vegas at Odds: Labor Conflict in a Leisure Economy, 1960-1985*.

I hope you enjoy this momentary pause from the vigorous research into Nevada's past to reflect on Nevada's history. What is this thing called Nevada? What do we know about it? Where do we go from here? I hope this issue provides us with a snapshot in time, a clear picture of the major historical trends of the last 150 years, and a path toward Nevada's Bicentennial in 2064, when, I hope, the *Quarterly* will pause to reflect on Nevada's past, and, I'm certain, the governor will celebrate with the cutting of a very, very large cake.

Notes

[1]Richard White, "A Commemoration and a Historical Mediation," *Journal of American History*, Vol. 94, no. 4 (March 2008), pp. 1073-1081.

[2]"centennial, adj. and n.". OED Online. June 2015. Oxford University Press. http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/29640?redirectedFrom=centennial& (accessed July 10, 2015).

[3]Barry Schwartz, "The Social Context of Commemoration: A Study in Collective Memory," *Social Forces*, Vol. 61, no. 2 (Dec. 1982), pp. 374-402

The Enterprise of Nevada History

William D. Rowley

In May 1912 University of California history professor Herbert Eugene Bolton traveled across the mountains to Reno from Berkeley. At the invitation of Jeanne Weir, founder of the fledgling Nevada Historical Society, Bolton journeyed east of the Sierra to inspire the new organization and the enterprise of Nevada history. On May 13, he stood before the members of the society to deliver a lengthy address that urged Nevadans to engage the enterprise of Nevada history by writing their own history: "The Obligation of Nevada toward the Writing of Her Own History." On this "obligation" hinged the creation of "historic consciousness" from which "civic consciousness" sprang. In California, Professor Bolton already enjoyed a reputation for championing the history of his state, as well as the histories of the the Pacific Slope and Spanish settlement across much of the Southwest that predated American conquest. He designated California part of the "Borderlands" or the Spanish "frontier" settlements (the presidio, the mission, and the pueblo) prior to American conquest in 1848 and the Mexican Cession in the Treaty of Guadalupé-Hidalgo. The Great Basin of the Far West fell outside the Borderlands experience, but like all other regional and local history, the grand narrative of American expansion to the Pacific required the inclusion of the Nevada story.[1]

William D. Rowley is a professor of history at the University of Nevada, Reno, specializing in the American West, environmental history, and the history of Nevada. He served as the editor-in-chief of the *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly* from 1991-2004, and held the university's Grace A. Griffen Chair in Nevada and the West from 1998 to 2016. He has many publications to his credit, including the following books: *Reno: Hub of the Washoe Countr*y (1984), *U.S. Forest Service Grazing and Rangelands: a History* (1985), *Reclaiming the Arid West: the Career of Francis G. Newlands* (1996), and *The Bureau of Reclamation: Origins and Growth, 1902-1945* (2008).

Without attention to its history, Nevada faced the prospect of diminished civic and community life. Professor Bolton called upon local people to rise to the occasion. Enterprising work in Nevada history offered the state the opportunity to create an "historic consciousness" about the grand narrative of western expansion and the planting of a commonwealth in the inter-mountain region. Already by the early twentieth century a substantial historical literature existed, but it was narrowly focused on the Comstock gold and silver riches—a twenty-year period from 1860 to 1880 wherein occurred the creation of Nevada Territory in 1861 and statehood in 1864. By the late 1870s the Comstock had failed and went into borrasca (out of luck and out of ore —the opposite of bonanza), followed by twenty years of mining depression (1880-1900) from which the state was finally rescued by a mining revival. The early twentieth-century mining boom occurred with new gold and silver finds in Tonopah and Goldfield accompanied by the rise of copper mining in White Pine County in the far reaches of the state's "Great East." New life in Nevada's mines, both in precious and industrial metals, brought prosperity and an influx of population, with some calling it "the Southern Klondike" as it came on the heels of the northern Klondike gold-rush failure in Alaska. Renewed activity marked a new prosperity and influx of population. While the renewal of Nevada's economic well-being stirred high hopes, the state's history remained largely buried. Bolton noted that Nevada seemed to disappear from national or even western history by the early twentieth century. In one of the latest school histories, he said, "which prides itself on its emphasis upon the West, the name of Nevada does not appear, although a chapter of twenty pages is headed 'Texas.'" Summing up the state of Nevada's history, Bolton said, "Nevada seems to be largely unknown to historians," but he added, "except as the seat of the Comstock Lode and a State whose admission into the Union was due to the need of Republican votes."[2]

From an academic viewpoint there is much to criticize in Bolton's emphasis upon history serving the cause of patriotism and civic consciousness. Yet citizenship and patriotism became widely recognized as handmaidens of history writing and teaching in the ideology of Progressive Reform, and certainly by 1917 had become an accepted, if not required, practice in the fervor of patriotism that accompanied American entrance into World War I and the years following. The Progressive Era (c. 1900-1917) understood the importance of creating more democratic and responsible government to overcome corruption and the threat to democratic government posed by monopolies and economic trusts during the Robber Baron era of the late nineteenth century. Bolton clearly saw history (state and local) playing a role in the creation of citizenship and even patriotism as he noted in his opening remarks to members and patrons of the Nevada Historical Society in 1912. While his words met with approval from this audience, Bolton did not go unchallenged on his own turf at the University of California. His UC critics

looked with dismay upon the Bolton-dominated history department's emphasis upon California, the Pacific Coast, and the Spanish Borderlands as simply "history as a representative of local patriotism," and contrary to the larger discipline of "history" as a "University study." Suffice it to say that some saw serious problems with history as "local patriotism," or national patriotism for that matter.[3]

In the following years Jeanne Weir continued her work with the Nevada Historical Society, its annual publications, and her teaching position in the University of Nevada's History Department. Joining her in these good works for Nevada history should be mentioned Professor Romanzo Adams of the university's Sociology Department. He published important studies of Nevada taxation, school reforms, and stock ranching in the Nevada environment, all with an eye to promote reform measures that could make Nevada a more just and equitable place to build community-minded citizenship and transform the current transient, predominantly male population into a more diverse, stable demography based upon families, schools, and an industrious middle class. The writings of both Weir and Adams often drew upon a small collection of "mug histories"[4] that pioneered the effort to write Nevada history. The first of these was published by Thompson and West; edited by Myron Angel, *History of Nevada* appeared in 1881. It was a relation of events in Nevada history that also featured subscribed biographies of "Prominent Men and Pioneers," which were, of course, flattering in their presentations. Other Nevada histories with similar mug-patronage financing did not appear until the twentieth century. They included Thomas Wren, *A History of the State of Nevada: Its Resources and People* (1904); Sam P. Davis, editor, *The History of Nevada* (1913); and later, with James G. Scrugham as editor, *Nevada: A Narrative of the Conquest of a Frontier Land* (1935). In 1890 the H. H. Bancroft History Company of San Francisco published volume XXV of a general history of the American West entitled *History of Nevada, Colorado, and Wyoming*. Hubert Howe Bancroft was a true entrepreneur of history. Writing in nineteenth-century California he clearly saw Nevada to be worthy of his enterprise as the site of the great Comstock mines and fabulous wealth that held the Pacific Coast and nation enthralled for nearly twenty years.

By the 1920s major figures in Nevada's first generation of Progressive-Reform-minded historians and "upbuilders" were saying farewell to what Nevada was becoming.[5] In the ten years after 1910, copper mining and smelting became the focus of economic growth in White Pine County, but gold and silver mining to the south of Reno, in Tonopah and Goldfield, faded. Las Vegas remained a railroad way station between Salt Lake City and Los Angeles, with Boulder or Hoover Dam still a distant dream in the minds of engineers and ambitious, forward-looking politicians. In Reno the moral reforms of the Progressive Era, the strict anti-gambling bill of the 1909 legislature, women's suffrage, 1918's prohibition (in reaction to wartime arguments against using grain for alcohol instead of food, with a dash of prejudice against German

brewers) began to take a backseat as Reno, especially after the 1923 mayoral elections, was permitted to become a "wide open town." A clandestine economy of boozy speakeasies, a permissive sex trade, and illegal gambling thrived alongside legal pari-mutuel betting on horse races and Reno's Divorce Colony. By 1931, Reno's mayor E. E. Roberts was quoted as saying that if he had his way in Reno, "there would be a whiskey barrel on every street corner with ladles for all."[6]

Racy, vice-related trends in "economic development" sowed the seeds of disillusionment among some of the reform minded who had a far different view of the future. Some left the state and others did not live long enough to see what the future held. After all of his civic-minded work studying the history and organization of Nevada's school system, taxation history, and ranch land ownership, Professor Romanzo Adams departed for the University of Hawaii, where he did groundbreaking studies in race relations in that island complex. Nevada's crusader for women's suffrage (achieved in 1914) and twice candidate for United States Senate (in 1918 and 1920), Anne Martin left the state for a new residence in Carmel, California, but not before delivering a parting shot at what she regarded as Nevada's retreat from reform and progress. The polemical message reached a national audience with her article in *The Nation* magazine, a part of a series on "The State of the States." The editors invited Martin, as a leading reform figure in Nevada, to submit the essay on Nevada—its present conditions and prospects for the future. Her article appeared in the July 22, 1922, issue of *The Nation* and was entitled "Nevada: Beautiful Desert of Buried Hopes." The title sums up Martin's views as she described a state of dramatic desert and mountain beauty, once imbued with a reformist spirit of uplift, but now in the grips of "boss ridden" politics. Still plagued by a transient population largely employed in ranching, mining, and transportation interests, Nevada showed signs of reverting to control by a political machine (George Wingfield) and a plutocracy wielding political power more characteristic of its late nineteenth-century Gilded Age politics during and after the Comstock. Martin declared, "Nevada began well," but became "the neglected step-child, the weakling in the family of States," and now, "a vast, exploited, undeveloped State with a meager and boss-ridden population."[7]

In the first decades of the twentieth century hope and optimism abounded in Nevada. By the beginning of the third decade, however, the plans of reformers to make Nevada into a "model commonwealth" had evaporated. Nevada's United States Senator Francis G. Newlands often used that term to describe what he believed should be the goal of Nevada's progressive future. His death at the end of 1917, the coming of World War I, the failure of the Newlands irrigation project in Fallon to usher in a new era of civic-minded small farmers to Nevada, and finally the downward turn in the mining economy as the mines in Tonopah and Goldfield played out all served to deflate the ambitions of reform in the state. Nevada, according to Martin, had

reverted to oligarchic machine politics dominated by political bosses who were reasserting (or extending) the power of the "saloon crowd" and encouraging a vice-based economy, a far cry from what Martin and others had hoped for the future of the state. Although she did not use his name in her scathing article, Martin and others saw George Wingfield, who had grown rich in the southern mining boom in Tonopah and Goldfield, as the kingpin of political power who was now busily promoting a vice-based economy, either legal or illegal, that later assumed the benign and appealing label of "a tourist economy."

Despite the demise of Progressive reform in the state and its brainy professional proponents, the enterprise of Nevada history took a curious twist with the rise of a post-war Narrow Nationalism (c. 1919-1924). Portrayed by most sources as a reaction against the internationalism that American participation in World War I implied, the Narrow Nationalism sought to defend "American values." Congressional rejection of participation by the United States in the League of Nations as a part of the European war (Treaty of Versailles) settlement indicated a rising tide of disillusionment with the war, its high-minded goals (to Save the World for Democracy), and overseas involvements that seemingly brought "the blow back" of foreign radicalism to American shores. Reactions to change provoked movements to defend a homogenous American national character and ethnic make-up, especially a white Protestant ethnicity as opposed to increased diversity in American life and society. The Narrow Nationalism included measures to limit immigration from Europe for the first time, especially from southern and eastern Europe, to quash labor radicalism, and to educate the public, especially immigrants, in the values, history, and content of American democratic government at the national and state levels.

The call for civic education even produced a new academic discipline called "political science."[8] Sentiments in the Nevada state legislature also followed national trends. In a move which Professor Bolton would probably have applauded, the 1923 Nevada legislature entertained and passed a bill to require public schools and the public and private colleges of the state to institute instruction in the United States and Nevada constitutions. Officially entitled "An Act to require the teaching of the Constitutions of the United States and of the State of Nevada in the public and private schools and colleges of the state, and matters properly relating thereto," the act passed both houses of the legislature with only some absentee votes not registering their approval. The law emphasized that instruction must be given "in the essentials of the constitution of the United States and the State of Nevada, including the origin and history of said constitution and the study of and devotion to American institutions and ideals."[9] Civic education at the college level became compulsory along with the acknowledgement that "history" was an integral part of the requirement. The historian Russell R. Elliott remarked that, at the time, the passage of this legislation "did little to

stimulate the study or the teaching of Nevada history in the schools" because school curricula and school administrators failed to take advantage of the educational possibilities of state history. Also, with barely five hundred students at the University of Nevada, the attention to the subject did not draw the attention of research and writing.[10]

Left to the state's own devices, little occurred in the enterprise of Nevada history even with educational laws requiring the teaching of civics and history in the state. That picture changed in the 1930s. The Great Depression that followed the 1929 stock market collapse brought Franklin D. Roosevelt's presidency, the New Deal, and a host of economic relief and recovery programs from the federal government. The Federal Writers' Project, part of the Work Projects Administration (WPA), infused federal funds into cultural projects associated with history, arts, and letters. One program authorized an inventory of county records that was later to be microfilmed. Another, *The American Guide Series,* sought to develop travel guides for the various states to promote tourism by automobile, but also often included extensive historical discussions of places and events by knowledgeable local writers, scholars, and educators. Jeanne Elizabeth Wier, the perennial director of the Nevada State Historical Society and now head of the Department of History and Political Science at the University of Nevada, sponsored and supervised the Nevada undertaking: *Nevada: A Guide to the Silver State,* published by Binfords & Mort, Portland, Oregon, in 1940. It featured work by multiple Nevada researchers and writers, with Wier responsible for reading and correcting the final manuscript. The state supervisor in the forward to the Writers' Project in Nevada noted that Wier's contributions "go far beyond actual reading of the manuscript, in that many people who gave assistance to preparation of the book were stimulated long ago to an interest in Nevada history by Dr. Wier."[11]

In the same year as the publication of *A Guide to The Silver State*, Wier's essay "The Mystery of Nevada" appeared in a collection of essays entitled *Rocky Mountain Politics* (1940). She posed an array of questions about the state, its history, limited resources, and possibilities for the future. Unlike Anne Martin's previous disparaging 1922 post-World War I essay in the *Nation* magazine, Wier on the eve of a new world war expressed an admiring view of what she called the "The Mystery of Nevada," wherein she lauded the political, educational, and even religious institutions of the state, or "the daily habits of more stable and permanent population" that existed side by side with the divorce and gambling elements. "This conservatism and stability," wrote Wier, "bracketed with a constant holiday spirit, constitutes what has been called the "mystery of Nevada."[12]

Director Wier's serious and reflective essay appeared following the publication of Effie Mona Mack's *Nevada: A History of the State from the Earliest Times through the Civil War* (actually to 1878), published in 1936. Mack's book was the first scholarly attempt to survey early Nevada history. Mack held

Effie Mona Mack at her desk. (*Nevada Historical Society*)

a Ph.D. in history from the University of California. She also cooperated with Byrd Wall Sawyer in the 1940 publication of a junior high school text on Nevada history entitled *Our State: Nevada*. While Mack pursued a career as an English teacher at Reno High School, she published widely on Nevada history, including *Mark Twain's Nevada* (1947).

The connection of Mark Twain with Nevada did much to stimulate the enterprise of Nevada history. Richard G. Lillard, an American literature scholar whose interest in Twain drew him to Nevada history, produced the insightful 1942 book *Desert Challenge: An Interpretive History of Nevada*. He congratulated Nevada for finding reliable economic props in matrimony (quick divorces and marriages), legalized gambling, and assorted tourism to substitute for the shortcomings of its natural-resource economy. Almost for the first time Lillard's work sounded a congratulatory note to Nevada on its recent economic choices, which were designed to encourage an inflow of money to the state. While Wier's previous essay was by no means critical of the attempt to encourage a vice-related tourism, she could not resist an apologetic defense by asserting that "these things are condoned by many as a matter of economic expediency in lieu of more desirable ways of making a living." For several decades Lillard's work remained the best widely read study of Nevada until the scholarship of the late 1960s and 1970s.[13]

During the postwar period the enterprise of Nevada history followed the fortunes of the state. In 1940 Nevada's population passed the 100,000 mark, giving the state almost one person per each of its 110,000 square miles and also for the first time in the ten-year census cycle a balanced male/female gender ratio. After 1945, the rising prosperity of postwar America and the attractions of a tourist-entertainment economy (laced with the essential amenity of legalized gambling), caused the Nevada economy and population to grow by leaps and bounds. Now more public funds were available to spend on schools, higher education, and cultural institutions—the Historical Society and Nevada State Library and Archives, special collections in the libraries of the universities, and even an oral history project for Nevada at the University of Nevada, Reno, and later at the new University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Local depositories stemmed the flow of Nevada documents out of state to Yale, the Huntington Library in San Marino, and the Bancroft Library in Berkeley. Historians of Nevada now had resources closer to home. The establishment of the state's second major university, in Las Vegas, indicated the exponential growth of population and an important shift to the south away from Washoe in the north. This meant that the future enterprise of Nevada history began a focus on new topics and in places far to the south that often emphasized the phenomenal growth of a spectacular and glitzy city, one that historians of southern Nevada strove to portray as simply another sunbelt oasis city with normal concerns of providing urban amenities such as infrastructure, adequate water supplies, schools, and roads.[14]

Once the state with the smallest population, Nevada's population between 1950 and 2010 saw an increase from 160,000 to 2,500,000, larger than several other Rocky Mountain and Great Plains states. Nevada could no more be referred to as "our pettiest state," especially with its senior United States senator, Harry Reid, as the Senate majority leader since 2007.[15] In the 1960s and 1970s state institutions grew in response to population growth, and state budgets expanded to include aspects of the enterprise of Nevada history. The University of Nevada Press found funding security when it was put under the Chancellor's Office in Nevada's system of higher education. The two universities, with oral history programs and a legislative mandate (still in effect dating from 1923) to provide instruction in the Nevada and United States constitutions, enrolled large classes in Nevada history. The Nevada Historical Society sought a professional director as well as a professional librarian and curators. Most important, it started regular publication of the *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly*, a publication outlet for peer-reviewed articles and discussions of Nevada history. An important survey of Nevada history, James Hulse's *The Nevada Adventure*, for junior high school and high school students, appeared from the University of Nevada Press in 1964, and in 1973 Russell R. Elliott launched the first complete college-level survey of Nevada history; it was published in the University of Nebraska Press's state history series. In

this same year the University of Nevada Press published, under the editorship of Walter Van Tilburg Clark, *The Journals of Alfred Doten, 1849-1903* in three volumes based upon the multiple Doten diaries deposited in the library at the University of Nevada, Reno. The diaries related Doten's experiences as an argonaut in the gold fields of California, his arrival on the Comstock in 1863, and his life in Nevada throughout the latter part of the nineteenth century until his death, in 1903. Availing this rich primary source to a wider public won the new University of Nevada Press well-deserved accolades.

Publication of *The Journals of Alfred Doten* and Elliott's *History of Nevada* made 1973 a banner year in the enterprise of Nevada history. These achievements foreshadowed an avalanche of publications in the next decades on the many phases and time periods of Nevada history. In his 1978 article on state history Professor Elliott listed the following areas as demanding attention in Nevada history: gambling, mining, agriculture, transportation, warehousing, banking, and labor. These were largely economic concerns and twentieth century in nature. Labor questions, however, reached back into the nineteenth century with the place of labor and mining unions on the Comstock. Beyond these subjects were social and cultural topics related to religion, education, the arts, law enforcement and crime, ethnic and racial minorities, and especially histories of Native Americans in the Great Basin. Gender history in terms of women's history and gay and lesbian history also presented challenges to the enterprise of Nevada history.[16]

In the more than thirty years since Professor Elliott made his summation in the late 1970s, significant scholarship has poured from the presses both academic and popular. Space does not permit a full listing, but mention of recent trends and some major works draw attention in chronological and topological categories. The early nineteenth-century "contact period" usually begins the discussion with appropriate nods to the 1776 Dominguez-Escalante Expedition into the Ute country of the eastern Great Basin and, in the same year, Father Francisco Garcés's travels into the Southern Paiute country near what some believe to be current-day Las Vegas. Sometimes a more comprehensive approach dictates a view of pre-history both for the human population and the formation of the challenging landscape; that landscape marks what one author, John McPhee, notes as the basin-and-range province of the Great Basin in his 1982 work, *Basin and Range*. Other sources also comment on the aridity and desiccation that has proceeded apace in the Great Basin since the last ice age that left behind remnant land-locked pluvial lakes or ancient lakes such as Lake Lahontan in the west and Bonneville in the eastern Great Basin.[17]

The human population that lived along the shores of these lakes is more properly the province of anthropology, but the history of native peoples can be addressed in the early contact period when explorers from the east, the north, and to a lesser extent the south came to the Great Basin. Peter Skene Ogden from the north with the Hudson Bay Company, and the American fur traders,

Jedediah Smith and Joseph Walker, from the Rocky Mountains to the east, followed by the U.S. Army Topographical Corps explorer John C. Frémont in the 1840s all figure in the contact period. New investigations, especially the work of John Phillip Reid on the Snake River Expeditions of Peter Skene Ogden in the 1820s supplement the earlier work of Gloria Griffen Cline entitled, *Exploring the Great Basin* (1963). Cline based much of her research on the records of the Hudson Bay Company as did Reid in his *Contested Empire: Peter Skene Ogden and the Snake River Expeditions* (2002). The extensive journals of Frémont documenting his explorations in the Great Basin received updated annotated treatment by Donald Jackson and Mary Lee Spence in their multi-volume *The Expeditions of John Charles Frémont* (1970-1984). Anne F. Hyde's *Frémont's First Impressions* (2012) add new cultural and landscape perceptions to his travels throughout the Great Basin. A most recent contribution to the predicament of Great Basin Indians in the context of colonial expansion, especially from the Spanish settlements in the southwest (Santa Fe), is by Ned Blackhawk in his *Violence over the Land: Indians and Empires in the Early American West* (2006).

There is extensive literature of the trails across the Great Basin and the trials of crossing the Sierra. John Mack Faragher's *Women and Men on the Overland Trail* (1979) gives significant insight into trail travel for families. Will Bagley writes on a topic directly connected to early travel across the Great Basin in his *With Golden Visions Bright before Them: Trails to the Mining West, 1849-1852* (2012). The now widely available and ever-readable Sarah Royce's account of the journey to California during the California Gold Rush, *A Frontier Lady: Recollections of the Gold Rush and Early California* (1932), offers accounts of the trails across, as do the early works by George R. Stewart on the California trails and his popular *Ordeal by Hunger: The Story of the Donner Party* (1960). Joseph King has attempted to offer a revisionist treatment of the Donner party's trials in *Winter of Entrapment: A New Look at the Donner Party* (1994). Ric Burns's 1992 "American Experience" PBS documentary film on the Donner party offers a haunting but in the end triumphal portrayal of the Donner party's horrendous ordeal. Other, more recent, treatments include Ethan Rarick, *Desperate Passage: The Donner Party's Perilous Journey West* (2008), and Frank Mullen, *The Donner Party: A Day-by-Day Account of a Doomed Wagon Train, 1846-1847* (1997). Of some good interest to local historians is Harold Curran's *Fearful Crossing: The Central Overland Trail through Nevada* (1982), and for those with curiosity about rocks and strata is Keith Heyer Meldahl's *Rough-hewn Land: A Geological Journey from California to the Rocky Mountains* (2011).

The topic of trails across the basin can also be interwoven with the arrival of the Mormon settlement in the Salt Lake Valley from 1847 onward into the late 1850s, when in 1857 the Mormon War brought back to Salt Lake City the Mormons from outlying settlements to the west to defend against an invading force of federal troops. This move involved evacuation of the settlements in

Washoe Valley first brought there by Orson Hyde, and in the same year the outpost called the Las Vegas Mission collapsed. An often-noted legacy in the literature of the Mormon exit is the "Curse of Orson Hyde," which was directed at the people of Carson and Washoe valleys for his lost property, as noted in Thompson and West's *History of Nevada* (1881).[18] All of these events have produced sagas involving trail routes, the most prominent being the development of what will be known as Highway 50, the loneliest road in the world (pioneered by Mormon settlers); the Egan Trail, which was surveyed or commented on in the George Simpson Wagon Road Survey, merited an online "Vignette" from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineer's Historical Office in 2004. Leonard Arrington's work in Mormon history especially offers background in *The Mormon Experience: A History of the Latter-day Saints* (1979) and in his small booklet, *The Mormons in Nevada* (1979).

The Mormon War in 1857 and the influx of California miners in the Rush to Washoe following discovery of the Comstock Lode in 1859 removed a Mormon presence in early Nevada. The most recent treatment of the Mormon War is by the writer and historian C. L. Gammon: *The Great Mormon War of 1857 and 1858* (2013). The Comstock, it can be said, created the enterprise of Nevada history with Dan De Quille's classic *History of the Big Bonanza: An Authentic Account of the Discovery, History, and Working of the World Renowned Comstock Silver Lode of Nevada.* It appeared in 1876, one year before the Comstock started to fall into decline. Another contemporary work and official United States government study is Eliot Lord's *Comstock Mining and Mines: The Comprehensive History of Virginia City's Mining Industry* (1883). It offers a rich source of statistical data on the mines and miners. A myriad of works and studies have appeared since, with the most recent efforts surrounding Ron James's work, *The Roar and the Silence* (1998), that considers the Comstock in the light of the popularity of Westerns in American TV media such as the program series "Bonanza." The Comstock's impact upon the West and the Pacific Coast made Nevada one of the earliest states of the Far West when it became, in 1864, the third state in the region, after California and Oregon. While many works have appeared on the various figures of Comstock history, some of the more recent are Michael J. Makley, *The Infamous King of the Comstock: William Sharon and the Gilded Age in the West* (2006), and his *John Mackay: Silver King in the Gilded Age* (2009). And there is always insightful and readable David Lavender's *Nothing Seemed Impossible: William C. Ralston and Early San Francisco* (1975).

A venerable work on western mining that includes an excellent treatment of Comstock mining and ore processing is Rodman Paul's *Mining Frontiers of the Far West, 1849-1880* (1963), also of note is Richard E. Lingenfelter's *Hardrock Miners: A History of the Mining Labor Movement in the American West* (1974). A new analysis of the miner on the Comstock—one linking the risk to affirmations of masculinity in the dangerous beginning days of underground industrialized mining—has appeared from Gunther Peck. His 1993 article in the summer issue

of the *Journal of Social History* is titled "Manly Gambles: The Politics of Risk on the Comstock Lode." Other, more recent, sophisticated and specialized works on metal mining have appeared from Kent A. Curtis, *Gambling on Ore: The Nature of Metal Mining in the United States, 1860-1910* (2013), and Eric C. Nystrom, *Seeing Underground: Maps, Models, and Mining Engineering in America* (2014). Gordon Morris Bakken addresses a still prevalent issue in mining politics in *The Mining Law of 1872: Past, Politics, and Prospects* (2008).[19]

David Johnson produced an important study of the three early states of the Far West and their constitutions in *Founding the Far West: California, Oregon, and Nevada, 1840-1890* (1992). After the Comstock's fall into borrasca after 1880, there followed twenty years of depression and decline in Nevada. It became a "rotten borough," a term often used by the popular press to describe Nevada's situation as a geographical place with little population but with the same political representation in the national government in Washington, D.C., as more normal and populous states. The term "pocket borough," too, was often applied because so many of the prominent United States senators from Nevada were in the pocket of California interests. The career of William M. Stewart well illustrates this occurrence, which Russell R. Elliott explored in *Servant of Power: A Political Biography of William M. Stewart* (1983). Range scientist James A. Young made an important contribution to Great Basin ecological history with his study of the livestock industry, its origins and plight in this period and on into the twentieth century. Written in cooperation with B. Abbot Sparks, the book, *Cattle in the Cold Desert*, appeared in 1984 from Utah State University Press and was republished in a revised edition by the University of Nevada Press in 2002. Edna Patterson, et.al. *Nevada's Northeast Frontier* (1969) also dealt with range issues in the "Great East" of Nevada. Mary Ellen Glass's *Silver and Politics in Nevada: 1892-1902* mainly concentrates on the rise of the Silver Party in Nevada during the 1890s, but offers limited analysis of the role silver played in the late nineteenth-century money question. For an understanding of the money question in the late nineteenth century and how the issue of silver money fit into this question, broader national surveys of the subject are required. A book that seizes upon the notorious "rotten borough" term characterizing much of Nevada's history is Gilman Ostrander's work, *Nevada: Great Rotten Borough, 1859-1964* (1966). It paints Nevada as a plutocracy in the late nineteenth century, especially in terms of the men it sends to the United States Senate. In the process, the book makes an abrupt transition to the twentieth century, where it offers an unflattering portrayal of the career of Senator Patrick McCarran. It generally concludes that Nevada has made a less than stellar contribution to national life and has generally lacked the natural and human resources to be a creditable and/or legitimate state, thereby justly earning it the moniker "rotten borough."

While Ostrander's oddly organized book considered nineteenth-century Nevada, it largely ignored Nevada's early twentieth-century Progressive

Era and the environment that produced a community of people with a new-found sense of social purpose and reform. It quickly passed on to mid-twentieth-century concerns about the Communist Red Scare that followed World War II, a movement that attracted the attention and demagoguery of Nevada's United States Senator Patrick McCarran. The omission failed to note of the rising fortunes of Nevada as it met the twentieth century, its reform mindedness, and the new interest in its history. Jeanne Wier, of course, found her career purpose in this era promoting the various causes of Nevada history. Later, native Nevadan Russell R. Elliott, who grew up in White Pine County amongst the new copper-mining and smelting industry in McGill, Ruth, and Ely, drew attention to the revived fortunes of the state in his *Nevada's Twentieth-Century Mining Boom: Tonopah, Goldfield, Ely* (1966). Elliott's not-widely known emeritus publication, *Growing up in a Company Town* (1990), was a stride toward new emphasis on social history as he wrote of his family's experiences in the White Pine County town of McGill. Encyclopedic notations on Nevada mining districts appeared in 1923 with the publication of *Mining Districts and Mineral Resources of Nevada* by Francis Church Lincoln.

Much new scholarship on the figures of early twentieth-century Nevada have also appeared. Loren B. Chan studied one of Nevada's Progressive Era governors in *Sagebrush Statesman: Tasker L. Oddie of Nevada* (1973), while William A. Douglass and Robert A. Nylen brought to publication a rich primary source in *Letters from the Nevada Frontier: Correspondence of Tasker L. Oddie, 1898-1902* (1992). C. Elizabeth Raymond made a study of a major early twentieth-century figure in her *George Wingfield: Owner and Operator of Nevada* (1992). Sally Zanjani and Guy Rocha offered insights into the labor wars in Goldfield in their *Ignoble Conspiracy*, (1986). Zanjani made a further contribution to Goldfield history in her *Goldfield: The Last Gold Rush on the Western Frontier*, (1992). In 1996 William D. Rowley completed a study of Nevada's most prominent national Progressive figure with the publication of *Reclaiming the Arid West: The Career of Francis G. Newlands*. An early publication of the Nevada Historical Society about this era that should not be ignored is Romanzo Adams's *Taxation in Nevada* (1918). A thorough study of Anne Martin appeared in 1985; written by Anne Bail Howard, a University of Nevada, Reno, English professor, it is entitled *The Long Campaign: A Biography of Anne Martin*.[20]

While World War I and the subsequent 1920s decade are important years in Nevada, they have not drawn the attention in terms of book-length monographs that the convergence of national Progressivism and Nevada's twentieth-century mining boom did for the period from 1900-1920. Article-length commentaries on the flu epidemic of 1918-19 and the impact of a post World War I Red Scare in the wake of the "Red" Russian Revolution with the onset of an ultra-nationalist reaction in various states have appeared. The ultra-nationalism of the period has been referred to as a "Narrow Nationalism" that gripped the nation and states. It included a reaction against involvement in the

European war, a rejection of the Treaty of Versailles and the League of Nations; there was an atmosphere that fostered anti-immigrant sentiments, attacks on labor organizations, promotion of Americanization education to imbue patriotism, and even the re-emergence of the Ku Klux Klan into western states, with Nevada being no exception. Events in Nevada reflected all of these, but at the same time Reno's "clandestine economy" started to thrive in the midst of national prohibition by permitting speakeasy drinking, gambling operations, and access to rapid divorces. Of course, Reno's boisterous and permissive Mayor E. E. Roberts will be a personality that draws attention in this period, as do the regrets of Anne Martin about the state's inability to maintain the spirit of Progressivism and reform of which she had been so much a part. Rowley's *Reno: Hub of the Washoe Country* (1984) and Alicia Barber's important study, *Reno's Big Gamble: Image and Reputation in the Biggest Little City* (2008), deal with these themes, as do articles in the *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly* and *Halcyon*, a publication of Nevada Humanities (1979-95).[21]

Moving to a focus on the New Deal and Great Depression in Nevada, Jerome E. Edwards's study *Pat McCarran: Political Boss of Nevada* appeared in 1982 and, with the subject most recently expanded upon, in Michael Ybarra's *Washington Gone Crazy: Senator Pat McCarran and the Great American Communist Hunt*, in 2004. On Nevada's longtime United States Senator Key Pittman (1913 to 1940) of this era, the foundational work of Fred Israel, *Nevada's Key Pittman* (1963) is available. In addition, there is a later study by the political scientist Betty Glad, *Key Pittman: The Tragedy of a Senate Insider* (1986), which also includes discussions of Pittman's spouse, Mimosa. Of interest, too, is the recent publication of a study of the New Deal's Civilian Conservation Corps by Renée Corona Kolvet and Victoria Ford, *The Civilian Conservation Corps in Nevada: From Boys to Men* (2006). Since the 1930s was the decade when Nevada reopened legalized gambling and approved the six-week divorce, as well as adopting "One Sound State" policies to attract investment in the state, it is appropriate to note again Barber's work about Reno recreating itself in *Reno's Big Gamble*. Mention should also be made of the republication in 1991 by the University of Nevada Press of *The WPA Guide to 1930s Nevada*, first published in 1940. These works introduce a social dimension into state history that reaches beyond political figures, especially with the building of Hoover Dam in the 1930s—an event that brings social issues to the fore with the coming of a large industrial labor force to southern Nevada.

World War II and the immediate postwar period saw a takeoff of the Nevada economy, and the changes in the state's society and government were widely noted in the literature. Most recent is Joanne Goodwin's *Women at Work in Las Vegas, 1940-1990* (2014), which features the theme of women entering the work force in Nevada's then-burgeoning wartime economy. Gambling in Las Vegas offered an avenue to spend money for entertainment at a time when the war had closed other outlets for consumer spending on household

items and automobiles. Nevada assumed prominence in the war effort when the expansion of military bases occurred, especially Army Air Force training bases. Preparations and/or training of the B-29 pilots took place at the Army Air Force base in Wendover, Nevada, where the crew for the Enola Gay trained before its mission to deliver the first atomic bomb to Hiroshima. *Combat Zoning: Military Land-Use Planning in Nevada*, by David Loomis, addresses the large areas held by the military in Nevada, especially since World War II. The production of magnesium in southern Nevada at Henderson by Basic Magnesium for airplane construction and fire bomb material also has drawn the attention of historians, along with an examination of the migration of African Americans from the South to that facility. All form an aspect of the new history enterprises centering on the rise of Las Vegas in Nevada history.

Since 1929, with the establishment of the Hawthorne Naval Ammunition Depot and also the naval airbase at Fallon during World War II, the military has assumed an increasing presence in Nevada. In 1950 the importance increased spectacularly when the Defense Department decided upon Nevada as the site for nuclear testing in the Cold War. These subjects, including military lands in Nevada, have drawn the interest of historians, as have works on the "Down Winders," who suffered from the effects of radioactive fallout from the nuclear tests. The literature on this subject is fairly extensive because it involved atmospheric testing in the 1950s, with ensuing environmental consequences. At the time, however, Las Vegas tried to make the nuclear-bomb testing into a party event; Dina Titus's book, *Bombs in the Backyard: Atomic Testing and American Politics* (1986), portrays a campaign in the city to turn the flashes of brightness in the skies north of Las Vegas into tourist attractions. The 1956 presidential campaign made it a national issue when the Democratic Party nominated Adlai Stevenson for his second presidential bid. Along with his vice-presidential running mate, Estes Kefauver, he took a stand against atmospheric testing (prohibited by international treaty in 1963) in Nevada. The congressionally authorized Nevada Test Site Museum in Las Vegas opened in 2005 and addresses some of these issues, while lauding the work and detonations at the test site as necessary for the winning of the Cold War. The Oral History Office on the campus of the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, has committed resources to developing the Nevada Test Site Oral History Project to interview test site workers and their experiences.

Tennessee Senator Estes Kefauver's name was already widely known in Nevada before his nomination for the vice-presidency on the Democratic ticket. Beginning in 1950 he appeared in Nevada as head of the Senate Select Committee on Crime to investigate underworld ties to Las Vegas gambling. Many Nevadans accused Kefauver of using the investigations to gain publicity for his campaign for the Democratic presidential nomination, and indeed the committee's hearings in Las Vegas were widely publicized in the newsreels of the time, serving as exposés of Nevada's open and legal gambling's ties to

the nation's crime syndicates. These investigations and subsequent hearings in Nevada of the Senate committee raised the specter of federal regulation of Nevada gambling, if not its prohibition, through confiscatory taxation measures from Congress. In reaction, the state made haste to establish its own regulatory agencies to head off any federal actions to deal with the presence of the underworld in Nevada. The Mob Museum in Las Vegas, opened in 2012, offers a version of these events in Nevada history. Gaming regulatory studies have arisen around these events, as well as histories in the 1950s that note the rise of Nevada's State Gaming Regulatory Board and the later establishment of the Gaming Commission.[22] One of the early works to confront the events of the 1950s was Mary Ellen Glass's *Nevada's Turbulent '50s: Decade of Political, Economic Change* (1981). Glass's many activities in the enterprise of Nevada history first began in earnest with her founding of the Nevada Oral History Project in 1964 at the University of Nevada, Reno. Its subsequent direction has been under Tom King, with its digitization under Alicia Barber and storage in the Special Collections Department of the Mathewson-IGT Knowledge Center (MIKC). The digitization enables computer searches of all the collected oral histories, making this compendium a valuable and easily used research depository.

In 1984, when Tom King took over from Mary Ellen Glass as director of the Oral History Project at the University of Nevada, Reno, he turned to developing oral histories into book form instead of the typescript question-and-answer format that characterized the earlier style. His efforts explored aspects of Nevada's entrepreneurial figures and especially those relating to gaming and, of course, political figures, e.g., *Hang Tough! Grant Sawyer: An Activist in the Governor's Mansion* (1993). In the field of university history and reform efforts in the state associated with the civil rights movement, King's production of Professor Elmer Rusco's oral history *Not Like a River: The Memoir of an Activist Academic* (2004) is particularly instructive. Russo was a professor at the University of Nevada, Reno. King's work took him into the field of video productions that featured Native American communities and life ways in Nevada that had previously been absent from the oral history projects. These efforts included videos that can be utilized nicely in classrooms: *People of the Marsh* (1993); *Rabbit Boss* (1995); and *Red Mountain Dwellers* (2006), about the Duckwater Reservation. Continuing with the interest in Native Americans of the Great Basin, the University of Nevada Press by the late twentieth century brought to a wider audience Sarah Winnemucca's *Life among the Piutes* when it issued a paperback reprint in 1983. Sally Zanjani furthered scholarship with her *Sarah Winnemucca* (2001) in the University of Nebraska Press's "American Indian Lives Series," as has Michael Hittman's *Great Basin Indians: An Encyclopedic History* from the University of Nevada Press (2013). Recent historians have shown particular interest in the ghost dance originating in Nevada and its relation to the 1890 massacre of Sioux Indian people at Wounded Knee in South Dakota. In this connection, the life

of Wovoka (or Jack Wilson) emerges as an important subject certainly in the following works: *Wovoka and the Ghost Dance* (1990, 1997) by Michael Hittman, and Gregory Smoak's *Ghost Dances and Identity: Prophetic Religion and American Indian Ethnogenesis in the Nineteenth Century* (2006). The foundational work for the subject, of course, was James A. Mooney's *The Ghost-Dance Religion and the Sioux Outbreak of 1890*, published by the U.S. Bureau of American Ethnology in 1896. Others, including Paul Bailey's *Wovoka: The Indian Messiah* (1957), over the years have leaned heavily on this original ethnological investigation and report.

The last quarter of the twentieth century (and on into the twenty-first century) has brought forth a myriad of studies on diverse topics that the growing and ever more diverse society of Nevada has found relevant to its present development and future direction. Heightened interest in gender questions, especially women's history, racial-ethnic questions, and the economic and social overhead cost of a gaming society upon which Nevada seemed to have a monopoly. Thoughtful essays began to appear on what many were regarding as the Nevada phenomenon or success story in the desert. One of those figures who tried to make some sort of sense and lend perspective to Nevada history at this point was Wilbur S. Shepperson, with his edited collection of essays, *East of Eden, West of Zion* (1988), and his last work, *Mirage-Land: Images of Nevada* (1992). Dealing with the physical and early setting of the Great Basin are McPhee's much-cited *Basin and Range* and the works of the cultural historical geographer Richard V. Francaviglia, most notably his *Mapping and Imagination in the Great Basin: A Cartographic History* (2005) and *Go East Young Man: Imagining the American West as the Orient* (2011). In the latter, he makes much of John C. Frémont's remarks in his 1845 journals about the Great Basin being un-American and Asiatic in its landscape. David Thomson, a prolific author and writer outside the halls academia, in 1999 contributed a fast-moving and eminently readable survey of all things Nevada with his *In Nevada: The Land, the People, God, and Chance*. The book consists of chapters or vignettes considering subjects from "Spirit Cave Man" to "Pugilism" and many others in the state's history. In reference to pugilism, those interested in boxing as sport have recently welcomed Richard O. Davies's *The Main Event: Boxing in Nevada: From the Mining Camps to the Las Vegas Strip* (2014).

More foundational works that appeal to the popular interest in local history continue to attract interest: Stanley Paher's multiple works, especially his *Nevada Ghost Towns and Mining Camps*, originally published in 1970, has had successive editions. There is also Helen S. Carlson, *Nevada Place Names: A Geographical Dictionary* (1974), and David R. Myrick, *Railroads of Nevada and Eastern California*, originally published in two volumes (1962-1963) and revised and republished by the University of Nevada Press in three volumes (1993-2007). Also, the Laxalt name has become a part of northern Nevada's literary culture reflecting the particular contributions of Basque immigrants to that culture with the works of Robert Laxalt, especially his *Sweet Promised*

Land (1957). In the political realm, his brother Paul Laxalt has yet to see a serious academic history of his career in the state. His support of corporate gaming ushered out-of-state corporations into the Nevada gambling business by the 1970s, and he was a United States senator from Nevada (1974-87) and a close association and confidant of President Ronald Reagan. By contrast, the Democratic senator Alan Bible, who preceded Laxalt and was heir to the McCarran legacy in Nevada politics, is the subject of an insightful biography by Gary E. Elliott, *Senator Alan Bible and the Politics of the New West* (1994).

Beyond the politics of late-twentieth-century Nevada, ethnicity, race, and women's history have commanded interest. The Women's History Project, largely founded through efforts of former assembly woman Jean Ford and based in northern Nevada, has been a force for preserving materials related to Nevada's women's history and encouraging publications in the field. In this respect, *Comstock Women: The Making of a Mining Community* (1998), edited by Ronald M. James and C. Elizabeth Raymond, made a significant contribution to the understanding of the role of women in early Nevada's mining communities. In terms of ethnic and racial histories, Wilbur S. Shepperson's *Restless Strangers* (1966) laid a foundation for exemplary works to follow: John P. Marschall's *Jews: A History in Nevada* (2008), and William A. Douglass and Jon Bilbao's *Amerikanuak: Basques in the New World* (1975, 2005), which dealt with the Basque heritage in the Americas as well as in Nevada. The recent arrival of a large Hispanic population in Nevada awaits treatment from enterprising historians, as well as social and political observers. Elmer Rusco's pioneering effort in black history in Nevada is evidenced with his *"Good Time Coming?": Black Nevadans in the Nineteenth Century* (1975). Rusco's name cannot be ignored in any study of minority groups in Nevada, including Native Americans and the Chinese. Sue Fawn Chung, a longtime student of the Chinese in Nevada, has recently offered *In Pursuit of Gold: Chinese Americans in the American West* (2014), based in part on her enterprising ventures into Nevada history.

Of course, the most remarkable development in late-twentieth-century Nevada history comes with the rise of Las Vegas. As the center of Nevada's population by the late twentieth century, its economy thrived on commercial gaming, entertainment spectacles, and enormous resort-like hotels offering spas, golf, and other recreational facilities. The city drew tourists from throughout the nation and the world to a desert metropolis rivaling Phoenix, Arizona, and other desert-oasis cities in the American southwest. The word oasis implies that there is water in place to service these new urban giants, but their growth inevitably demanded water from distant places presenting fundamental environmental issues about their sustainability. Las Vegas is a prime example. Once upon a time western water planners thought the enormous water resources of Lake Mead behind Hoover Dam on the Colorado River held the enduring answer to southern Nevada's water needs.[23] Of recent years, however, prolonged drought lowering the lake and Las Vegas's

persistent growth have forced the city to look to what its Southern Nevada Water Authority calls "ancient water" in the interior of the Great Basin, hundreds of miles north of the city in the arid basin-and-range topography of Nevada. Environmental limitations have long been a constant topic in Nevada history. James C. Hulse's most recent excursion into the enterprise of Nevada history critically examines water topics, mining wastes, and the nuclear test site, and portrays Las Vegas as an environmental contradiction in the desert in his brief book, *Nevada's Environmental Legacy: Progress or Plunder* (2009). It is a far cry, however, from his previous effort, *Forty Years in the Wilderness: Impressions of Nevada, 1940-1980* (1986), a jeremiad reciting Nevada's social, economic, and political disappointments. Hulse's *The Silver State: Nevada's Heritage Reinterpreted* (1991) and his *Oases of Culture: A History of Public and Academic Libraries in Nevada* (2003) mark him as one of the most productive scholars in the enterprise of Nevada history.

The wonderment of Las Vegas's allure and success with commercial gaming makes it an urban phenomenon in the center of a vast desert. As such, it presents a topic unto itself in the enterprise of Nevada history that cannot begin to be addressed to any good extent by the present endeavor. Suffice it to say here that Eugene P. Moehring presented a foundational work on the city with his *Resort City in the Sunbelt: Las Vegas* (1989, revised edition 2000) and his most recent comparative work, *Reno, Las Vegas, and the Strip: A Tale of Three Cities* (2014). His *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly* articles, "Nevada History: A Research Agenda" in the spring of 1989 and "Las Vegas History: A Research Agenda" in the winter of 2004, offer excellent guides to the extant literature and possible questions for the future. He has largely begun the historiography of modern Las Vegas and, in 2005, figured prominently in marking its centennial with a popular work, *Las Vegas: A Centennial History*. Nevada history plays prominently in his scholarly work on western urban history, *Urbanism and Empire in the Far West, 1840-1890* (2004). A diverse two-volume work must also be mentioned concerning the ethnic and social history of Las Vegas: *The Peoples of Las Vegas: One City, Many Faces* (2005) and *More Peoples of Las Vegas: One City, Many Faces* (2010), both jointly edited by Jerry L. Simich and Thomas C. Wright. Michael Green joins Moehring and others in his contributions to Las Vegas history and the Nevada history enterprise. Green's research and writing reaches beyond Las Vegas with his 2015 publication of a new textbook, *Nevada: A History of the Silver State* (2015). It will succeed Russell Elliott's earlier text survey work that saw publication in 1973 and a revised edition in 1987. In terms of a broad sampling of writing on Nevada, Cheryll Glotfelty in 2008 presented a huge edited volume of more than 800 pages entitled *Literary Nevada: Writings from the Silver State*.

In the economic growth years of the 1990s there was much talk of Nevada finally becoming a "normal state" with little need for historical apologies about its rotten-borough past or jeremiads about its vice-based single-

industry tourist economy. Political scientist Richard Lewis Siegel's long essay, "Nevada among the States: Converging Public Policies," in the fall 2000 issue of the *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly*, somewhat boastfully delivered this message. He wrote that Nevada was becoming "more typical or normal in terms of governmental programs" when compared nationally to other states. No more was it "the ugly duckling … the weakling in the family of states," as Anne Martin described Nevada in 1922. [24] Professor Siegel did offer the caveat that the standards of "typical or normal" did not mean that the state had reached an admirable optimum in its social and educational services, but that it was no more the penurious outlier in terms of governmental programs and infrastructure to deliver them.

In the first decade of the new century, however, the bottom fell out of the Nevada economy, with a consequent cutback in public services. Nevada's becoming a normal state, so lauded by observers, was put on hold. In the Great Recession beginning in 2007-08 the old cycle of bust after the boom once more reared its head in Nevada destroying the myth that the Nevada gaming economy was recession proof. Along with the recession that brought depression levels of unemployment to the state, the Governor who took the reins of state government in Carson City was determined to slash state services that included state-supported cultural institutions, i.e., museums and historical societies, as well as educational entities at all levels.

Another assault on the Nevada gaming economy, especially in northern Nevada, came with the building of huge Indian casinos on reservation lands in California, authorized under the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act from the United States Congress in 1988. Various works have dealt with the developments of Indian gaming including Steven and Kathryn R. L. Rand's *Indian Gaming and Tribal Sovereignty: The Casino Compromise* (2005), but there has been nothing dealing comprehensively with its impact on Nevada. Yet, by 2012, Nevada, like the rest of the nation, moved into recovery mode as Tesla, the maker of innovative electric cars, announced the building of a five-billion-dollar battery factory in northern Nevada. Also, the Las Vegas gaming figures recovered, and most important, gas prices sank to recent record lows in 2015, boding well for tourist seasons in Nevada. Nevada's Governor Brian Sandoval in his January 15, 2015 "State-of-the-State" address to the Nevada Legislature, called for the building of a "New Nevada" in the twenty-first century.[25] To say the least, the ever-changing landscape of Nevada's quest to sustain itself in an arid basin-and-range environment presents no scarcity of subjects for new generations to engage in the enterprise of Nevada history.

Notes

[1]Herbert E. Bolton, "The Obligation of Nevada toward the Writing of Her Own History," *Third Biennial Report of the Nevada Historical Society, 1911-1912* (Carson City: State Printing Office, 1913), 62.

[2]*Ibid*., 72-73.

[3]Albert L. Hurtado, *Herbert Eugene Bolton: Historian of the American Borderlands* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012), 114.

[4]"Mug histories" can best be described as subscription histories wherein a publisher and an author or editor solicit subscribers to buy a forthcoming publication on a city, county, or state in return for the advance purchase of the product that will usually contain portraits or "mugs" of the subscribers, with accompanying adulatory biographical vignettes.

[5]The muckraker Progressive Era writer Lincoln Steffens used the term "upbuilders" for the title of his book lauding the efforts of reformers throughout the United States. Lincoln Steffens, *Upbuilders* (New York: Doubleday, 1909).

[6]William D. Rowley, "Reno at the Crossroads," *Halcyon: A Journal of the Humanities,* 6 (Nevada Humanities Committee, 1983), 123-36.

[7]Anne Martin, "Nevada: Beautiful Desert of Buried Hopes," *The Nation*, 115 (26 July, 1922), 69.

[8]Dorothy Ross, *The Origins of American Social Science* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

[9]*Nevada Statutes* (1923), p. 323; William D. Rowley, "In Narrows of Nevada History," *Halcyon*: *A Journal of the Humanities*, 4 (Nevada Humanities Committee, 1981), 123-39,.

[10]Russell R. Elliott, "On the Writing of State History," *Western Historical Quarterly*, 9 (July 1978), 327.

[11]*Nevada: A Guide to the Silver State*: *The WPA Guide to 1930s Nevada* (Nevada writers' project of the Work Projects Administration in the state of Nevada) (Portland, Ore.: Binfords & Mort, 1940), xx.

[12]Jeanne Elizabeth Wier, "The Mystery of Nevada," *Rocky Mountain Politics*, Thomas C. Donnelly, ed. (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1940), 99.

[13]Effie Mona Mack, *Mark Twain in Nevada* (London: Scribner's Sons, 1947); Richard G. Lilliard, *Desert Challenge: An Interpretative History of Nevada* (New York: Knopf, 1942); Wier, "Mystery of Nevada," 99.

[14]Eugene P. Moehring, *Resort City in the Sunbelt: Las Vegas, 1930-1970* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1989, and 2nd edition in 2000 bringing the story to the end of the century).

[15]James Q. Dealey, *American State Constitutions* (Boston: Ginn and Company, 1915), 5.

[16]Russell R. Elliott, "On the Writing of State History," *Western Historical Quarterly*, 9 (July 1978), 327.

[17]Steven Mithen, *After the Ice: A Global Human History, 20,000-5,000 BC* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004).

[18]*History of Nevada* (Oakland: Thompson and West, 1881), 40-41.

[19]Gunther Peck, "Manly Gambles: The Politics of Risk on the Comstock Lode," *Journal of Social History*, 26 (Summer 1993), 703-26.

[20]See Rowley, "The Wisconsin Idea in Nevada," *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly*, 34 (Summer 1991), 350-59, for comments on Adams as an academic reformer in Nevada.

[21]Rowley, "Reno at Cross Roads," 123-36.

[22]William R. Eadington and Judy A. Cornelius, eds., *Gambling: Public Policies and Social Science* (Reno: Institute for Study of Gambling and Commercial Gaming, 1997).

[23]On the building of Hoover Dam, see Joseph E. Stevens, *Hoover Dam: An American Adventure* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1988) ; Michael Hiltzik, *Colossus: Hoover Dam and the Making of the American Century* (New York: Free Press, 2010); William D. Rowley, *The Bureau of Reclamation: Origins and Growth to 1945* (Denver: U.S. Department of Interior, Bureau of Reclamation, 2006).

[24]Martin,"Nevada: Desert of Buried Hopes," 89; Richard Lewis Siegel, "Nevada among the States: Converging Public Policies," *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly*, 43 (Fall 2000), 214.

[25]*Reno Evening Gazette* (16 January 2015).

Mining and Nevada
An Entwined History

Eric C. Nystrom and Ronald M. James

After traveling to the region in the late 1850s, Horace Greeley asked a rhetorical question about the western Great Basin, "who would stay in such a region one moment longer than he must?… I thought I had seen barrenness… but I was green…. Here, on the Humboldt, famine sits enthroned, and waves his scepter over a dominion expressly made for him…. There can never be any considerable settlement."[1] For Greeley, (commonly remembered for the famed phrase "Go West, young man") as for so many early observers of what would become Nevada, the only thing that seemed to recommend the expanse of the Great American Desert was its potential for minerals. And the region was forthcoming on that score, demonstrating a potential for mining that far exceeded even the most optimistic predictions.

Ronald James retired as the Nevada State Historic Preservation Officer following thirty years of service, after which he helped found the Comstock Foundation for History and Culture. His dozen books and three dozen articles have dealt with history, folklore, archaeology, and architectural history, on subjects ranging from Europe to mining in American Far West. James is currently affiliated with the Anthropology Department at the Iowa State University.

Eric C. Nystrom is assistant professor of history in the Interdisciplinary Humanities and Communication department at Arizona State University. Prior to joining ASU, he was associate professor of history at the Rochester Institute of Technology in upstate New York. His book, *Seeing Underground: Maps, Models, and Mining Engineering in America* was published in 2014 by the University of Nevada Press, and won the Mining History Association's Clark C. Spence Award for best book in mining history. Nystrom is a native of the Carson Valley.

Of course, Native American exploitation of resources included what the earth could yield. Finding rock that could be chipped into tools was an obvious goal, but even things as basic as retrieving salt was another obvious example of pre-contact mining. One remarkable example of a coveted resource was the Tosawihi "Shoshone white knife," quartz, the beauty of which made it a valued trade item throughout the region.[2] The fact that the white quartz often included inclusions of gold heightened its attractiveness and consequently its value, and the quartz has subsequently attracted attention more recently with mining companies.

The first hint that the mineral resources of the western Great Basin might be valuable to Euro-Americans came in 1849 when a gold nugget was discovered by a prospector heading for California's gold region. He found the specimen in the soon-to-be-named Gold Canyon of the Comstock Lode, an area that supported placer miners working sand bars for gold during the following decade. Major gold strikes of underground ore bodies in 1859 attracted hundreds of fortune seekers, but when it became clear that silver, in even larger quantities, was available in the emerging mining district, thousands arrived. The area would gain international fame as the Comstock Lode, and Virginia City, its principal city, earned a reputation for wealth and sophistication.

With mining came settlement in a region that was stingy with other means of support. And with settlement, government followed, first as local communities incorporated into cities, and then as the region with roughly six thousand residents achieved territorial status in 1861. With one of his last official signatures, President James Buchanan thus created Nevada.[3] Three years later, as the population grew to several tens of thousands, many thought that statehood was warranted, and all of this was possible thanks to mining.

Mining remained the bedrock of the state's economy during the 1860s and 1870s. Agriculture and commerce played supporting roles, but mineral wealth was key. In an ironic statement that illustrated how difficult it was to imagine the role Nevada would assume a century later, the state's first governor, Henry Blasdel, spoke of gambling as an "intolerable and inexcusable vice"…and he did everything he could to keep it from being part of the economy and fabric of the emerging society. A firm believer in mining and a follower of a strict moral code grounded in his Methodism, Blasdel hoped to point Nevada in what he perceived to be the wholesome direction of industry rather than the inherent vice of gambling.[4] From his point of view, it would probably have been difficult to imagine that the state would ever rely on anything besides its rich geological resources for its support.

The relationship of mining and Nevada can be understood by considering the industry through several distinct lenses. It is, first of all, appropriate to mention that the abundance of Nevada's mineral resources resulted—and continues to result—in a robust amount of wealth being drawn from the ground. During the first twenty years, Virginia City and Gold Hill led the way with roughly $320 million in gold and silver, but there were many other

mining districts, and dozens yielded their own substantial bonanzas, though none as large or long-lasting as the great Comstock Lode.[5] Together, the yield would be counted in the tens of billions of dollars in today's values. And mining continued to be an important, if at times diminished, part of the Nevada economy throughout all of the state's hundred and fifty years.[6] While mining was critical, miners and their supporters also contributed greatly to the nature of the industry and to the history and character of the state.

Mining is a curious combination of human activity and natural conditions. There must be mineral in the ground to have a mine (a legitimate mine at any rate), but simply having mineralization is only the first basic step in making a mine, as Nevada proved during a hundred and fifty years to thousands of would-be mining tycoons. Law, technology, transportation, and market demand each mattered as much as—and perhaps even more than—the elements in the ground in creating a successful mine. It was easy for Nevadans to see the hand of an alternating generous or fickle Nature as something to praise or blame for a mine's success or failure, but the human context mattered too. A mineral-rich strike might not make a successful mine because of problems with transportation costs, lawsuits over ownership, ore chemistry too complex to mill at a profit, or a host of other reasons. For more than a hundred and fifty years, the mining industry and its supporters worked to manipulate these human factors in order to succeed, but have typically had little compunction about moving on when success was fleeting or evaded their grasp entirely.

It must also be remembered that mining is an extractive industry that deals with a non-renewable resource. Careful technique, new technology, and shifting demand might prolong a mine's productive life, but no amount of good stewardship—as can be practiced by farmers or in the harvesting of timber—can perpetuate the material in the ground. One can only extract and process ore where it is found, and when it is depleted, only newly discovered deposits will sustain a mining operation. And if no new deposits can be found, the result is a collapse in the economy of a community that relies exclusively on mining. Looking beyond present opportunities to find and stake new mines is therefore an essential part of the life cycle of mining.

Because the discovery of precious metals is newsworthy, often striking a romantic chord in the hearts of those who seek wealth, the big strikes that occurred in Nevada's history inspired waves of newcomers. This has affected the character of the state; during most of its history, large percentages of its population were born somewhere else, and often a significant number of these people were foreign born. This fundamental fact caused the state to change from decade to decade. It consistently granted Nevada an international character, but it also meant that many of its residents regarded themselves as sojourners, people who came to Nevada to make a profit but who hoped to return to some far away home with their new-found riches. Of course, many stayed,

but the transient nature of tens of thousands of the newcomers—whether it was in fact or merely in their mindset—caused many residents of the state to see little reason to build permanent places. Monumental architecture is subsequently scarce when compared to the building stock of states with more stable populations.[7]

All of the people who arrived in Nevada brought their own concepts of the place and how it would figure into their lives, and the state attracted an astounding diversity of people. Wilbur Shepperson, in his flawed but eloquent *Restless Strangers: Nevada's Immigrants and Their Interpreters*, correctly pointed out that the 1870 federal census recorded more foreign born in Nevada than in any other state in the nation. More than 44 percent of Nevada's residents in 1870 were foreign born, almost 7 percent more than the next closest state, California. This foreign born character remained true in the 1880 census as the mining boom continued, when just over 41 percent of Nevadans were foreign born, still nearly 7 percent more than second-place Minnesota. In later decades, as the mining booms waned, Nevada remained among the leaders in this category but yielded the top spot.[8] Some migrants brought special skills from the Old World that were needed by the burgeoning mining-driven economy. This included the Cornish with their mining expertise and the charcoal-making techniques of migrants from northern Italy. Others arrived simply with strong backs and a willingness to work. The Comstock led the way, dominated as it was by Irish, Cornish, and Chinese immigrants, but there were many others who settled throughout the Silver State. Speakers of Spanish came from Mexico but also from Central and South America, adding to a complex picture. From Moroccan street performers and Turkish and Russian merchants to Australian-born Irishmen and a full array of Scandinavians, Italians, Germans, and French, nearly every country had representatives at one time or another in Nevada during the nineteenth century.[9]

This polyglot population filled an array of cities and towns across the state centered on mining. After the discovery of the Comstock, prospectors tromped across Nevada's rugged ranges and empty valleys in the 1860s and 1870s, searching for signs of mineralization that might indicate that another bonanza slumbered below. Some of the largest finds turned into important mining towns of their own, including Aurora, Austin, Eureka, and Pioche, each of which served as jumping-off points for further exploration. Many others boomed in their time but are largely forgotten ghosts today; this was the story of Candelaria, Treasure City, Belmont, Unionville, and many others.[10]

Because mining dominated the economy, fluctuations in metal prices and the varied fortunes of discovery caused major shifts in prosperity and population. When the mines in most of Nevada declined in the 1880s, workers committed to the industry moved elsewhere. Those who remained often found it too difficult to eke out a living in a place where wealth no longer seemingly erupted from the ground. The Cornish were some of the first to leave because

they were tied more than most to the occupation of mining. A significant number of the Irish remained, but most left with the others. Most Chinese immigrants retreated to the Golden State, although significant pockets remained.

The pattern repeated itself with the mining booms of the turn of the century, well considered by Russell Elliott, the dean of Nevada history. A major silver strike in 1900 resulted in the founding of Tonopah, in central Nevada, and close by a tremendous gold bonanza was found at Goldfield beginning in 1902. In the pattern established decades earlier, these new mining centers served as hubs for exploration and discovery throughout central Nevada, with new finds (and old finds re-evaluated by new technologies) forming the basis of new communities and new prosperity.[11] At the same time, enormous low-grade copper deposits in eastern Nevada, similar in size, quality, and required mining technique to those that earned Arizona the "Copper State" moniker, caused White Pine County and its communities of Ely, McGill, and Ruth to boom.[12]

Echoing the 1860s and 1870s, Nevada at the turn of the century attracted people from diverse places, and the foreign born once again played important roles. But this time, it was the Southern and Eastern Europeans, together with Japanese immigrants who occupied the thriving economies of the new capitals of mining. At the same time, the Irish, Cornish, Chinese, and others returned, along with people from throughout North America. Once again following the previous nineteenth-century bonanza period, the turn of the century included its own generation of sojourners who hoped to make it rich and leave for greener pastures.[13] And then, miners depleted the ore, the mines closed, and the high tide of humanity retreated, leaving the state as before, with many towns that were mere shadows of their former selves.

The boom times visited Nevada twice more, but in a different form, one with less power to shape and reshape the culture of the state. In the 1930s, a rise in the price of gold helped spur the discovery of several new excavations, the best known of which were the Gold Acres Mine in Lander County and the Getchell Mine in Humboldt County. The Getchell, Gold Acres, and their handful of contemporaries softened the effects of the Great Depression for a few Nevadans, but were not large enough to boom the state into prosperity singlehandedly. These deposits were important for another reason—they were the first Nevada examples of so-called invisible gold, with precious particles so fine that the prospector of earlier years could not have detected them in the pan.[14] While mining for precious metals declined after the discoveries of the 1930s, mining for other metals, including copper, magnesium, lead, zinc, tungsten, and iron, as well as industrial minerals such as clay and cinders (to make concrete blocks), continued to be an important part of Nevada's economic activity through the middle of the twentieth century, even as Las Vegas became the state's largest population center and gambling became the permanent mainstay of the state's economy. A clear pattern emerged, in which the state's biggest metropolitan areas—Las Vegas and Reno—became

Aerial photograph of the Newmont Mill and Pit in Carlin, Nevada, 1967.
(*Nevada Historical Society*)

economies in which mining mattered little, but the rural parts of the state still leaned on mining as one of several important economic activities.

The 1960s saw the beginning of a period of mining prosperity that continues today, highlighted by enormously productive mines located in an area known as the Carlin Trend, a sort of modern-day Comstock Lode, fifty miles long and five miles wide.[15] The key feature of Carlin-style mines is that they contain enormous amounts of very finely disseminated gold. In 1961, Newmont Mining Corporation geologists, inspired by reports on the 1930s era invisible gold deposits, and guided in part by detailed United States Geological

Survey mapping data and interpretations, began careful examination of the possibility of a large, low-grade invisible gold deposit that could be mined profitably using cheap mass production methods. The mine they created, the Carlin Mine, began production in 1965 and grew into an astounding success, sparking widespread imitation and touching off a decades-long period of major Nevada mineral production.[16] Collectively, these modern invisible gold mines have even outproduced the historic Comstock mines (the single year of 1983 saw more production than the Comstock's historic total),[17] but their social legacy, in an era when mining is much less labor intensive because of the widespread use of machinery, has been far more limited. Most of today's Nevada miners live in existing towns such as Elko, Battle Mountain, Eureka, and Ely, and commute to work.

In spite of improved technologies which held the promise of resuscitating a played-out district, it has not been uncommon for former mining camps—even ones that prospered enough to become the seats of local governments—to decline into periods when they have more buildings than residents. Thus, during the 1930 census, Virginia City and Gold Hill, which had boasted nearly twenty-five thousand people in the early 1870s had declined to a mere five hundred ninety.[18] Austin, where boosters claimed some ten thousand residents at its height, has dwindled to fewer than two hundred today. Neighboring Eureka has endured a similar transformation. Goldfield, the Esmeralda County seat, once exceeded twenty thousand near the turn of the century, but is now home to fewer than three hundred.[19]

It is in part attributable to the effects of mining that Nevada has passed the baton of "largest community" more times than perhaps any other state. The first settlement in the region was established by a group of miners in 1850 in the location of present-day Dayton. This was soon eclipsed by Mormon Station—now Genoa—which boasted such hallmarks as a post office, making it the region's first town.[20] Genoa had yielded to Carson City by 1859, but it was overtaken by Virginia City the following year, until it shrank in the 1890s, at which point, Reno became the largest Nevada city. Then Goldfield grew in the first decade of the twentieth century and became the largest city in the state. But when its mines failed a decade later, Reno was once again the largest city in Nevada, only to lose the title to Las Vegas before 1960. Not all of these transitions have been because of mining, but the industry has been key to many of the radical changes in where people lived, scattered across the state.

Another consequence of mining's impact on Nevada's society emerged from the way the state's mines developed. Early on, miners realized that corporate investment was needed to keep large mines prosperous. While the California Gold Rush of 1849 celebrated the idea that anyone could become rich, it was quickly clear that the hard-rock mining needed to extract most of Nevada's ores increasingly demanded enormous investments. Invariably that meant that California funding would support Nevada's mines. And as a

consequence, profits often left the state, giving Nevada the role of a California colony. Even Nevada's members of United States Congress were notoriously absent from the local scene, many spending most of their lives between California and the nation's capital. Mansions funded by Nevada mines were almost entirely built elsewhere, and that usually meant in Northern California. Financing later mining booms similarly followed the pattern of non-Nevadan funding, such as the Philadelphia capital that brought Tonopah to its height, though an important exception was the Goldfield Consolidated Mining Company, headed by George Wingfield. He remained a crucial player in Nevada politics and society after his fortune was made by central Nevada's mines.[21] Even today, most mining in Nevada is done by corporations headquartered elsewhere, particularly in Canada.

Even as the Comstock brought California capital to the Silver State, Nevada miners were the first west of the Mississippi to organize. Territorial Governor James Nye, with the aid of federal troops from Fort Churchill, suppressed the initial effort. With statehood, miners understood that to organize successfully and to have a voice in negotiations, they would need elected officials who supported labor. Since miners represented the largest bloc of voters, it quickly became clear that the miners union was a force that demanded attention. Labor won adequate wages, but this was a matter of salary, not wealth, and that, too, would shape the nature of the state.[22]

Perhaps in no other way has Nevada's mining proven itself a leader in the field than in the development of technology. Inventive people—often living elsewhere—inspired by Nevada's ore bodies have consistently invented new ways of retrieving valuable ore; the state's mineral riches have served as the impetus for many important mining and milling technological developments that have affected the industry internationally. At first, however, it was not clear that mining in the western Great Basin would be the focus of innovation. The earliest efforts there involved placer mining, which mirrored what was happening during the California Gold Rush of the 1850s. The Grosh brothers, famous for being two of the first to realize the existence of silver in what would become the Comstock Mining District, observed that the miners of the western Great Basin in 1853 were "two or three years behind" their California counterparts when it came to technology.[23] Even after the first strikes of the Comstock Lode in 1859, open-pit mining ruled the day, using an approach that had been well known for millennia. But in short order, miners needed to pursue ore underground, and the Comstock, together with the many other mining districts of Nevada, invented or tested techniques and devices that would define the industry for the next fifty years.

A quick inventory of the nineteenth-century innovations include square-set timbering, flat wire cable, the consistent use of dynamite underground, and the safety cage, to name only a few. More important, the mining engineers of this "modern" industrial age began to design their excavations

for efficiency. Previously, miners had followed an approach developed in the late medieval period that called for miners to drift with ore bodies as they meandered underground; this resulted in free-form excavations that followed the direction of nature. This new industrial age facilitated excavations that intersected with ore bodies and extracted them in a way that attempted to maximize productivity.[24]

Technological innovation during the turn of the twentieth century placed Nevada in a leadership role for the mining industry just as it had forty years before. While the nineteenth-century mills had relied on mercury to amalgamate with gold and silver, a new approach allowed for the more efficient retrieval of precious metal. Nevada proved itself once again at the forefront of the industry when Robert Jackson, at the University of Nevada, located in Reno, perfected a new method of milling that employed cyanide and zinc to precipitate gold and silver from the miller's pulp. Mills in Virginia City and Silver City experimented with this new approach, proving that it was much more effective. Coincidentally, the innovation represented far less of a threat to the environment than had the previous mercury-based method, both because cyanide milling allowed the piles of old waste tailings to be reworked and eliminated, and because cyanide will break down into less harmful by-products with exposure to sunlight, unlike the heavy-metal mercury which persists in the environment (and food chain) indefinitely.[25] The huge operations of the Carlin Trend in the late twentieth century similarly helped bring new low-cost technologies into widespread use, including the crucial technique of cyanide-heap leaching to recover microscopic amounts of precious metals. Yet it is curious that despite the long heritage of mining innovation developed in, or for use in, the Nevada mining industry, the state never developed a robust mining-equipment manufacturing sector (as did Denver, for instance); instead, Nevada's mining was dominated for much of its history by San Francisco equipment manufacturers.[26]

Yet another way to understand the history of the industry and the state is to consider the development of laws. Mining and the legal system in Nevada have been intertwined from the beginning. Upon first arriving in a potentially rich area in Nevada or elsewhere in the West, miners formed themselves into a "mining district," a particular form of limited, democratic government that primarily set rules about mining property for the miners and future newcomers. In the words of mining law expert Curtis H. Lindley, "some of these regulations were wise, and others were not so wise."[27] Such mining-district governments often pre-dated other forms of organized law, and persist in limited form and power to the present day, thanks in large part to the efforts of Nevada's United States Senator William M. Stewart, who ensured that existing local mining district rules would be grandfathered into federal mining laws passed in 1866 and 1872. These mining-districts were democracy in action, government of mining, by miners, for mining.

While mining districts were as local as government might get, more formal legal institutions were also shaped by the desire of Nevadans to provide a judicial environment favorable to mining. The need for more responsive courts to settle mining disputes was an important factor in the creation of Nevada Territory from parts of the vast Utah Territory in 1861.[28] Once Nevada was granted the status of a territory, the entanglement of mining and the proto-state government intensified. The two most important political controversies of the short territorial period both involved mining and the law. The first was the impartiality (or not) and expertise (or not) of federally appointed judges in hearing important mining disputes on the booming Comstock. The other was the failure to approve a state constitution in early 1864, which would have speeded the territory to statehood a little less than a year earlier than eventually proved to be the case. These controversies are discussed thoroughly elsewhere, so there is no need for repetition; suffice it to say that mining was a core issue driving much of the political and judicial controversy as Nevada made its transition from territory to state.[29]

After statehood, Nevadans continued to work toward a mining-friendly legal environment. At the national level, Nevada's senators (especially the redoubtable William Stewart) made important contributions to the creation of the mining laws of 1866 and 1872, which made federal land available for mining at extremely low cost and with no-ongoing federal royalty requirements.[30] The Nevada delegation also campaigned hard for all of a series of successive acts to require government purchases of silver after the United States quietly switched to the gold standard in 1873.[31] These acts included the Bland-Allison Act of 1878, the Sherman Silver Purchase Acts of 1890 and 1893, and the later Pittman Silver Purchase Act, passed in 1918. The last of these, championed by Nevada's Senator Key Pittman, who had been an important figure in the early mining history of Tonopah, required the United States government to purchase silver at above-market rates for years in order to replace some $350-million-dollars-worth lent to Great Britain during World War I.[32] "Every silver mine in the United States would be closed down now except for the Pittman Act," crowed the senator to the *Mining Congress Journal* in 1921.[33] Like the other acts, the intent was to use the federal government to help the mining industry remain profitable, but in this Pittman was at some level simply acting on decades of Nevada precedent.

Nevada's legal support for mining was even more pronounced at the state level. The state constitution that was passed by voters in 1864 contained a provision that mines would not be taxed like other property, but instead would be taxed only on the basis of their output after the expense of mining was deducted (the so-called net proceeds). These net proceeds would be taxed at the same rate as ordinary property. In many mining areas, including several western states, miners must pay a greater sort of tax in recognition that minerals may be extracted from the ground only once (sometimes termed a "severance" tax), but this has never been the case in Nevada.[34]

The net-proceeds tax provision was further modified in 1987 and 1989, when a bill written by mining industry representatives allowed the net proceeds to be taxed differently from other property, with a cap at a 5 percent rate; it was passed twice by the state legislature and then ratified as part of the state constitution by a popular vote. The rationale at the time, well documented in the minutes and testimony from the legislative Taxation Committee though perhaps imperfectly understood by the public, was to gain sorely needed additional revenue for the state by shifting some mining-tax revenue from local jurisdictions to the state and increasing it slightly; in exchange for this the industry received the long-term fiscal certainty provided by a 5 percent cap on the tax on their output after all deductions were made. Fiscal certainty helped justify the expensive and lengthy process of searching for new deposits, designing mines, and securing financial support for the undertakings.[35]

In 2014, a proposal to remove this cap, potentially opening the door to higher mining taxes and more state revenue, was put to the voters. Public discussion of the proposal frequently referred to the cap as though it had been part of the state constitution since 1864, likely because it seemed so consistent with the pro-mining attitude of early Nevadans, though whether this heritage was good or bad was typically shaped by one's opinion of the cap-removal proposal. Pro-mining rural Nevadans voted overwhelmingly to keep the cap in place, which, combined with voter apathy in the metropolitan areas and the traditional skepticism of many Nevadans toward all taxation matters, led to a defeat of the measure, thus leaving in place the provision capping mining taxes at 5 percent of net proceeds.

While the net-proceeds provisions of the state constitution were evidence of Nevada's ongoing efforts to provide a legal environment favorable to mining, the clearest such statements in the law were a pair of legislative acts passed in 1875 and 1907. Later upheld in court, they declared mining to be a "public good," meaning that it was so important that the power of eminent domain could be used on behalf of the mining industry.[36] Upholding the validity of the law in 1876, state Supreme Court Justice Thomas Hawley eloquently described how Nevada's peculiar circumstances meant that everyone was affected by mining's success or failure:

> Mining is the greatest of the industrial pursuits in this state. All other interests are subservient to it. Our mountains are almost barren of timber, and our valley lands could never be made profitable for agricultural purposes, except for the fact of a home market having been created by the mining developments…. Nature has denied to this state many of the advantages which other states possess, but, by way of compensation to her citizens, has placed at their doors the richest and most extensive silver deposits ever yet discovered. The present prosperity of the state is entirely due to the mining developments already made, and the entire people of the state are directly interested in having the future developments unobstructed….[37]

After the 1931 legalization of gambling—following a time when mining had slumped—Nevada's principal industry relied on obtaining wealth more from the pockets of strangers than from pockets of ore. There can be no question that the popular perception of Nevada has shifted to the point where it is recognized internationally as a tourist destination, its casinos offering dazzling respites from ordinary life. That said, Nevada remains the Silver State, and it has not shed a self-perception that is bound up with mining. It was a prospector who looked over a Nevada landscape for the automobile license plate celebrating the hundred twenty-fifth anniversary of statehood, in 1989. And twenty-five years later many events associated with the sesquicentennial which celebrates the admission of Nevada into the Union in 1864 were mining related; in fact, one of the official state commemorative medallions for the hundred fiftieth anniversary employed the imagery of mining.

Although there have been times when it seemed as though mining in Nevada was insignificant, there have consistently been places in the state that thrived because of the resources the ground provided; and in turn mining helped some Nevadans get by. During the Great Depression of the 1930s, Pioche boomed with the exploitation of zinc, while other parts of the state saw renewed gold placer mining by individuals attempting to stave off poverty's worst impacts.[38] From World War I until the 1960s, Nevada's tungsten mines contributed an ingredient that was key to the production of armor plate steel, durable automobile parts, and light bulb filaments.[39] The gigantic Basic Magnesium Incorporated plant, which established the town of Henderson during World War II, was built to extract magnesium from ore mined at Gabbs in central Nevada.[40]

At the same time, an executive order in 1942 limited the strategic resources that could be used for the retrieval of precious metals, depriving gold and silver mines of oil, gasoline, and rubber. Still, many mines resumed production after the war. Subsequent discoveries, including the massive Carlin Trend, has provided mines with low-grade gold ore that can be profitably mined with cyanide heap leaching. The consequence of excavating in this and similar deposits has been that Nevada has consistently produced tens of billions of dollars in gold every year, far more than all the other states combined.[41] If it were a nation, Nevada in recent decades would have consistently ranked in the top five in the world for gold production. And it does not stop with gold: everything from lithium to kitty litter comes from Nevada deposits. As the pro-industry bumper sticker reads, "If it isn't grown, it's mined."

In his retrospective on life in Nevada—and his consideration of its character—James Hulse in *Forty Years in the Wilderness* (1986) looked fondly at the twin industries of agriculture and mining. Echoing the warning of Blasdel, the state's first governor, Hulse would have his native state relying on occupations that produce things of substance rather than depending

on the glitzy slight-of-hand world of entertainment. But in a state that is increasingly urban—more urban than every other state except New Jersey—popular sentiment has tended to run against the industrial utopia that Hulse would recommend as the salvation of Nevada. And yet mining continues: the industry has contributed to the region's economy during every decade since the first settlement of the western Great Basin in the 1850s, and it will likely continue to do so in the foreseeable future.

Notes

[1]Horace Greeley, *An Overland Journey from New York to San Francisco in the Summer of 1859* (New York: C. M. Saxton, Barker, 1860 (reprint, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1963), 203-31, as quoted in Ronald M. James, *Temples of Justice: County Courthouses of Nevada* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1994), 18.

[2]As one of many examples, Southern Paiute peoples mined Gypsum Cave in southern Nevada for salt: Amy Gilreath, "Gypsum Cave," *Online Nevada Encyclopedia*, 4 January 2011. http://www.onlinenevada.org/articles/gypsum-cave (accessed 25 January 2015); on "Shoshone white knife" quartz, see R. G. Elston, ed., "Tosawihi Quarries: Archaeological Investigations and Ethnographic Studies in Nevada," U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, Nevada, Cultural Resource Series No. 16. CD available at U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, Nevada State Office, Carson City (2006).

[3]The count of "roughly six thousand" comes from the eighth federal census, in 1860, of the western Great Basin. This does not include the Native American population. The population may have increased by March 1861, when the president signed the territory into existence, but the increase was probably not significant at the time. It subsequently increased and fluctuated dramatically. For a look at the 1860 census, see Ronald M. James, "A Tale of Two Wests: A New Census Report for Nevada in 1860," *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly,* 53:1 (Spring 2010).

[4]See the *First Biennial Message of Governor H. G. Blasdel*, 10 January 1867, page 14, as quoted and discussed by James W. Hulse, *The Silver State: Nevada's Heritage Reinterpreted* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1991), 262.

[5]Grant H. Smith, with Joseph V. Tingley, *The History of the Comstock Lode, 1850-1997* (Reno: Nevada Bureau of Mines and Geology, with University of Nevada Press, 1998), 310-14. This work provides a careful analysis of Comstock production figures and discusses the reliability of different sources. Smith's estimate of 1859-82 Comstock production, in historical dollars, is $320 million.

[6]Joseph V. Tingley, Robert C. Horton, and Francis C. Lincoln, "Outline of Nevada Mining History," Nevada Bureau of Mines and Geology Special Publication 15 (1993), 6-7. Total estimate in today's dollars was made by summing 1860-80 production figures from p. 7 and converting Tingley's "1987 dollars" estimates into 2014 dollars using on-line inflation calculators. Projecting monetary value across such a wide span of time is inherently flawed, and the authors provide this information simply to suggest the magnitude of mineral production.

[7]For an overview of the state's architectural history, see Ronald M. James and Elizabeth Stafford Harvey, *Nevada's Historic Buildings: A Cultural Legacy* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 2009).

[8]In 1890, Nevada was fourth in percentage of foreign-born residents, behind North Dakota, Minnesota, and Montana; it was tenth in both 1900 and 1910. Data is from *Historical Census Browser,* retrieved 26 December 2014, from the University of Virginia, Geospatial and Statistical Data Center: http://mapserver.lib.virginia.edu/(2004). For 1910 and after, the data categories provided by the site make it difficult to create comparisons directly comparable to earlier census years. For 1910, the comparison used was of foreign-born whites to all whites.

[9]Wilbur S. Shepperson, *Restless Strangers: Nevada's Immigrants and Their Interpreters* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1970). For critiques of Shepperson using improved access to census data, see Ronald M. James, *The Roar and the Silence: A History of Virginia City and the Comstock Lode* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1998) and Ronald M. James and Kenneth H. Fleiss, "Women of the Mining West: Virginia City Revisited" from Ronald M. James and C. Elizabeth Raymond, *Comstock Women: The Making of a Mining Community* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1998), 17-39.

[10]Donald R. Abbe, *Austin and the Reese River Mining District: Nevada's Forgotten Frontier* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1985); Hugh A. Shamberger, *The Story of Candelaria and its Neighbors: Columbus, Metallic City, Belleville, Marietta, Sodaville and Coaldale, Esmeralda and Mineral Counties, Nevada* (Carson City: Nevada Historical Press, 1978); W. Turrentine Jackson, *Treasure Hill: Portrait of a Silver Mining Camp* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1963 (reprint, Reno: University of Nevada Press, 2000); Robert E. Stewart, *Aurora: Ghost City of the Dawn* (Reno: Nevada Publications, 1996); Robert D. McCracken, *A History of Tonopah, Nevada* (Tonopah: Nye County Press, 1990); Lambert Molinelli and Company, *Eureka and its Resources* (San Francisco: H. Keller and Company, 1879 (reprint, Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1982); James W. Hulse, *Lincoln County, Nevada:*

1864-1909 (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1971). On both Aurora and Unionville, see Samuel Clemens [Mark Twain, pseud.], *Roughing It* (first edition, 1872),Harriet Elinor Smith and Edgar Marquess Branch, eds. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993).

[11]Russell R. Elliott, *Nevada's Twentieth-Century Mining Boom: Tonopah, Goldfield, Ely* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1988); Jay A. Carpenter, Russell R. Elliott, and Byrd Fanita Wall Sawyer, *The History of Fifty Years of Mining at Tonopah, 1900-1950*, University of Nevada Bulletin, Vol. 47, No. 1, Geology and Mining Series, No. 51 (1953); Sally Zanjani, *Goldfield: The Last Gold Rush on the Western Frontier* (Athens, Ohio: Swallow Press/Ohio University Press, 1992); for a good example of one of the short-lived camps of the twentieth-century boom, see Nancy B. Schreier, *Highgrade: The Mining Story of National, Nevada* (Glendale, Calif.: Arthur H. Clark Co., 1981).

[12]Elliott, *Nevada's Twentieth-Century Mining Boom*; A. B. Parsons, *The Porphyry Coppers* (New York: American Institute of Mining and Metallurgical Engineers, 1933); Russell R. Elliott, *Growing up in a Company Town: A Family in the Copper Camp of McGill, Nevada* (Reno: Nevada Historical Society, 1990).

[13]Detailed study of Nevada's population, including ethnic makeup, can be conducted using the raw census microdata published as Ronald M. James, Kenneth H. Fliess, and Eric Nystrom, *Nevada Census Microdata, 1860-1920*, Harvard Dataverse Network [Distributor], (1991–2014). Current version: v2, released 31 December 2014. http://dx.doi.org/10.7910/DVN/27218.

[14]These were the Getchell, the Standard, the Northumberland, and the Gold Acres mines. The two-boom formulation is part of Tingley's characterization of Nevada's history as having four great mining booms, with the Comstock and the Tonopah-Goldfield booms being the other two (along with the 1930s boom and the Carlin Trend). Tingley *et al*., "Outline," 8.

[15]Technically, the Carlin Trend is joined by the Battle Mountain Trend, which is also a large multi-mine belt of invisible gold mineralization, and by a number of individual mines outside these two belts (some located at the sites of historic mines), in using similar mass production methods to profitably work low-grade gold and silver deposits. Though these different properties frequently use slightly different mining and milling strategies, they all operate on low-value ore in large quantities, have come into production since the late 1960s, and are popularly (though sometimes incorrectly) considered "Carlin-type" mines.

[16]J. Alan Coope, "Carlin Trend Exploration History: Discovery of the Carlin Deposit," Nevada Bureau of Mines and Geology Special Publication 13 (1991); Tingley *et al*., "Outline," 6-8, 39-43; Ralph J. Roberts, *A Passion for Gold: An Autobiography* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 2002); John Sealy Livermore, "Prospector, Geologist, Public Resource Advocate: Carlin Mine Discovery, 1961; Nevada Gold Rush, 1970s," an oral history conducted in 1992, 1997, and 2000, by Eleanor Swent and Maurice Fuerstenau, Regional Oral History Office, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, 2000.

[17]Tingley *et al*., "Outline," 41.

[18]Total Population, Virginia City Precinct, *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930, Population,* vol. 3, pt. 2 (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1932), p. 149, table 21.

[19]For a discussion of Austin's population, including the "absurd" ten thousand claim, see Donald R. Abbe, *Austin and the Reese River Mining District: Nevada's Forgotten Frontier* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1985), 55-58; for Goldfield peak population estimates, see Sally Zanjani, *Goldfield*, 94-95. Historical census figures for all three can be derived from data in James, Fleiss, and Nystrom, *Nevada Census Microdata*, but peak populations rarely coincided with the decennially recorded census. Note: modern figures are from the 2010 census, and represent the "Census Designated Place" (CDP), not the larger and less-distinct "Census County Division" (CCD). "Nevada: 2010, Population and Housing Unit Counts," *United States Census 2010,* U.S. Census Bureau (August 2012), 11-12, http://www.census.gov/prod/cen2010/cph-2-30.pdf (accessed 17 April 2015).

[20]Priority credit for the title of "Nevada's First Settlement," between Gold Canyon/Dayton and Genoa, is a topic of fierce contention between the two towns and their partisans, but see James and Harvey, *Nevada's Historic Buildings*, 28, and Guy Rocha, "Nevada's First Permanent Settlement," http://nsla.nv.gov/Archives/Historic_Myths/ (accessed 28 December 2014).

[21]C. Elizabeth Raymond, *George Wingfield: Owner and Operator of Nevada* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1992).

[22]Guy Louis Rocha, "The Many Images of the Comstock Miners' Unions," *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly,* 39:3 (Fall 1996), 163-81.

[23]Ronald M. James and Robert E. Stewart, *The Gold Rush Letters of E. Allen Grosh and Hosea B. Grosh* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 2012), 108.

[24]Otis E. Young, Jr., *Western Mining* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1977); Donald L. Hardesty, *Mining Archaeology in the American West: A View from the Silver State* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2010); Eric C. Nystrom, *Seeing Underground: Maps, Models, and Mining Engineering in America* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 2014).

[25]Young, *Western Mining*, 265-66, 283-84; and Smith, with Tingley, *History of the Comstock Lode*, 258.

[26]Lynn Bailey, *Supplying the Mining World: The Mining Equipment Manufacturers of San Francisco, 1850-1900* (Tucson: Westernlore Press, 1996).

[27]Curtis H. Lindley, *A Treatise on the American Law Relating to Mines and Mineral Lands within the Public Land States and Territories and Governing the Acquisition and Enjoyment of Mining Rights in Lands of the Public Domain*, 3d ed. (San Francisco: Bancroft-Whitney Co., 1914), hereafter *Lindley on Mines*; quotation in vol. 1, 613. The mining district system originated in California during the early statehood period, where Mexican laws regulating mining had been repealed with the admission of California to the U.S., but no new federal laws took their place, thus opening the door for local regulation. It should also be noted that most national-level systems of mining law, including those early efforts in the U.S. prior to the California Gold Rush, required payment of some kind of tax, fee, or percentage of output of the mines to the government. But by adopting local rules which had no such provisions, the early Californians essentially dodged this traditional taxation, a situation which became permanent when these customs were incorporated into the federal Mining Laws of 1866 and 1872, and which remains true to this day. For a detailed legal overview of this early period in California and the pre-1866 federal context, see *Lindley on Mines*, vol. 1, 71-88.

[28]Gary D. Libecap, "Government Support of Private Claims to Public Minerals: Western Mineral Rights," *Business History Review,* 53:3 (1979), 364-85 argues in convincing detail that changes in pre-territorial, territorial, and early state governance were largely driven by the needs of the mining industry, though not necessarily by any single large firm.

[29]Statehood was achieved quickly for Nevada after the failed vote, but it is important not to take such a re-vote as historically inevitable. For example, Colorado became a territory in 1861, like Nevada, then turned down statehood in a popular vote in 1864, narrowly voting for statehood the following year, in 1865. By that time, however, Lincoln was dead and the admission of Colorado to statehood fell victim to national-level political wrangling between the Radical Republicans in Congress and President Andrew Johnson, who vetoed a bill granting statehood. The issue became further complicated by politically ambitious Coloradans and those hoping to stymie them by insisting that Colorado lacked sufficient population to be a state. After several efforts, enabling legislation passed in 1875 required that Colorado have 150,000 inhabitants in order to become a state, which it did by 1876, when it was then admitted to the union. See http://www.jerrykopel.com/b/Colorado-statehood-struggle.htm (accessed 10 December 2014); also Duane A. Smith, *Henry M. Teller: Colorado's Grand Old Man* (Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2002). The census did not count more than the 100,000 in Nevada, the number traditionally needed for statehood, until 1940, and the state did not reach 150,000 until 1950. See http://www.census.gov/population/cencounts/nv190090.txt (accessed 10 December 2014). The first Nevada constitution was defeated because of several factors, one being an anti-Stewart (and San Francisco capital) backlash, and the other being a provision that taxed mines like other property. David Johnson argues that these factors played differently during debates in 1863, when times were flush and individual entrepreneur miners were worried about concentrated capital. But in 1864, when a severe depression had struck, it became apparent that deeper mining required deeper pockets. David A. Johnson, "Industry and the Individual on the Far Western Frontier: A Case Study of Politics and Social Change in Early Nevada," *Pacific Historical Review,* 51:3 (Aug. 1982), 243-64; *idem*, "A Case of Mistaken Identity: William M. Stewart and the Rejection of Nevada's First Constitution," *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly,* 22:3 (1979), 186-98; also see Russell R. Elliott, *Servant of Power: A Political Biography of Senator William M. Stewart* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1983).

[30]Stewart also apparently helped defeat proposals that would have sold western mining lands in a fashion similar to homesteads. Libecap, "government support," 372.

[31]Mary Ellen Glass, *Silver and Politics in Nevada, 1892-1902* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1969); also see Elliott, *Servant of Power*.

[32]Fred L. Israel, "The Fulfillment of Bryan's Dream: Key Pittman and Silver Politics, 1918-1933," *Pacific Historical Review,* 30:4 (1961), 359-80; Betty Glad, *Key Pittman: The Tragedy of a Senate Insider* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), 74-76.

[33]"Pittman Silver Purchase Act Will Remain in Force," *Mining Congress Journal,* 7 (June 1921), 218.

[34]James L. Wadhams, "The Taxation of Mining," *Nevada Lawyer,* 21:4 (April 2013), 12-16.

[35]The bill that was eventually passed twice and inserted in the constitution was Senate Joint Resolution 22, introduced in 1987 and referred to during the 1989 session as SJR 22 of the 64th Session. Senate Bill 61 in the 1989 session implemented provisions of SJR 22. SJR 22 was drafted by Frank Daykin, an attorney working for the mining industry, to embody the taxation plan developed by officials from the Nevada Mining Association. State legislators also worked to retain industry support of the measure and move it to passage quickly, because the plan of which SJR 22 was a part would increase revenue which was desperately needed at the time. The minutes of the state Senate Committee on Taxation are most illuminating about the origins, language, and intent of the measures. For 1987, see "Minutes of the Senate Committee on Taxation," 64th session, 900-22 (12 May 1987); 949-50, 956-57, 1018-23 (19 May 1987); 1188, 1191-92, 1198 (6 June 1987); for 1989, see "Minutes of the Joint Meeting Senate and Assembly Committees on Taxation," 65th session, 64-205 (2 February 1989); "Minutes of the Senate Committee on Taxation," 65th session, 15-16 (24 January 1989); 33-34 (26 January 1989); 63 (27 January 1989); 207-43 (9 February 1989); 244, 271 (14 February 1989); 396-98 (23 February 1989); 421-22, 444 (28 February 1989); 445-56, 462-63 (7 March 1989); also see pp. 659-86 (14 April 1989), which was ostensibly a hearing about SB 212, concerning mining reclamation, but in the course of testimony by mining representatives SJR 22 was mentioned several times and is clearly part of the context of possible changes.

[36]Stats. 1875, sect. 111 (Comp. Laws 1900, sect. 283-300); amended by Laws of 1907, pp. 140, 279, 289 (Rev. Laws 1912, sect. 5606); as cited in *Lindley on Mines*, 3rd ed., vol 1, 591. These laws persisted in Nevada until 2011, when the legislature overwhelmingly voted to remove the language that mining was of "paramount interest" and therefore a legitimate use of eminent domain, however, a small number of mining-related uses relating to water transport still remain as appropriate uses. Legislative record for SB 86 of the 76th Legislative Session (2011), http://www.leg.state.nv.us/Session/76th2011/Reports/history.cfm?billname=SB86 (accessed 7 December 2014).

[37]Dayton Mining Co. v. Seawell, 11 Nev. 394, quote on 408; quoted in *Lindley on Mines*, vol. 1, 591-92.

[38]Charles W. Miller, *The Automobile Gold Rushes and Depression Era Mining* (Moscow: University of Idaho Press, 1998); Benjamin Barna, "The Rabbit Hole Snipers: Mining, Making Do, and the Great Depression in Northern Nevada," *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly,* 54 (2011), 75–100. Pershing County gave mining grubstakes to out-of-work men as a form of Depression relief.

[39]Ronald H. Limbaugh, *Tungsten in Peace and War, 1918-1946* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 2010).

[40]William T. Dobbs, "Southern Nevada and the Legacy of Basic Magnesium, Inc.," *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly,* 34:1 (Spring 1991), 273-303; also useful is R. Jackson Armstrong-Ingram, *Henderson* (Charleston, So. Carolina: Arcadia Publishing, 2002), which focuses on the period of BMI's construction and operation.

[41]For specific figures set in the context of over-all domestic and global production, the U.S. Geological Survey's annual *Mineral Yearbook* publications are very helpful: http://minerals.usgs.gov/minerals/pubs/commodity/gold/

The Urban Impact
Towns and Cities in Nevada's History

Eugene Moehring

For many people, when they think of Nevada, especially during the days of the Old West, they think of blue skies, wide-open spaces, lonely prospectors, and lots of tumbleweeds. But urban places were, and continue to be, vital to Nevada's historical development, a fact that needs to be appreciated as the state celebrates its sesquicentennial.

As it was for nearly all mining areas, urban development was vital to the Comstock's success. From its earliest days, towns and cities supplied and developed the big silver mines, created a food market that spawned local farms and ranches, and moved Nevada toward statehood. Within weeks of the historic discovery on the slopes of Mount Davidson, Virginia (it legally became a city in 1861) bustled with thousands of people. Nearby Gold Hill also began to fill up with prospectors, storeowners, and draymen. By the early 1860s, an inner and outer belt of nearly fifty towns surrounded the core mining area of Virginia City, Gold Hill, Silver City, and American Flat near the major mines on the mountain. In nineteenth-century Nevada, as in the Far West, towns created by mineral deposits were often clustered relatively close together, in networks. The Comstock urban network was a large one, stretching sixty miles outward, with more than fifty cities, towns, and villages.[1]

Eugene P. Moehring is professor of history at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. He is the author of *Resort City in the Sunbelt: Las Vegas, 1930-2000*, and *Urbanism and Empire in the Far West, 1840-1900*. His most recent book is *Reno, Las Vegas, and the Strip: A Tale of Three Cities.*

Carson City and Reno were already important places in the network, but, at this time, they were still much smaller than Virginia City. Reno began as a convenient fording point on the Truckee River, where pioneers and supply trains plying the Old Emigrant Trail could cross in shallow water and move down the Virginia Road (today's Virginia Street) to the Comstock. In the early 1860s, Myron Lake's construction of a new, more durable bridge with an adjacent inn helped divert Comstock-bound traffic away from other fording points along the river and funnel it instead through "Lake's Crossing." Lake solidified his property's future in 1868 by convincing Central Pacific Railroad officials to make his land the site for the division town they needed before continuing to build eastward. In its march across the desert toward Utah and the Union Pacific's tracks, the Central Pacific created a line of new towns at Wadsworth, Lovelock, Winnemucca, Battle Mountain, Palisade, Carlin, Elko, and Wells. Subsequent short lines into wealthy mining regions created even more urban communities in the state, many of which still exist today.

Carson City began earlier than Reno and antedated the Comstock by a year. In 1858 Abram Curry and his partners subdivided part of their ranch into a grid of blocks and lots. What became Carson City eventually served as the eastern terminus for the toll road (roughly the early route of today's U.S. 50) connecting the Comstock area with Placerville and eastern California. The heavily traveled route supplied the miners with food, mining equipment, and other supplies. But transportation was not Carson City's only function. In 1861 the creation of the Nevada Territory and the location of its capital in Carson City added to the new community's population, business, and importance, and helped it later become the state capital.[2]

To be sure, towns more than cities made up the vast urban network that gradually spread outward from the core communities of Virginia and Gold Hill on Mount Davidson. To the west, the old mill sites at what became Franktown, Mill Station, and Ophir were restored to life by the Comstock and grew into substantial villages. Washoe City emerged as a key wagon stop and freight transfer point and later served as Washoe County's first seat of government. To increase profits, the Bank of California's mining company and others eventually built mills on the mountain near Virginia City and Gold Hill or along the Carson River in or near the city of Dayton to cut milling costs. They did this because Washoe Lake was simply too far to send the silver for milling.[3]

But milling was just one force powering the town formation process in the burgeoning urban network surrounding Mount Davidson. Linked by a maze of pack trails, toll roads, wagon roads, rivers, and even flumes, a thriving urban system served the Comstock area during the early 1860s—even as civil war raged in the East. To run the massive Comstock complex, with its flumes, railroads, water siphons, and telegraph wires, and to serve the thousands of miners, millworkers, and lumberjacks who worked there, required towns and lots of them. Horse-and-wagon transportation created a variety of stops along

the roads and trails leading to the Comstock. Aside from Reno and Carson City, there were Junction House, Huffakers, Magnolia House, Fridays, and Steamboat Springs—just a few of the villages and towns that sprang up around small inns on the prairie, in the Sierra, and even along Lake Tahoe, all needed to feed the horses, fix the wagons, and care for weary travelers. Communities also grew up around the tollhouses on key roads and crossings. This was the case not only at the bridge where Reno began, but also at places like Devil's Gate, a notch entry to the Comstock.[4] Devil's Gate sat at the entrance of a natural shortcut through the area's rugged geography; it shaved miles off the trip up to Virginia City and Gold Hill. A commuter town also developed—at least for a while—around the Sutro Tunnel, a massive project that delivered badly needed ventilation, as well as miners to their jobs, up *through* Mount Davidson rather than *down* the shafts from Virginia City and Gold Hill. It opened in 1879, and the town had eight hundred people for a while, but the tunnel arrived near the end of the mines' productivity. By 1881 fewer than four hundred Sutro residents remained.[5]

Of course, these were not the only towns in the vast urban network serving the Comstock. Beyond the core cities, the turnpike communities, and the inner belt of mining and mill towns was an outer belt of flume, food, and raw-material centers. Up at Lake Tahoe, Glenbrook forwarded wheat, hay, and even dairy products to the core cities on Mount Davidson, as did Genoa, Wheelers, and other places in the Carson, Eagle, Washoe, Pleasant, and other valleys, as well as in the mountain foothills east of the Sierra. There were even more distant points that emerged to feed Comstock residents, such as Wellington, more than fifty miles from Virginia City. In addition, many California towns and cities, led by Sacramento, also supplied the network's food market.[6]

The Comstock, with its voracious appetite for wood, soon denuded the Sierra woodlands north of Carson City. As new mines required miles more of square-set bracing and as towns and cities expanded, lumberjacks invaded the Tahoe Basin. They relied on the afternoon westerlies to blow the cut logs across the lake toward Glenbrook and Incline Village. By 1873, when the major lumber dealer Yerington & Bliss announced plans to greatly increase production, flumes carrying wood down the Sierra's eastern slope spawned a variety of small hamlets at receiving points on the valley floor that acted as transshipment centers, where the logs changed "vehicles" from flumes to heavy-duty wagons headed up to Virginia City and Gold Hill. There were also booms and other logging facilities along the Carson River at Empire City and elsewhere. Farther out were the salt centers at Sand Springs, Leete, and White Plains, whose deposits of sodium chloride were vital to making hydrochloric and other acids necessary for milling gold and silver ore. In these places and others salt works and borax plants sprang up, along with saloons and stores to serve the workers.[7]

While most prospectors recognized the fact that precious metals were often found in belts of ore, they also knew that isolated deposits often appeared near

large lodes. Many prospectors who sold their claims to mining companies on Mount Davidson went a bit farther out and discovered new pockets of gold and silver. This in turn added more mining towns to the expanding urban network. Ludwig, Como, and Palmyra were just a few of the numerous mining communities that sprang up in the desert hills beyond Mount Davidson.[8]

New mineral discoveries and the towns they spawned attracted even more population and accelerated efforts to separate Carson County from the Utah Territory. Within weeks of the Comstock's discovery a mass meeting of citizens at Carson City demanded their own territory, which came in 1861. Over the next three years Governor James Nye and the territorial legislature, consisting largely of members representing the Comstock and other mining networks, lobbied Congress and President Abraham Lincoln for statehood. This urban coalition, along with outlying ranchers and farmers (who wanted the mining industry to pay more taxes—a goal they later gave up on), approved the second proposed Nevada Constitution in 1864. This, along with President Lincoln's need for more electoral votes on Election Day in 1864, helped Nevada become a state *long before* it met the population requirement of sixty thousand mandated by the Northwest Ordinance of 1787.[9]

The discovery of silver and gold on the Comstock only whetted the appetite for more. Throughout the 1860s and 1870s prospectors swarmed across the hills, mountain ranges, and searing deserts of Nevada in search of precious metals. As it turned out, the first hit, at Mount Davidson, proved to be the biggest in terms of real dollars. But there were many more bonanzas in the nineteenth century and into the twentieth that yielded millions (and eventually billions) more dollars in profits. By 1861, barely a year after the Comstock hit, a new but smaller urban network began forming around Austin in the Reese River Mining District. The area's "rebellious" silver-lead deposits proved more chemically difficult to mill than the Comstock's, whose ore was more "docile" and easier to break down. Austin, Clifton, and a web of surrounding towns produced tons of silver and generous profits for those fortunate enough to control the major mines. They and other towns milled the silver and gold for easier transportation to the U.S. mints in San Francisco and, after it finally began operating in 1870, in Carson City.[10]

North of Reno and Austin, and almost between them, another substantial urban network formed in the 1860s around the core towns of Santa Clara, Star City, and Unionville. Although they lacked the flumes and logging mills of the Comstock network, the usual array of roadside rest stops, salt centers, provisioning towns, and milling communities arose to serve the needs of local residents and visitors. Farther east, the same pattern was replicated around Eureka, beginning in 1864. As at Austin, Eureka's silver deposits (as was often the case in central Nevada) were chemically difficult to mill until two Welch smelters found a way to do it. This occurred just as the chemists Lothar Meyer and Dimitri Mendeleev, working independently in Europe, produced the

Periodic Table of the Elements, in 1869. This allowed chemists to finally understand the "family of elements," a crucial prerequisite for milling or separating precious metals from the relatively useless compounds encrusting them.[11]

At roughly the same time, the White Pine boom erupted farther east at Hamilton and Treasure City, where, by 1868, more than thirty thousand people lived. Dozens of mine, mill, and provisioning centers quickly surrounded these central places just as they did at Mount Davidson, Reese River, and elsewhere. The same was true farther south during the Pioche silver boom and father north in the 1870s at Tuscarora near the Idaho border. Except for the Pioche area, southern Nevada's urban networks were less clustered with towns and villages than their northern counterparts. Communities in the south were more spread out, because the deposits were more spread out and not as rich as those in central and northern Nevada. Though smaller and less numerous than in the north, towns not only existed but were active in local governance and in moving goods and harvests through the area to market. Take, for instance, the Mormon agricultural towns in the Muddy-Virgin River network that began to form (and in the case of some earlier settlements, re-form) in the 1870s, at St. Thomas, New St. Joseph, Rioville, Mesquite, Moapa, Logandale, and Overton. In the nineteenth century this network of small communities sent food by wagon road to drought-stricken Utah and to Pioche's silver miners, and by river to western Arizona's mining towns via the port of Callville. Later, in the twentieth century the network shipped food by train and highway to Las Vegas.[12]

This was the pattern prior to 1890 when the U.S. Census Bureau effectively declared the frontier closed by claiming there was no longer a distinct line of settlements separating the populated eastern states from the western wilderness. But the frontier began to "close" much earlier. In fact, the proverbial frontier line hardly existed after the California Gold Rush, when Easterners rushed across the Mississippi to the "Promised Land" and built cities like San Francisco and Sacramento to exploit the western Sierra's goldfields. Ten years later, in 1859, the "Rush to Washoe" was a riptide movement backward toward the East. In that same year prospectors moved even farther east toward the mines at Colorado's Pike's Peak, and northeastward toward the gold and silver mines of Helena and Butte, and southeastward to the mines of Arizona at Prescott, Wickenburg, and La Paz. The urban networks in Nevada, like those that emerged in Utah, Arizona, and other western states, surrounded native tribes with miles of telegraph wires along heavily traveled roads and trails that connected towns full of young men, who could easily be assembled into white "urban armies," if necessary. All of this made white conquest of the West easier and the resistance of native peoples more difficult.[13]

But the important point that Nevada demonstrates, along with other states and territories, is that there was no frontier "line"—at least not after 1850 or so. Beginning in that year, Nevada served as the land bridge connecting the rest of America to California and the Gold Rush. For a gold-standard nation with

a booming immigrant population that made deflation a growing concern, the discovery at Sutter's Mill was a dream come true. And while Nevada attracted little population before 1859, thereafter, its settlement pattern disproved the Frontier Thesis of Frederick Jackson Turner. Urban networks in Nevada were jagged and not smooth. Development began in western Nevada and then spread eastward, defying Turner's thesis. In less than a decade settlers radiated through a maze of Great Basin valleys, canyons, and mountain ranges to form a number of small and large urban networks. This settlement process fragmented the Nevada wilderness into hundreds of big and small chunks. With their express-company wagon roads, pack trails, railroads, and steamboats, the state's urban networks created hundreds of oddly-shaped frontier lines which effectively compartmentalized dozens of Paiute and other native bands and erased the proverbial frontier *line* popularized by Turner.[14]

In the years after 1890 towns actively supported the state's development. New mining towns emerged and contributed heavily to Nevada's economy and treasury. Places like Wonder, Vernon, Pioneer, Amargosa, Rio Tinto, Rochester, Jarbidge, Crescent, and other communities helped draw population, capital, and supplies into their new mining districts. There were also smaller places like Carrara. Founded in 1905, Carrara was a shipping center for white, grey, black, and blue marble deposits from nearby Bear Mountain. The community also served as a stop on the Las Vegas & Tonopah Railroad.[15] Fairview, forty miles east of Fallon, grew up quickly after its founding in 1905—thanks to the purchase of several local claims by George Wingfield. Small towns like Fairview spouted all over northern Nevada in the years after 1890, and their value, like Carrara's, lay in the fact that once gold, silver, copper, marble, or some other valuable mineral drew miners, the men would then spread out in search of more ore, often creating a substantial district of wealth and activity. They needed places like Fairview and Carrara to supply them with food, equipment, capital, labor, and recreation while they conducted their prospecting or mining operations. Within just a few years of its founding Fairview boasted twenty seven saloons, and merchant stores carried the goods and offered the services that miners and millers needed.[16]

Towns and their saloons were important western places in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. As the historian Thomas Noel has noted for early Denver, the old western saloon handled many functions in urban communities.[17] This was certainly the case on Nevada's frontier, not just in larger places like Virginia City, but even in the smallest towns—because of the state's isolation. The saloon not only served as a watering hole where travelers could quench their thirst from the searing desert heat, but also as a refuge from the cold of winter and the sometimes staggering distances between destinations. Saloons were also temples of pleasure, with booze, gambling, prostitution, and sometimes opium or other drugs on the premises or nearby. On Sundays they were places of worship (after the paintings of naked women

on the walls had been turned around). Saloons also served as courtrooms for trials conducted by miner's courts, and even housed state district courts in places where a public building had yet to be erected. They also functioned as the headquarters for political clubs, as venues for political discussions, and as election-day voting places for townsmen and outlying residents.

In Nevada, saloons often served as business centers (much like the cocktail lounges of today's resorts do for convention delegates) where miners and loan officers from distant banks met to discuss financing for promising operations. Sometimes these meetings occurred in the saloon of a town such as Goldfield, just a few miles from the mine under discussion. On other occasions, the meetings took place in the nearest railroad town on the transcontinental line from San Francisco, with the banker coming in from San Francisco and the miner riding up from an outlying town in one of Nevada's many urban networks—say from Star City or Unionville up to Winnemucca, or from Treasure City or from Picollo to the short-line railroad town of Eureka, or even to the Central Pacific town of Carlin. The trip was literally worth its weight in gold, since funding was often hard to come by for prospectors. Because much of the capital for Nevada's mines came from long-distance financing, either directly from San Francisco or from its economic colony of Reno or from banks and other lenders in the East, the railroad town was a vital point in the face-to-face financing system that kept Nevada's mining economy healthy in the days before highways, airports, and telephones made traveling and communication easier.

Even before the American Revolution, taverns were the popular meeting places where local residents and travelers came to relax and socialize. In the early 1700s the first American newspapers that appeared in the taverns of Boston, New York, and Philadelphia were embedded in poles that hung on racks above the bar where patrons could easily take them down, read the three or four pages of news, and put them back up for the next customer. In Nevada's small towns and cities, people had to buy their own copies of the paper to keep it in business. But just as eastern newspapers kept colonists informed about the Boston Tea Party, Paul Revere's ride, and General Gage's latest troop movements, so too frontier newspapers in the Gilded Age and early 1900s were also vital organs that updated residents about mining news. And they performed other functions. From the territory's earliest days, Nevada's newspapers were valuable tools for moving information through urban networks to rural areas as well as to San Francisco, Chicago, New York, and at times even to London's financial circles. At any one time in the nineteenth century, dozens of small town editors were responsible for transmitting community and business news, ideas, dreams, fantasies, and promotional information that diffused through town streets and urban networks. Frontier conditions, rugged geography, and searing heat created no barrier the urban press could not pierce.[18]

Thanks to the towns and their newspapers, information radiated through the state's maze of urban networks and their farm-ranch hinterlands. Austin's *Reese River Reveille*, the *White Pine News,* and the *Eureka Sentinel,* just like today's *Reno Gazette-Journal* and *Las Vegas Review-Journal* made a vital contribution because they shrank their town and its hinterland to the size of a small community (just like they shrink today's metropolitan areas). In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, town-based editors led the fight to boost their mining districts over others. They also identified reliable water sources for miners and residents surrounded by parched deserts, who needed a guaranteed supply to fight the periodic conflagrations that could destroy a town in a matter of minutes. This was particularly important for a society of wooden buildings, flammable tents, and oil lamps based in a windy land of tinder-dry desert.[19]

Urban newspaper editors functioned as ceaseless advocates for their towns as well as for the mining and agricultural districts around them. Not only did the local newspaper promote its district when the boom was on, but also helped maintain optimism when production fell or when the price for precious metals dropped. It was the town editor who fought to establish and preserve law and order, pursue better stage service, help acquire a railroad, and convince local residents to build roads for better market access. It was the newspapers that opposed greenbacks and the anti-silver sentiment in Washington and the Crime of '73. It was the newspapers that championed the Bland-Allison Act, and the Sherman Silver Purchase Act, as well as the Pittman Silver Purchase Acts; and they embraced the candidacy of William Jennings Bryan in his various presidential campaigns. When the Central Pacific and other railroads overcharged for freight, it was the town newspapers that united the citizens in protest and championed the cause of railroad-rate regulation.[20]

In the more remote towns where food had to be hauled in by wagon train and prices were high, it was the urban editor who actively sought to recruit farmers from California and elsewhere to move nearby where springs and wells were present, and plant those patches of land where crops could grow and animals could graze. Every modern improvement from gas lighting to telegraph service was on the town editor's agenda. But most important, each newspaper promoted its district and community to potential investors. Editors throughout Nevada made sure their newspapers, with their "vigorous and boasting" news about the wealth residing in local deposits, rode the rails to San Francisco, Chicago, and other capitalist centers to attract the interest of investors, big and small. In an age before electronic media and instant communication, Nevada's towns and cities kept their residents, as well as those in the distant countryside, informed with their daily and weekly organs.

This was especially true in the decades following the Comstock's demise and the general decline of mining in the state. The first phase of Nevada's growth and development ended in the last two decades of the nineteenth

century, when recession and depression drained the state of population and profits. Nevada limped along in the 1880s and 1890s following the demonetization of silver in 1873, the National Railroad Strike of 1894, and the defeat of William Jennings Bryan in the presidential election of 1896, all of which slowed silver production and cut income in the state. At one point in the 1890s, Nevada's population dropped below forty thousand—not enough people to fill Fenway Park in Boston. But several events finally revived the economy.

The emergence of Tonopah, Goldfield, and the so-called Bullfrog Mining District resulted from discovery of new deposits of gold and silver and a rush to west central Nevada. Within months of Jim Butler's ore discovery in May 1900, the town of Tonopah began to rise. The place that counted fewer than thirty residents in the spring of 1900 had acquired three thousand two years later—thanks to Butler's leasing agreements, which greatly increased mining activity in the area. Just a year or so after Butler's initial discovery, more than $4 million in ore had been taken from the nearby hills. By fall 1902 upstart Tonopah had thirty-two saloons, two daily newspapers, and daily stage service to Reno. Organization of the Tonopah Mining Company and its access to San Francisco capital invigorated the area's mines and mills.[21]

As prospectors spread out in search of new lodes, Tonopah served as the transportation hub for the steadily expanding mega district (which eventually included many small mining districts) that extended in all directions for fifty or more miles. By 1904 the Iron Horse arrived to supplement the huge wagon trade that originally hauled supplies to Tonopah from the Carson and Colorado's terminus at Sodaville. But thanks to a narrow-gauge line that reached Tonopah from the Sodaville area in 1904, supplies traveled faster and at a lower price. In 1907 William Clark's Las Vegas and Tonopah Railroad came from Las Vegas, and Francis Borax Smith's Tonopah and Tidewater also arrived to offer Tonopah and later Goldfield connections to the Santa Fe line at Ludlow, California. In 1905 the original narrow-gauge line from Sodaville to Tonopah was extended to Goldfield.[22]

Goldfield's birth was part of the prospecting stampede triggered by Butler's bonanza at Tonopah. Many other towns resulted from this explosion of activity, but Goldfield was the largest. In the early days all of the camps and towns, including Goldfield, had their ore assayed at the network's central place, Tonopah. In 1903, after prospectors found high-grade gold at Columba Mountain, a syndicate was organized to secure enough capital for development. By 1904 the rush was on, and Goldfield began to take shape west of the mountain. In 1906 George Nixon and George Wingfield established the Goldfield Consolidated Mining Company to buy up the existing valuable claims and hire the hundreds of miners necessary to extract the ore efficiently and quickly. By 1908 Goldfield had more than twenty thousand people and boasted five banks, a stock exchange, and dozens of stores, as well as schools, churches, fraternal organizations, union halls, and gambling clubs. The town

was also the site of fierce class conflict evidenced by the arrival of the U.S. Army in 1907 and the state police in 1908 to force the militant International Workers of the World (the "Wobblies") out of town.[23]

After Goldfield, Rhyolite was perhaps the next best-known boomtown in the emerging urban network. In 1905 prospectors found gold in the Bullfrog Hills. Promoters quickly platted a town site near the richest mines and offered merchants free lots if they erected the usual array of stores and shops for groceries, mining equipment, and other services. Rhyolite's location was in a largely treeless area, so wood for town construction and mine bracing was at a premium. Like wood, water had to be hauled in from Beatty at great expense. But inflation was not such a problem in a town where gold profits could accommodate almost any price. By 1907 Rhyolite claimed six thousand people, but became a famous ghost town just a few years later when the national Panic of 1907 lowered gold prices and bankrupted many mining companies. The exodus continued for three more years, as the mines went *borrasca*. By 1910 Rhyolite was finished, suffering the fate of so many other mining communities that failed to develop other industries. Indeed, while many California Gold Rush towns continued their lives after the 1850s because of fertile fields nearby, Nevada's alkali flats and relative lack of forests, arable land, and water condemned most former boom camps to ghost town status. By the twentieth century, Nevada had more than five hundred ghost towns.[24]

Nevada's bigger towns were vital to the success of its smaller ones. The Bullfrog Mining District illustrates this point. San Francisco capitalists pumped a lot of money into the Comstock, Reese River, and central Nevada networks in the state's early years, and then financed many operations in the early twentieth century. San Francisco banks used their frontier outpost, Reno and its banks, to loan money to the hundreds of farmers, ranchers, and miners in west central Nevada, relying on the Carson and Colorado and the Tonopah and Goldfield lines to do it. These railroads were crucial to this enterprise, since the borrowers and the bank-loan representatives often rode the rails to meet each other and consummate these deals. As the historian Russell Elliott has shown, there was some effort by Los Angeles banks to use their client city of Las Vegas to do the same, but the northern-based companies and railroads that reached Tonopah and Goldfield first got most of the business before the economy in Tonopah and west central Nevada began to peter out after World War I.[25]

While the Bullfrog area's silver, and especially its gold, deposits helped the state out of its twenty-year depression in the years after 1900, the discovery of high-grade copper in the old Robinson District near Ely City gave Nevada another valuable boost. Miners had worked the hills for gold and silver as early as the 1860s and 1870s, but deposits were scattered, somewhat low-grade, and difficult to mine because copper kept intruding. Finally in 1902 former teamsters Edwin Gray and David Bartley leased nearby land and began mining high-grade copper deposits. There was a minor rush to the area, and

some small mining firms were established. But the main action began after 1905 when Mark Requa formed the Nevada Consolidated Copper Company, which began to acquire and consolidate many of the outstanding claims. Requa also built his one hundred forty-mile short line to transport the copper from the huge copper smelter under construction at McGill to the Central Pacific at Cobre near Toano, and interest in the copper districts skyrocketed. The railroad began service in 1906, but the national Panic of 1907 depressed interest until the McGill smelter opened in 1908. Even though America and the state were still feeling the Panic's effects, growing enthusiasm for electric power following the work of Edison, Tesla and Westinghouse in perfecting the DC and AC generators, respectively, made the need for copper as a wire insulator only more important. The Kennecott Copper Company began acquiring the copper mines in the Ely area in 1915 and invested much capital in the area.[26]

Of course, Ely was not alone in meeting the new demand for copper. Nearby Ruth grew to a town of five hundred by 1910, thanks to its huge copper pit, whose meandering deposits kept forcing miners to move the town over and back. Company houses, a hospital, and myriad stores and saloons appeared, and new subdivisions sprang up hither and yon throughout the early twentieth century. By 1927 the town had more than twenty-two hundred citizens until the Great Depression hit, and copper prices, along with the local population, fell. Twenty years earlier, in 1907, Reipetown formed just a few miles from Ruth to serve as a getaway for the miners. There, saloons, dance halls, gambling clubs, cribs, and opium parlors were available for mostly young and unmarried men twenty-four hours a day.[27]

The smelter town of McGill, part of Ely's network, also attracted population and spawned its own set of satellite and getaway communities. In 1906 the Steptoe Valley Mining and Smelting Co. built its huge smelter in McGill to process the copper mined in Ely's surrounding network of mining towns. The giant smelter opened in 1908, and as copper processing grew, so did the town. During World War I the concentrator increased daily production from eight thousand to fourteen thousand tons of copper. Even after production slowed following the armistice, McGill's population still approached two thousand, and by the early 1930s—despite the depression—the soaring demand for copper insulation at Boulder Dam and elsewhere drove the number of residents above three thousand. Just like Ely, McGill had its surrounding network of commuter, mining, and supply towns, including recreational communities such as Steptoe City and Smelterville, where the company's sheriff often "looked the other way" except when crime got out of hand. The copper towns experienced the familiar boom-bust mining cycles throughout the early twentieth century. The end of World War I and the Great Depression slowed production and occasionally cut the towns' populations, but World War II, America's insatiable demand for electric power, and Chicago Edison's

president Samuel Insull's innovations that helped democratize electricity all kept Nevada's copper towns purring until the 1970s. By that decade, growing pollution concerns and corporate deindustrialization policies shifted copper production largely to the Third World. and copper production eventually ceased in the Ely-McGill area.[28]

Not surprisingly, Nevada towns and cities were also the sites of union militancy and class conflict, just as they were in the East and Europe. During the National Railroad Strike of 1894, for instance, the Central Pacific's station towns across the old transcontinental corridor hosted picket lines. Reno even experienced minor rioting when California trains carrying unemployed workers—dubbed "Coxey's Army," for the militant Ohio Populist who organized a march on Washington to demand jobs for the unemployed—failed to stop in town to collect a large group of angry miners and millers headed east to support Coxey. Then in 1907, Goldfield witnessed violent clashes between the U.S. Army and the Wobblies, who were seeking to unionize miners and other workers in that town. After World War I, when workers in the Ely and Tonopah areas who willingly took war-time pay freezes were denied raises after the conflict, tensions rose to fever pitch before minor pay hikes and the threat of armed force slowly calmed the climate in these communities.[29] Las Vegas also witnessed its share of union turmoil during the national railroad strike in 1922 when striking railroad workers attacked Southern Pacific scabs in the yards, forcing the governor to declare martial law and dispatch the state police to replace the union-friendly sheriff. From its earliest days Las Vegas, much like Virginia City, was a union town. Indeed, the local building trades unions were powerful by the 1920s and continue to be so today. This was also the case with Culinary Union Local 226 in Las Vegas, which formed in 1938 following passage of the Fair Labor Standards Act during Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal. Unlike many American cities today, Las Vegas as well as other cities in the state, continue to experience a somewhat strong union presence.[30]

In stark contrast to their reputation for union militancy and occasional class violence, Nevada's large towns were also centers for amusement and shows. Entertainment went beyond the annual state or county fair. Every era had its popular singers, dance troupes, and other acts that visited the "opera houses" and other venues in Nevada's towns. Many saloons also hosted occasional floorshows in the years before small-town hotels did. Animal acts were also popular on a frontier where many species of mammals abounded. When it did visit Nevada in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the circus came to Reno, Carson City, and a few other railroad towns. The rails were the only safe way to transport elephants and other wild animals to frontier areas, so this form of entertainment largely confined itself to places with direct access to trains.[31]

This was somewhat less true of boxing. Of course, while there were matches in smaller camps, usually involving local combatants, the major prizefights took place in cities, because the railroads could deliver large

crowds for a big fight—much like the airlines do today. As Richard O. Davies has demonstrated in his recent study of Nevada prizefighting, matches in Nevada's mining and railroad towns were excellent training grounds for Jack Dempsey and other young fighters, as Goldfield and other aspiring towns attempted to draw in California mine investors by inviting them to attend and wager on local prizefights. In fact, Dempsey, a Colorado-born Mormon, spent much time in the 1920s and 1930s in Nevada's towns as a fighter and a promoter—and even as a saloon bouncer. Prior to Caesars Palace, MGM, and Mandalay Bay acting as the host site for championship fights in later decades, the most famous match was the 1910 Jack Johnson-Jim Jeffries bout in Reno, which drew more than twenty thousand visitors to the city and its gambling clubs.[32]

These prizefights, along with rodeos, other sports attractions, and horse racing in Reno, Elko, and other towns, were the first faint rumblings of an entrepreneurial effort to stage special events that would, over the years, draw millions of visitors to the desert state. By World War I the annual Reno Rodeo had begun, a promotion later imitated in Las Vegas, when the Helldorado Rodeo and parade began in the 1930s. Through the years, the Reno Air Races, the annual motorcycle race downtown, and the Reno Rodeo, as well the USBC championships at the National Bowling Center in Reno brought thousands of people to town. The same was true in Las Vegas with the Mint 500, the Caesars Palace Grand Prix, the Tournament of Champions at the Desert Inn Country Club, and even horseracing at the Thunderbird Hotel's track and Las Vegas Downs behind the Riviera Hotel. All of these events kept Nevada in everyone's newspapers.[33]

Given the Silver State's relative isolation before the automobile, the railroad and its towns were crucial to giving Nevada's audiences access to entertainment and sporting events. The car's debut at Chicago's Columbian Exposition in 1893 augured dramatic changes for world, the West, and Nevada. Once car ownership became more affordable for the masses after 1920, thanks to the Model-T and the Ford assembly line, towns became influential players in Nevada's effort to build a state highway system. After Congress passed the Federal Aid Highway Act of 1916 (in which the federal government agreed to match state spending for roads on a fifty-fifty basis), and the state legislature created the Department of Highways in the following year to plan roads and collect federal funds, road construction began in earnest. Passage of the state gasoline tax in 1923 and a subsequent hike in 1929 helped the state pay its share of construction costs. Townsmen and the farmers, ranchers, and miners in each town's surrounding area worked together to acquire the concrete, asphalt, tar, and graveled roads that connected them to the market world beyond. The first cars arrived shortly after 1900—just in time for future Governor and U.S. Senator Tasker Oddie to haul small amounts of ore to and from his Tonopah mine and for bank representatives and other lenders to drive out to deposits twenty or more miles from town for a quick "look-see" before agreeing to invest.[34]

By the mid- 1920s Nevada had the highest per-capita registration of motor vehicles in the nation—even more than neighboring California. The state's relative lack of trees, along with the only scattered presence of sagebrush, allowed cars to travel over the desert at speeds of twenty to thirty miles per hour—much faster than horses. The widespread presence of *caliche* and other hard soils, while disastrous for agriculture, provided a convenient surface for cars and small trucks. While railroads and stagecoaches stuck to their rails and smooth turnpikes, cars and small trucks could veer off into the desert at almost any location where the geography was friendly. The U.S. government's vast amount of open and still unfenced land in the 1920s and early 1930s promoted motor travel in the Silver State. Just as the effort in the 1860s to construct a transcontinental railroad required towns, so too did the effort to build highways. Urban communities joined with nearby farmers, ranchers, and mining companies in their market zones to press for paved thoroughfares. The first highway segments ran from Reno to Elko, linking the Central Pacific towns and their surrounding hinterland points, and from Reno to Tonopah, serving the Carson and Colorado and (most of) the Virginia and Truckee station towns and related communities.

By the 1930s, however, all of the state's towns led the chorus in Carson City for more paved roads. While rural voters were certainly important, urban mining, milling, and other companies based in towns that needed faster transportation to facilitate business, were very influential. In each session of the state legislature town-based assemblymen and senators lobbied hard for their areas. For centuries the horse and wagon had limped along at three miles per hour, creating an impenetrable barrier to business and growth. But the motor vehicle finally smashed that barrier by traveling across the desert at speeds more than thirty miles per hour. Faster and cheaper delivery of ore to market (a benefit long enjoyed only by mining towns with railroad access) reduced costs and increased profits, because faster and lower-cost transportation allowed miners to work even low-grade ore and still make a profit.

Urban communities were crucial to the road construction phase. In his 1927 report to the state legislature, Department of Highways board chair James Leonard referred to towns all through his report. For example, he expected construction of what he called "Route 1" to be completed soon from Lovelock to the Utah line east of Wells, and he noted that work on "Route 2" between the towns of Fernley and Ely was also progressing nicely. He also advised that the Las Vegas highway "will have to be brought to a higher standard due to the traffic which this road is annually receiving." The department's 1926 "traffic census" (conducted by opening checking stations on every state road) determined that as early as 1926, seventeen thousand motor vehicles daily plied the thoroughfares connecting Nevada's towns. A map of the existing state highway system demonstrated that in fewer than ten years the state's major towns were knit together by highways paved with asphalt, concrete, tar,

or gravel—a feat they had all lobbied for in Carson City. While there were still unpaved sections in 1927, the highway network was now far more substantial than the original system linking Reno with Elko and Tonopah. Las Vegas, Ely, and many other towns now had good roads. These new highways went right through towns and helped create new businesses on the streets and on the other roads that junctioned with them.[35]

By the mid 1930s highways crisscrossed the state. Every year the mileage of paved and unpaved roads increased, as more communities, big and small, joined the state system in an effort to move their goods and residents faster. Thanks to the efforts of senators Key Pittman and Pat McCarran, New Deal funding for road construction catalyzed the highway system's expansion, as Franklin Roosevelt used the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA), the Civil Works Administration (CWA), the Public Works Administration (PWA), and later the Works Progress Administration (WPA) funding to put more men on work relief. Much like the railroad days, building supplies and labor came from the nearest towns, whose previously unemployed accounted for a lot of the men on local construction crews.[36]

In the 1934 state Department of Highways report, it was clear that engineers and workers were trying to connect more secondary towns to larger ones. More than $5.6 million in National Industrial Recovery Act (PWA) funds helped Nevada pave roads from Zola to Mill City, and link Winnemucca to Golconda with roads, but these projects were just a small part of the effort. The process continued for the rest of the Depression through World War II and thereafter. Although the first road from Las Vegas to southern California came in the 1920s during the administrations of Harding, Coolidge, and Hoover, Franklin Roosevelt's public-works agencies built many more. The New Deal also widened U.S. 91 to allow the historic migration of gamblers and other traffic to Las Vegas. By the 1950s, southern California was responsible for 80 percent of Las Vegas's annual visitors.[37]

Today, the figure is much less, and air travel now accounts for almost half of all the visitors to town. During 1940-41 federal funding greatly improved the Las Vegas municipal airport (which later became Nellis Air Force Base). Over the decades the land around the new airport became the site for a constantly expanding McCarran International Airport that today serves more than forty-one million passengers annually. But the growing number of cars, trucks, and buses only made highways even more important. In the 1950s and 1960s, federal funding of Interstate 15 (at ninety cents on the dollar) helped replace the old U.S. 91, the last few miles of which later became Las Vegas Boulevard South—better known as the Las Vegas Strip. Money from the same federal law helped construct Interstate 80, which replaced the original highway built from Reno to Elko that had tied together all of the Central Pacific Railroad towns in the 1920s and 1930s. Interstate 15 opened completely through the Las Vegas metropolitan area in 1971, and Interstate 80 opened through Reno

in 1974.[38] As in the railroad days, both cities functioned as supply centers for the interstates' construction and even served as overnight dormitories for the workers. As construction moved farther away from the cities, Nevada's smaller towns like Wadsworth and Caliente took over the task of forwarding supplies to the laborers out in the desert and serving as getaways during the crews' time off. As for the future of transportation in the state, it remains to be seen whether Interstate 11 connecting Mexico/Arizona with Las Vegas and possibly Tonopah, Carson City, Reno, and Idaho/Canada will be built in the coming years. But, once again, the cities and towns along the route are lobbying heavily for it. Early estimates note that, if built, the new international route would annually re-direct billions of dollars in goods and business through western Nevada.[39]

Of course, modern transportation was just one way that the state's towns and cities helped promote Nevada's development. They also were important during the Great Depression, both world wars, and thereafter. During World War I, Tonopah, Goldfield and the state's other mining towns not only produced large amounts of gold and silver to help the United States and England finance their participation in the war, but offered other help as well. All of Nevada's towns and cities supported the war by engaging in such activities as fund-raising drives, private donations, letter-writing campaigns, and prayer services. The same was true in World War II, only on a larger scale. Las Vegas typified the concerted effort across the state to support the troops fighting Hitler and Tojo with scrap drives, "Meatless Tuesdays," war-bond purchases, and similar activities.[40]

During the so-called "Long Weekend" between the world wars when the Wall Street crash hurled America headlong into the Great Depression, Nevada's urban communities struggled like everyone else. In the 1932 election, with "Hoovervilles" in Reno, Las Vegas, and elsewhere full of unemployed men, Nevada's urban and rural places voted overwhelmingly for Franklin D. Roosevelt. During "the First Hundred Days" of Roosevelt's Administration, Senator Key Pittman and freshman Senator Pat McCarran pushed for New Deal funding to cut unemployment and stimulate spending in the Silver State, and they continued that effort throughout the 1930s. As a result, from 1933 to 1939 Nevada received the most *per-capita* New Deal funding of any state in the Union, and most of the programs were administered from the county-seat towns. While the thousands of workers who built Boulder (Hoover) Dam lived in Nevada's newest urban community, Boulder City, the hiring and supply centers and the railroad transfer point for the steel and other materials—and even the concrete testing lab—used to build the dam were based in Las Vegas. In Reno, the New Deal built many of today's street bridges over the Truckee River as well as dozens of other projects in the state's towns and rural areas.[41]

To combat the Depression, most states raised taxes to help fund state and federal relief programs, but not Nevada. Supported primarily by Reno's George Wingfield and other urban businessmen, Phil Tobin led a successful

effort in 1931 to legalize wide-open casino gambling. On that same day, legislators also cut the divorce waiting period to six weeks—a daring scheme to capitalize on Nevada's maverick image and rely on tourism to rescue the state from the Depression's worst effects. Reno and Las Vegas jumped at the opportunity to revive the state's sagging tourist industry in an historic move that soon transformed the state and its prospects.[42]

During World War II Reno and Las Vegas, with help from Pat McCarran, captured millions of dollars in federal defense spending for the state. The Las Vegas area became the site for the world's largest magnesium plant. Surrounding this enormous industrial complex was the Basic Townsite, home to thousands of defense workers, which later became the nucleus for Henderson, Nevada's second-largest city in the twenty-first Century. Just northeast of Las Vegas, the Army Gunnery School, which trained most of the U.S. airplane gunners in World War II, sprang up in an area that later became North Las Vegas. The Naval Ammunition Depot near Hawthorne, and other bases near Fallon, Elko, and Reno, also contributed to the war effort. Moreover, both Reno and Las Vegas entertained thousands of soldiers, sailors, aviators, marines, and defense workers with weekend passes during the war. Following creation of the U.S. Air Force in 1947, Reno (Stead Air Force Base) and Las Vegas (Nellis Air Force Base) both hosted large military installations. Because of its year-round sunny skies and unpopulated ranges, Nellis eventually became a center for advanced combat training (thanks to southern Nevada's exceptionally good weather), and in the 2000s it was the home for many drone strikes in the war against terrorism in the Middle East. At the same time, naval pilots who spearheaded the bombing of Saddam Hussein's Baghdad, as well as other operations in the region, trained at the Naval Air Station near Fallon. In addition, during the early Cold War, once the United States decided to move its atomic test site from the Far Pacific to part of the Nellis bombing range in southern Nevada following China's communist takeover, Las Vegas served as the major supply base for the Nevada Proving Grounds from 1951 until the Cold War's end in 1992.

Nevada's cities were also important on the mid-century domestic front. Reno, Las Vegas, and Carson City were centers for both progress and protest during the civil rights movement of the 1960s. Traditionally, Nevada and its cities had been bastions of Jim Crow. From the territory's earliest days Jews, Latinos, African, Native, and Asian Americans faced prejudice in the mining towns and other places. During and after World War II, in Las Vegas and Reno minority residents and visitors could gamble only in separate districts, away from the big casinos patronized by whites. But the national civil-rights movement inspired the local chapters of the NAACP in both cities to become more aggressive. In March 1960 the Las Vegas NAACP scheduled a large protest march on the Strip and in downtown. Anxious to avoid the specter of bloodshed and violence on national television, executives from most Strip

and downtown hotels voluntarily agreed to integrate their properties—four years *before* Congress passed the Civil Rights Act of 1964. African Americans in Reno also staged a variety of protests, but they had to wait until 1965-66, when marches on Washington and in Carson City, as well as federal and state civil-rights laws and threatened federal court actions, finally forced the big casinos downtown to open their doors to all minorities. Equal employment, school integration, and open housing came a few years later, but Reno and Las Vegas were the first places in Nevada where the state's big employers, unions, school districts, and landlords finally recognized racial, ethnic, and gender equality. By doing so they not only helped integrate the work force and create a just society, but in the long run greatly increased the number of annual visitors to the state's casinos and resorts.[43]

Of course, the contributions of Reno and Las Vegas to Nevada's development go well beyond national defense and civil rights. Any serious discussion of the impact of cities and towns on Nevada's history must include Reno and Las Vegas. By 2013, these two metropolitan areas accounted for roughly 90 percent of the state's population, and helped vault Nevada to prominence in the twentieth century. Once it officially passed Virginia City in population in the 1900 census, Reno remained the state's largest city until the mid 1950s when Las Vegas finally surpassed it. As noted earlier, Reno's nucleus began as a Truckee fording point on the way to the Comstock, and nine years later it became a railroad division town. For the Comstock, Reno functioned as the fast-rail gateway to the East and San Francisco. Bankers and capitalists from major cities came through Reno to examine the mines and decide whether to invest. The railroad played a similar role at Battle Mountain, Lovelock, Wells, and other railroad towns, where mining executives and bankers met in hotels near the tracks to negotiate investment deals. So, capital as well as supplies flowed through Reno and Nevada's other railroad towns to mining areas, just as gold, silver, and other precious metals flowed back. Up to World War II and beyond, Reno, like the state's other rail towns, was a window to the larger market world for hinterland farms and ranches.

But Reno wore other important hats. It was not just a railroad town, but also a university town after 1885 when it commandeered the tiny state campus from Elko, which had been struggling to attract students. Reno was also an industrial center, thanks to the railroad and the trackside industries it encouraged. These included bottling plants, woodworking mills, and small factories that manufactured or processed a variety of items needed in the countryside or along the railroad line.[44]

Reno formally became a city in 1903. As the new century progressed, the town became an infamous major divorce center, thanks to Nevada's six-month waiting period for divorce, which was considerably more liberal than the one-year period in California and most other states. When Nevada Progressives enacted a law in 1913 changing the waiting period to one year,

Reno lawyers and businessmen successfully lobbied the next legislature to restore the six-month law. As the main city on the railroad connecting San Francisco with Chicago and New York, Reno eventually became famous as *the* place where wealthy people came to dissolve their marriages. Until the 1960s, when California, New York, and other states finally adopted Nevada's shorter waiting period, an endless line of unhappy spouses moved to Reno (and by the 1930s to Las Vegas). In both places they could live quietly on nearby dude ranches or in rental apartments and, if they had the money, could spend their days riding horses and their nights partying in the towns' festive clubs.[45]

Following the state's legalization of wide-open gambling, Reno led the way in using the tables, the wheel, and the slots to lure railroad visitors from the East and especially from California. As it had done throughout the early twentieth century, Nevada popularized Nevada's maverick image and kept the state in the eastern press with its divorce and gaming industries. After 1940, Reno continued to be the city that many Americans associated Nevada with, thanks to the road signs posted all over America—and even in Korea—by Harold's Club, and by press coverage of major divorces and also by a handful of western films that used Reno as their setting.

But Las Vegas quickly rose to the fore, especially in the years after World War II. It too developed a line of clubs downtown that attracted its share of troops and defense workers. Like Virginia Street, Fremont Street was ablaze in neon and full of wartime visitors. After the war, and as Americans became more affluent, the number of visitors to both Reno and Las Vegas increased. There were certainly far more people than had visited the prewar clubs in both towns, and certainly more than had gambled decades earlier in Nevada's frontier-town saloons near the railroad and stagecoach stations. In time, some of the postwar hotels in downtown Reno and Las Vegas would have expanded vertically, as a few of them did. But gambling would have remained a prosperous but still minor industry if it were not for a cosmic breakthrough in wartime Las Vegas.

As this essay has been trying to demonstrate, throughout history, in Nevada and elsewhere, cities and towns have actively supported their states and their nations in a variety of important ways. Among their many benefits, cities have often produced or inspired innovative people with transformative ideas in all fields of endeavor. This was certainly the case in Nevada with someone like Steve Wynn, whose ideas for the mega-resort evolved over time while he was living in Philadelphia, Miami Beach, Las Vegas, and elsewhere. But long before this, Thomas Hull and a series of other men in the 1940s created a dynamic, new environment for gambling that allowed Steve Wynn, Jay Sarno, and other creative figures to thrive in later decades. In 1940, longtime California hotelier Thomas Hull decided to construct the next resort in his California chain not on Fremont Street, where Las Vegas Chamber of Commerce officials wanted him to build, but south of the city line in the desert bordering the Los Angeles

Highway. To this end, Hull purchased fifty-seven acres of land just south of today's Sahara Avenue, across the street from today's SLS Las Vegas Hotel and Casino, and built the first resort on what soon became the Las Vegas Strip. Hull liberated gambling from its traditional narrow confines on downtown city blocks and lots and put it out in the suburbs where there was enough space to allow a large casino, and several restaurants and stores, as well as a pool surrounded by sundecks, palm trees, and gardens. There were numerous restaurants, parking for hundreds of cars, and a showroom for entertainment. This simple act of moving gaming from a small club or hotel downtown to a resort hotel on a spacious tract in the suburbs released the brake on gambling's ability to attract millions of tourists to a desert state in the postwar decades when affluence and leisure reigned supreme. Hull was ten years ahead of Walt Disney, who also recognized that Disneyland and other theme parks belonged out in the desert or, in his case, out in the orange fields of California or in the wetlands of Florida.

In time, R. E. Griffith and William Moore (the Hotel Last Frontier), Billy Wilkerson and Bugsy Siegel (the Flamingo), and Marion Hicks and Cliff Jones (the Thunderbird), with help from Jake and Meyer Lansky, all joined Hull along the highway on the U.S. 91 approach to Las Vegas, and so the Strip was born. Within a decade, the Sands, Desert Inn, Stardust, Dunes, and other resorts helped the Strip and Las Vegas capture the nation's attention; American postwar culture, with help from Nevada, began to challenge conventional morality by embracing liberal divorce, legalized gambling, 24-hour liquor sales, sports betting, and Rat Pack entertainment (featuring Catholic, Jewish, and African-Americans stars) as well as other forms of leisure that Las Vegas either popularized or exploited. As Americans became more affluent in the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s, Las Vegas tourism grew. Steve Wynn's Mirage Revolution, which ushered in the megaresort era of the 1990s and early 2000s, only reinforced the Strip's reputation as a spectacle that had to be seen. Suffice it to say that Las Vegas's meteoric rise to prominence in the last half of the twentieth century is a story that has been told before and will not be repeated here.[46] But it should be noted that as the nationalization of casino gaming, the emergence of tribal resorts and casinos, competition from Macau and Singapore, internet gaming, and other events began to diminish Reno's popularity and access to capital for casino development, Las Vegas continued to provide the state with tens of millions of visitors each year.

Today, Nevada's two largest cities are responding to a new challenge: economic diversification. With the Las Vegas area on track in 2015 to surpass forty million visitors, the state will still have more than enough revenue to operate—albeit with some budget cuts. However, the demise of so many Reno casinos in the last two decades, along with the current drop in the price of gold which, if it continues, might cut production and state mining revenues, makes it more urgent than ever that Nevada pursue economic

diversification. Once again, the state's large urban communities will be crucial to the effort. The development of oil deposits through the fracturing process, though controversial, will probably go forward. New communities will form where the oil fields are, and larger towns will help supply the workers. But the development of solar power and other renewable energy sources, bio-medical research, electronic data storage, and the emergence of other knowledge-based industries will take place primarily in the state's two metropolitan areas.

Both state universities are currently taking steps to be recognized someday as "Tier One" research institutions by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. Donald Snyder, acting president of University of Nevada, Las Vegas, and a board member of Switch, the company whose enormous data-storage network sits in the Las Vegas metropolitan area, negotiated a landmark agreement in 2014 to connect the school's supercomputer to the Switch network.[47] This will give the university one of the most powerful platforms in the world for conducting advanced research in virtually any field. In northern Nevada, the decision by Apple to construct a huge data center for its cloud computing system at the Reno Industrial Park will not only create about five hundred construction jobs, but could also mark a giant step toward diversifying the city's economy for the long run. It might also have important implications for the university. The arrival of a Silicon Valley giant could someday help University of Nevada, Reno, extend its platform for advanced research in dramatic ways. It is to be hoped that other companies will follow Apple across the border. Such events could benefit Reno just as the migration of some Hewlett-Packard and Micron operations benefited Boise beginning in the 1970s and over time helped transform that traditional food-and-wood town into a thriving electronics center.[48]

In short, over the past one hundred and fifty years cities and towns have not only supported but also shaped Nevada's development. In a remote state of rolling grasslands, fiery deserts, catacomb-like geography, and twisting geology, cities and towns organized space to create an environment that allowed capitalism and democracy to thrive not only on the old Great Basin frontier, but also in today's highly competitive world. From the territory's earliest days, when the Comstock urban network facilitated the herculean task of extracting more than $300 million (in 1880s money) worth of silver and gold from the rugged terrain, to the later networks at Austin, Eureka, White Pine, and Bullfrog, to the neon cities of Reno and Las Vegas, and to the gleaming towers of the Strip, urban places have been crucial to Nevada's success and development. And, the same will be true over the next few decades as Nevada approaches its bicentennial. To be sure, as the Silver State works to diversify its economy in the twenty-first century to meet the challenges of a changing world, cities and towns once again will lead the effort.

NOTES

[1]Eugene P. Moehring, "The Comstock Urban Network," *Pacific Historical Review,* 66 (August 1997); 337-62. For a smaller community on the mountain, see, for instance, Italo Gravazzi, "American Flat: Stepchild of the Comstock Lode Part I," *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly,* 41 (Summer 1998); 92-101; See also Robert E. Kendall's companion essay on American Flat ("Part II" in the same issue, 102-14).

[2]Myron Angel, compiler, *History of Nevada with Illustrations and Biographical Sketches of its Prominent Men and Pioneers* (Thompson & West (Oakland), 1881), 55-61. For Reno, see appropriate sections of William D. Rowley, *Reno: Hub of the Washoe Country: An Illustrated History* (Woodlawn Hills, Calif.: Windsor Publications, 1984) and John M. Townley, *Tough Little Town on the Truckee: Reno, 1868-1900* (Reno: Great Basin Studies Center, 1983). A good picture of early downtown Reno can be obtained from Sanborn Map Company, *Maps, Cities, and Towns: Nevada, 1885-1906* (San Pablo, Calif.: Vlad Shkurkin, 1979): January 1885, pp. 1-5, and April 1890, appropriate pages.

[3]Moehring, "Comstock Urban Network," 342-46. For the general area and Carson City, see also C.C. Warner, *Products, Resources, Opportunities for Capital and Advantages to Emigrants of Nevada* (Reno: *Reno Evening Gazette* Book and Job Print), 14, and Angel, *History of Nevada*, 21-75. See also N. A. Hummel, *General History and Resources of Washoe County, Nevada* (Verdi: Sagebrush Press, 1888, 1969), 13-16.

[4]*Ibid*., 347-48.

[5]Ronald M. James, *The Road and the Silence: A History of Virginia City and the Comstock Lode* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1998); for Sutro City and the Sutro Tunnel, see 58-59, 88-89.

[6]Stanley M. Paher, *Nevada Ghost Towns and Mining Camps* (Berkeley: Howell-North Books, 1970), 86-87; Angel, *History of Nevada*, 380-82. For a good contemporary survey of developments, see *Bishop's Directory of Virginia City, Gold Hill, Silver City, Carson City, and Reno…* (San Francisco: B. C. Vandall, 1878),18-34.

[7]Eugene P. Moehring, *Urbanism and Empire in the Far West, 1840-1890* (Reno and Las Vegas: University of Nevada Press, 2004), 126-27; Paher, *Nevada Ghost Towns,* 110-13. See also Robert N. Chester, "Comstock Creations: An Environmental History of an Industrial Watershed," Ph.D. diss. (University of California, Davis, 2009).

[8]*Ibid*., 84-86, 71, 72-75. See also Mary Matthews, *Ten Years in Nevada, or Life on the Pacific Coast* (Buffalo: Baker, Jones & Co., 1880), 163-218.

[9]Russell Elliott with William Rowley, *History of Nevada,* 2d ed., (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1987); 59-60, 77-84.

[10]Moehring, *Urbanism and Empire*, 139-43.

[11]*Ibid*., 144-45; Paher, *Nevada Ghost Towns*, 181-85.

[12]Moehring, *Urbanism and Empire,* 145-48; see also Paher, *Nevada Ghost Towns*, 247-52. For more on the Mormon farm towns, see appropriate sections of Aaron James McArthur, "Reclaimed from a Contracting Zion: The Evolving Significance of St. Thomas, Nevada," Ph.D. diss. (University of Nevada, Las Vegas, 2012), and Carolyn Grattan-Aiello, "New St. Joseph, Nevada: The Muddy Mission Experience Revisited," *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly,* 29 (Spring 1986); 31-52; Jane Kowalewski, "Strange Bedfellows: Mormons and Miners in Southern Nevada," Master's Thesis (University of Nevada, Las Vegas, 1984), *passim.* See also Elbert Edwards, *200 Years in Nevada: A Story of People Who Opened, Explored, and Developed the Land: A Bicentennial History* (Salt Lake City: Publishers' Press and Mountain Bindery, 1978), 272-83.

[13]Rodman W. Paul, *Mining Frontiers of the Far West, 1848-1880* (New York: Holt, Reinhart, and Winston, 1963), *passim*.

[14]John Mack Faragher , ed., *Rereading Frederick Jackson Turner: The Significance of the Frontier in American History and Other Essays*, with commentary by John Mack Faragher (New York: H. Holt, 1994), 31-61.

[15]Paher, *Nevada Ghost Towns*, 102, 107, 114, 116, 330-31, 317, 212-15, 126-29, 206-10, 301, 303, 321-22.

[16]*Ibid*., 96-101.

[17]Thomas Noel, *The City and the Saloon: 1858-1916* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1982).

[18] *Ibid*., *passim.*

[19]Eugene P. Moehring, "'Promoting the Varied Interests of the New and Rising Mining Community': the Booster Press on Nevada's Mining Frontier, 1859-1885," *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly,* 42 (Summer 1999), 98, 106. See, for example, *White Pine News* (13 February 1869), p. 3; *Battle Mountain Weekly Messenger* (25 June 1881), p. 3; *Tybo Sun* (22 September 1877), p. 3; *Eureka Daily Sentinel* (13 October 1871), p. 2.

[20]*Battle Mountain Weekly Messenger* (27 July 1881), p. 2; *The Elko Independent* (14 January 1871), p. 2; Reese River Reveille (1 July 1863), p. 1; *Reno Evening Gazette* (8 April 1876), p. 2; *Eureka Daily Sentinel* (3 March 1876), p. 2; Moehring, "Promoting Varied Interests," 105.

[21]Russell Elliott, *Nevada's Twentieth-Century Mining Boom: Tonopah, Goldfield, Ely* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1966), 79; Paher, *Nevada Ghost Towns*, 333. See also *Reese River Reveille* (9 September 1863); *idem* (15 July 1863), p. 1. For more on the subject of the booster press, see Jake Highton, *Nevada Newspaper Days: A History of Journalism in the Silver State* (Stockton: Heritage Books, 1990), 107-16, 151-65.

[22]Elliott, *Nevada's Twentieth-Century Mining Boom*, 16, 124, 163-64; see also David Myrick, *Railroads of Nevada and Eastern California Volume Two—the Southern Roads* (Berkeley: Howell-North, 1963): 166-210, 504-43, 256-59, 261-67, 454-503.

[23]Elliott, *Nevada's Twentieth-Century Mining Boom*, 8, 9, 131-38; Sally Zanjani, *The Glory Days in Goldfield, Nevada* (Reno and Las Vegas: University of Nevada Press, 2002), 1-11.

[24]Paher, *Nevada Ghost Towns*, 312-13.

[25]Elliott, *Nevada's Twentieth-Century Mining Boom*, 28-31.

[26]*Ibid*., 182, 284-85, 183, 191-92, 284; Paher, *Nevada Ghost Towns*, 229-32.

[27]Paher, *Nevada Ghost Towns*, 232, 235

[28]*Ibid*., 233-39. For an informative discussion of Samuel Insull's contributions to the spread of electricity to the middle and lower classes, see Harold L. Platt, *The Electric City: Energy and the Growth of the Chicago Area, 1880-1930* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991).

[29]Sally Springmeyer Zanjani and Guy Rocha, *The Ignoble Conspiracy: Radicalism on Trial in Nevada* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1986), *passim*; Elliott, *Nevada's Twentieth-Century Mining Boom*, 103-48.

[30]Eric Nystrom, "Labor Strife in Las Vegas: The Union Pacific Shopmen's Strike of 1922," *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly,* 44 (Winter 2001), 313-32.

[31]See appropriate sections of Doug Mishler, "The Greatest Show on Earth: The Circus and the Development of Modern American Culture, 1860-1949," doctoral dissertation: University of Nevada, Reno, 1994.

[32]For Jack Dempsey's years in Nevada, see Richard O. Davies, *The Main Event: Boxing in Nevada from the Mining Camps to the Las Vegas Strip* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 2014), 99-116, 119-24.

[33]For more on why towns welcomed boxing matches, see Davies, *Main Event*, 38, 118.

[34]Elliott, *Nevada's Twentieth-Century Mining Boom*, 36.

[35]"Fifth Biennial Report of the Department of Highways," in the *Appendix to the Journals of the Senate and Assembly of the Thirty-third Session of the Legislature of the State of Nevada, 1927, Volume 1* (Carson City: State Printing Office, 1927), 7, 10, 13, 15; for the highway system map, see page 12.

[36]"Ninth Biennial Report of the Department of Highways," in the *Appendix to the Journals of the Senate and Assembly of the Thirty-seventh Session of the Legislature of the State of Nevada, 1935, Volume 1*: p. 9. For a map showing the route of the Victory Highway, the Abraham Lincoln Highway, and the Arrowhead Highway (named for the Old Arrowhead Trail), see Edward Leo Lyman, "The Arrowhead Trails Highway: Southern Nevada's First Automobile Link to the Outside World," *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly,* 42 (Winter 1999), 257.

[37]"Tenth Biennial Report of the Department of Highways" in the *Appendix to the Journals of the Senate and Assembly of the Thirty-eighth Session of the Legislature of the State of Nevada 1935, Volume 1,* 17, 89-91.

[38]http://www.8newsnow.com/story/24591161/mccarran-passenger-numbers. For McCarran Airport funding, see Eugene P. Moehring, *Resort City in the Sunbelt: Las Vegas, 1930-2000,* 2d ed., (Reno and Las Vegas: University of Nevada Press, 2000), 132, 206, 238, 264-67, and for the interstate highways, see 101-103, 246-47.

[39]http://www.reviewjournal.com/news/long-road-interstate-11

[40]Karen Loeffler, "World War I and the Nevada Homefront: Pre-war Rhetoric versus Wartime Reality," *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly,* 50 (Fall 2007); 215-38.

[41]See Leonard Arrington, ed. and James T. Patterson, "The New Deal in the West: A Preliminary Statistical Survey," *Pacific Historical Review,* 38 (California: University of California Press, August 1969). This entire issue, edited by Leonard Arrington, was devoted to the New Deal in the various western states.

[42]Eric Moody, "Nevada's Legalization of Casino Gambling in 1931: Purely a Business Proposition," *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly,* 37 (Summer 1994); 79-100.

[43]Moehring, *Resort City in the Sunbelt*, 184-202. For the Lake-Evans block and racial discrimination especially in downtown Reno, see Mary Ringhoff and Edward J. Stoner, *The River and the Railroad: An Archaeological History of Reno* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 2011), 133-49.

[44]Alicia Barber, *Reno's Big Gamble: Image and Reputation in the Biggest Little City* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2008), 27. For Reno's trackside industries, see Ringhoff and Stoner, *River and Railroad*, 60.

[45]Barber, *Reno's Big Gamble,* 107-11, 129-32, 53-71, 83-89.

[46]Eugene P. Moehring, "Las Vegas, Nevada," in J. Mark Souther and Nicholas Bloom, eds., *American Tourism: A National Tradition* (Chicago: Center for American Places at Columbia College, 2012), 157-66.

[47]Donald Snyder to UNLV Senate, May 6, 2014.

[48]http://www.dailytech.com/Apple+to+Build+New+Data+Center+in+Reno+Could+Create+1B+Economic+Impact+in+Nevada/article25039.htm

Good Luck If You Do
Nevada's Long Relationship with Gambling

David G. Schwartz

> Gambling of one kind or another built Nevada and the West, and, indeed, America, and hazard still rides with the every cattleman in the state and is at the elbow of every miner…. In fact, anything you may do in the free and open State of Nevada is your business providing you break none of the few laws which exist here for your protection *and providing you play a square game*… If you win, treat your neighbor. If you lose, go cry by yourself. *You need not gamble in Nevada*. But if you do—good luck![1]
>
> —Basil Woon, Foreword to *The Why, How, and Where of Gambling in Nevada*, 1953

Nevada is the Silver State: through a hundred and fifty years, that nickname has stuck. When it joined the Union in 1864 the state was best known for the mineral riches then being extracted from the Comstock Lode. The state's mines continue to be productive. But most Americans, and certainly most international visitors, don't immediately associate mining with Nevada. Instead, they think of a once-forbidden, now nearly commonplace American pastime (it's now too widespread to call it a vice and keep a straight face), gambling. Nevada was the country's single option for legal casino gambling

David G. Schwartz is the Director of the Center for Gaming Research at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, where he also teaches history and honors classes. His most recent book, *Grandissimo: The First Emperor of Las Vegas*, chronicled the rise of fall of Jay Sarno. He earned his Ph.D. in United States History from the University of California, Los Angeles.

for only forty-seven of its one hundred and fifty years, from the 1931 re-legalization to New Jersey's 1978 debut. Still, for many people, Nevada means gambling above all else. Yet the relationship between the state and its most recognized industry is complex. Nevada became a state without legal gambling, and at one point the state outlawed the business of it, and even at the gaming industry's height the state was actively seeking diversification. Yet, like a veteran player making the best of the cards that have been dealt, Nevada has gotten as good a deal as it can from the turning of cards, tumbling of dice, and spinning of reels.

Large-scale non-native migration into Nevada began in the late 1850s. It chiefly came from the West, where California was in the midst of an epoch-making mining book. Being colonized primarily by men abandoning their homes in search of gold, California was not unfriendly to the act of gambling; after all, what was gold-seeking itself but a gamble? Though the state criminalized commercial gambling in the 1850s, social gambling remained legal at the time of Nevada's first mineral strikes, and it was not until the convening of Nevada's territorial legislature in 1861 that there was any official action against gambling.[2]

In his opening address to the territorial legislature, Governor James Nye—a recent arrival from New York—spoke passionately about the abiding genius of the American Constitution, which allowed "intelligent people" to govern themselves via the "sacred ballot." But some people needed protecting; he urged the legislators to "protect the public from the devastating influence of an unrestrained traffic" in liquor. Barring sale to those under age, as well as to known drunkards, and ending sales to anyone on Sunday were steps in the right direction. Yet gambling, Nye argued, was the "worst" of all vices, since it "captivates and ensnares the young, blunts all the moral sensibilities, and ends in utter ruin."[3]

The legislature obligingly criminalized gambling, passing a law that punished both gambling proprietors and players. When Nevada achieved statehood in 1864, gambling remained illegal. Yet there were strong arguments in favor of legalization. Banning gambling hadn't seemed to stop it. An 1865 law decreased the penalties for proprietors and eliminated those for players. The legislators themselves, apparently, enjoyed nothing more than a high-stakes game of poker; a letter to the San Francisco *Daily Evening Bulletin* printed on March 17, 1865, bemoaned that "scenes, such as half-a-dozen gambling tables in full blast at one time in the Committee room of the Assembly… reflect much discredit on our law makers and, consequently, on their constituents and the state at large."[4] It is not surprising, then, that four years later the legislature passed—over the veto of governor Henry Blasdel—a measure that legalized commercial gambling.[5]

Gambling became legal just as Nevada plugged into the national transportation network. In May 1869 the first trains from the east arrived via the newly completed transcontinental railroad. The new link, as described in Thompson and West's 1881 *History of Nevada*, brought an unparalleled bounty to the young city of Reno: "work for all who sought it; plenty of money; good

prices paid for men and goods." But there also appeared "a class of human cormorants who live on the labor and toil of others by robbing them at the gaming table…with such a class, in common with her sister towns, was Reno infested. Saloons and gambling houses opened their inviting doors, and shameless women walked the streets and enticed men into dance houses where music and revelry sounded far into the night."[6]

At the time, Nevada was not unique for its legal gambling, in the West at least, and few remarked on its presence. Those who did, like the authors of *History of Nevada*, tended to take a negative view of the practice. There was no state oversight of gambling. City or county officials ensured that proprietors adhered to the law and collected all license fees. There are few records of passionate pro-gambling sentiment from the period, and gambling remained "a back-room industry…which played no part in the normal life of a community."[7] Yet legal gambling was popular enough; the legislature continued to fine-tune its framework for legal gambling, even adding bookmaking (1903) and slot machines (1905) to the wagering opportunities permitted.[8]

Even as Nevada was broadening its legal gaming regime, the rest of America sought to distance itself from gambling. States that had previously tolerated legal betting on horse races began banning it in the 1880s, and by the outbreak of World War I, only Maryland and Kentucky offered legal race betting. Lotteries had been banned throughout the nation, with the Louisiana Lottery finally slithering off to its end in 1907.[9]

In that atmosphere, pressure mounted for Nevada to throw off the shackles of its pioneer past and embrace the progressive values that forced gambling to retreat across the United States. In March 1909, the legislature banned all gambling, with proprietors given until October 1, 1910, to close their doors. If they did, it did not significantly diminish Nevada's appetite for gambling. Slot machines continued to operate, and in 1911 the Las Vegas City Commission was extracting a $15 per quarter license fee for each machine. It wasn't until two years later that the legislature undertook the formality of amending the gambling ban to legally permit such machines.[10] In 1915, the legislature further rolled back the ban, sanctioning "social games played only for drinks and cigars," and for prizes of less than two dollars.[11] By 1919, cities around Nevada were licensing saloons and pool halls that offered social games in which the deal alternated.[12]

Perhaps because of the limited nature of legal offerings, or because of the few resources dedicated to enforcement, illegal gambling thrived in the 1910s and 1920s.[13] Both the illegal operators and the general public seemed untroubled by this arrangement, but in 1931, local (city and county) governments and business interests (including both gambling operators and others who would benefit from more tourist traffic) expressed sentiment for outright legalization of commercial gambling. The "wide open" gambling measure passed both houses of the legislature. Governor Fred Balzar signed it into law on March 19, 1931.[14]

Reno, then Nevada's largest city, moved immediately to take advantage of the new permissiveness; by the time of the July 4 Max Baer-Paolino Uzcudun heavyweight boxing match, gambling halls dominated Center Street between Commercial Row and Second Street. Bill Graham and Jim McKay, who had thrived during the quasi-legal years, quickly dominated the gambling trade, their Bank Club becoming the city's top spot. The clubs of downtown Reno featured high-and-low-stakes action at table games including faro, craps, blackjack, and roulette, slot machines, and bingo (often called tango).[15] John Pettricianni's Palace Club, another popular Reno gaming hall, was the first to feature the game of "racehorse keno," in which players bet on which horse's name would be called from a group of eighty, represented by numbered balls. The game became wildly popular, and ultimately spread throughout the state.[16]

Harold's Club, a Reno gambling mainstay with an international reputation thanks to its "Harold's Club or Bust" billboard campaign, got its start in 1935. A family-owned-and-managed gambling hall, Harold's grew out of the Smith family's experience operating carnival games of chance in California. As that state began enforcing its anti-gambling laws with increasing seriousness, Raymond "Pappy" Smith and his family, including son Harold, opened a small club in space vacated by a failed bingo parlor on Virginia Street. Harold's drew on Pappy's long experience as a carnival promoter to get gamblers through the doors, and, thanks to a relaxed atmosphere that encouraged both men and women to stay and play, kept them coming back. Harold's wife, Dorothy, helped out by dealing games, and the club soon hired more woman dealers. Other operators scoffed at the Smiths' low limits and publicity stunts, but Harold's made a name for itself as a destination for casual gamblers, and its success started the migration of gambling clubs from Center to Virginia Street.[17]

Another migrant from California, William Fisk Harrah, made his own eponymous gambling club the base for an empire that continues to this day. Harrah opened a bingo parlor after his 1937 arrival in Reno, and, after a change of location, enjoyed a thriving business.[18] His Harrah's Club, a full-service casino on Virginia Street, became a popular and profitable operation because of Harrah's focus on standardization and friendly customer service. In 1955, he expanded to Lake Tahoe. After his 1978 death, Holiday Inn bought his two casinos. An Atlantic City casino bolstered the company's business and provided the blueprint for further expansion. During the 1990s, Harrah's casinos popped up throughout the United States. Although a 2005 acquisition of Caesars Entertainment ultimately led to the company dropping the Harrah's name for Caesars, Bill Harrah's place in the pantheon of Nevada casino operators is secure.

As Reno gambling halls were innovating—and, according to all accounts, raking in some serious money—in the 1930s, their Las Vegas counterparts were modestly performing. A clutch of small clubs on and around Fremont Street catered primarily to travelers stopping at the Union Pacific depot on Fremont and Main and, in the first half of the decade, to workers on the Hoover Dam

Panoramic view of the El Rancho Hotel, Las Vegas. (*Nevada Historical Society*)

project who were spending their federal paychecks. At the end of the 1930s, Clark County reported a gaming win about half as large as Washoe County's.[19]

That balance would begin to shift with the creation of the Las Vegas Strip. California hotelier Thomas Hull opened the first resort-style casino hotel, on Highway 91 just south of the Las Vegas city limit, on April 3, 1941. Unlike the downtown gambling halls in both Reno and Las Vegas, which focused on gambling to the exclusion of everything besides liquor and basic food service, Hull's El Rancho Vegas was designed as a full-service resort, with hotel rooms and bungalows spread along winding roads throughout the complex, restaurants, retail, a street-front pool—and a gambling casino. The El Rancho deliberately sought to ensure that "all of a guest's needs could be found on the premises," a harbinger of casino resort evolution on the Strip.[20] This was good business: a guest who can get everything near the gaming tables (or slot machines) is far more likely to continue gambling than one who has to leave to eat or see a show.

The following year, the Last Frontier opened to the south of the El Rancho Vegas. That resort, the creation of R. E. Griffith and his nephew, Bill Moore, was the first elaborately themed casino in Las Vegas. While many Nevada gambling halls, north and south, made at least a perfunctory appeal to the Wild West traditions of saloon and green felt, the Last Frontier self-consciously created a "period replica" resort that duplicated, with flourish, the appearance of an Old West gambling and entertainment establishment. The Last Frontier Village, a full-scale tourist attraction incorporating genuine artifacts and extrapolations from them, completed the theme. For a while, visitors could imagine themselves in a real frontier town.[21]

But the future of Las Vegas—and the key to its eventual dominance of not just the state's, but for decades, the nation's gambling market—lay not in nostalgia for the frontier past but with an aggressive group of erstwhile bootleggers who brought expertise in the business of gambling (often obtained when such businesses ran without the blessings of the law or regulation). The arrival of figures linked with organized crime added a new element into Nevada gambling: illegal entrepreneurship was stirred into the pot of western self-reliance and frontier laissez faire, creating a uniquely Nevadan (and, for the most part, Southern Nevadan) gambling culture.

These arrivals came just as Las Vegas was beginning to grow once more. The Second World War brought more federal money to the city. The existing Highway 91 casinos thrived, as did the Downtown gambling halls, including the new arrival, the El Cortez. One of the principals in the El Cortez, underworld jack-of-all-trades Benjamin "Bugsy" Siegel, would, in 1946, assume control over Billy Wilkerson's stalled Flamingo project on the highway (far to the south of even the Last Frontier). Siegel has been credited, in some quarters, with revolutionizing Nevada gambling, but at the time of his career (and at the time of its sudden end, June 20, 1947, in a hail of bullets) few of his contemporaries remarked on him as being anything other than one of many investors in the city's burgeoning gambling industry. True, the Flamingo—which was successfully completed and opened by him—did take a step towards the future with its preference for international luxury over western nostalgia in its design and its links to Hollywood. But Siegel was only one of many upstarts who were transforming Nevada gambling, and even if he had been the inspiration behind the new direction that Las Vegas operators would take, he was killed about six months after the Flamingo's debut.[22]

Another former bootlegger, Morris "Moe" Dalitz, had a more lasting impact on the development of gambling in Nevada. Dalitz, who had reportedly been involved in organized crime in Cleveland and in Michigan and several other states (and who retained most of his connections) organized a syndicate that bought a controlling share of Wilbur Clark's then under-construction Desert Inn. Clark kept his name on the marquee, but Dalitz and his partners called all of the shots.[23] Their resort brought the first shades of

luxury to Las Vegas gambling, and the Desert Inn Golf Course was an early attempt to broaden the appeal of Las Vegas for casual vacationers. Junkets from major cities kept casinos filled with serious gamblers (and maintained links with gambling interests nationwide) and fanciful public-relations work successfully positioned a vacation in Las Vegas as a fun pastime for work-weary Americans.

With the investment and managerial acumen of figures like Dalitz (and, from a distance, the reputed underworld financier Meyer Lansky), the stretch of roadway south of San Francisco Street (soon renamed Sahara Avenue after one of the new resorts) saw a burst of activity. By 1956, more than a dozen resorts lined the highway that became known as the Las Vegas Strip, and by the end of the decade the road had been officially renamed "Las Vegas Boulevard." State gaming revenue, $27 million in 1946, was $120 million ten years later—a more than 400 percent increase.[24] The population of Las Vegas similarly mushroomed, driven by both the growing gaming-tourism complex and the revival of federal spending on Nellis Air Force Base and the Atomic Test Site. And, in the true spirit of both frontier practicality and wiseguy opportunism, casino operators quickly promoted their proximity to atmospheric atomic testing as an amenity, even holding outdoor viewing parties for the blasts.

While the atomic tests rattled windows in Las Vegas hotels, connections between the legal casinos of Nevada and gambling interests in the criminal underworld of other cities brought an unwelcome spotlight on Nevada's gaming industry. Reform groups—up to and including the 1950-51 Special Committee to Investigate Organized Crime in Interstate Commerce (better known as the Kefavuer Committee after its headline-grabbing chairman, Estes Kefauver)—pressured local police to enforce anti-gambling statutes less selectively. At the same time, Nevada, because of the immature state of its regulatory apparatus and oversights in its regulations, was attractive for both capital and management expertise. Although statutes empowered the state Tax Commission to vet all applicants for gaming licenses, that body was understaffed and not particularly well suited to the nuances of quasi-criminal investigations. This opened the door for those with continuing connections to criminal organizations to receive gaming licenses. Those who did enjoyed advantages. While mainstream lenders still balked at financing risky casino projects, those with experience in illegal operations had no moral compunctions against doing so, and indeed could better assess the hazards and opportunities than those with no gambling experience. Furthermore, illegal gambling operators could provide much-needed marketing for the resorts, organizing high-rolling junkets with pre-screened big players. Finally, since Nevada law did not permit the collection of gambling debts through the courts, those who had associates with no reluctance to use strong-arm tactics had an advantage over managers who could only ask politely for their markers to be paid.[25]

The Kefauver Committee conducted one morning of hearings in Las Vegas (on November 15, 1950) and, in its *Third Interim Report*, concluded that because of its tolerance of operators convicted of gambling offenses in other states and the high level of gambling among the general population, Nevada's live-and-let-live approach to gambling was not to be admired. "As a case history of legalized gambling," that report's section on Las Vegas concluded, "Nevada speaks eloquently in the negative."[26] The state's congressional delegation was able to forestall any federal attempt to stifle Nevada's gaming industry, but the unwanted attention brought by Kefauver and other revelations about organized crime's influence in Nevada gaming, combined with the discovery that the existing gaming regulatory system was porous enough to permit Meyer Lansky to have a secret share in the Thunderbird, led to the creation of the Gaming Control Board in 1955. This body was charged with policing the industry in order to "eliminate the participation of undesirable elements" from the state. Gambling and the tourism it engendered had, by this time, emerged as the dominant economic drivers in the state, so protection of the industry—even from itself—was seen as crucial to the well-being of Nevada. During the administration of Grant Sawyer (1959-67), the state encountered further threats of federal action. Sawyer's "hang tough" policy, which sought aggressive action to root out organized crime influence, starting but not limited to the development of the "Black Book" of people banned from casinos because of their unsavory reputations elsewhere, may have prevented a catastrophic federal crackdown on Nevada gaming. During Sawyer's tenure, the Gaming Commission was created, and all responsibility for granting licenses were transferred to it from the Tax Commission. The "tough" policy ensured the survival of Nevada gaming through this tense period, and the organizational reforms gave the state's regulatory apparatus, more or less, its present form.[27]

As Nevada tightened its regulatory grip, the cohort that raised the Strip from the desert was beginning to pass the baton. Now mostly in their sixties, former bootleggers were retiring or passing away, and those who followed them into management positions had business degrees, not rap sheets. Over the next two decades, changes in the law eliminated the advantages for those with organized crime connections, and more vigilant policing forced the most notorious mob-tied operators from the industry.

In the early years of this process, three new arrivals to Las Vegas in the mid 1960s pushed Nevada gambling into new directions. While Reno casinos modernized and expanded in these years, the real impetus for growth of the gaming industry had shifted to the south, and though the north did not lack creative entrepreneurs or innovative operations, the Las Vegas Strip saw major changes that would shift the entire basis of Nevada gaming. Each of the three figures—who opened or purchased landmark Strip casinos in the late 1960s—inaugurated those changes in different ways.

Jay Sarno had built three Cabana motor hotels (in Atlanta, Dallas, and Palo Alto) with generous loans from Jimmy Hoffa's Teamsters Central States Pension Fund. Smitten with the possibilities (although definitely not the reality) of the Strip, Sarno received another loan and, in 1966, opened Caesars Palace. At $19 million, this was the most expensive resort yet built on the Strip, and it immediately raised the bar with its unprecedented opulence (a champagne look achieved on a beer budget) and its all-encompassing Roman theme. Caesars Palace became the most successful high-end casino in Nevada. Sarno's follow-up, 1968's Circus Circus, struggled in its early years but, under the leadership of Bill Bennett and Bill Pennington, came to dominate the low end of casino gaming and ultimately open an outlet in Reno. Sarno's vision—that gamblers wanted to be surrounded by, if not actual luxury, certainly the illusion of luxury, provided the template for the future evolution of the casino resort.[28]

Howard Hughes might have been the opposite of Jay Sarno; he had no artistic vision for casino design (indeed, he did not build any casinos), but plenty of money. He arrived in Las Vegas in November 1966, taking up residence in the Desert Inn. In March 1967, he bought the Desert Inn, starting a casino buying spree that came to include the Frontier, Sands, Castaways, Silver Slipper, and Landmark in Las Vegas, and Harold's Club in Reno. Hughes installed college-trained technocrats as executives and hastened the on-going move towards more rational management of the rapidly growing industry, but otherwise made few changes, though his entrance into the industry brought it a new degree of respectability.[29] His true legacy for Nevada, though, may be his numerous land purchases, which led to the development of the Summerlin master-planned community in Las Vegas.

Kirk Kerkorian, by contrast, effected tremendous changes in Nevada gaming. Originally Jay Sarno's landlord at Caesars Palace, he decided that the real money was to be made in operating a casino, not leasing the land under one, so he bought the Flamingo and began planning the International, a mammoth project that would be, on its July 1969 opening, the largest hotel in the world. Kerkorian subsequently sold the International and Flamingo to Hilton Hotels, which renamed the International the Las Vegas Hilton. Kerkorian would return to casino ownership in 1973 with the MGM Grand, again the world's largest hotel on its opening. Selling that hotel to Bally's in the early 1980s, he briefly owned the Sands and Desert Inn before building a new MGM Grand—again the world's largest hotel—in 1993.

Kerkorian was able to sell his first resort to Hilton because of a profound change in the law of gaming. Under the system of regulation that coalesced in the Sawyer years, all shareholders in a casino had to be investigated and licensed. This precluded any company with publicly traded stock from owning casinos. Although the Del Webb company was able to skirt these requirements with a leaseback scheme that allowed it to operate the Mint and

Sahara casinos, most major corporations were unwilling to invest in building or buying a casino unless they could own it outright.[30] After extensive lobbying and considerable resistance, particularly from existing Reno license holders, the legislature approved changes to the law in 1967 and 1969 that permitted publicly traded corporations to own and manage casinos in Nevada.

The influx of corporate ownership continued the swing towards respectability. Writing in 1974, the gambling authority John Scarne concluded that "although former illegal operators are responsible for opening most of the casinos on the Vegas Strip, many law-abiding businessmen now own it." Furthermore, "few of the old-time professional gamblers who helped make Nevada the gambling mecca of the world are in the state today. Most have passed away or retired."[31]

This change, and the continued growth of gaming as an economic force, led to the further acceptance of casino gambling, not just by Nevadans but by all Americans. In his introductory remarks before the Committee to Review the National Policy Toward Gambling in 1975, Senator Howard Cannon recalled that when he first arrived in Congress (1959), "there was a great deal of hearsay and emotional rhetoric dealing with Nevada gaming," and that the attitude of the federal government was frankly "anti-gambling." "We have come a long way," he declared, "since the Kefauver investigation and the justifiable preoccupation with the sinister, illegal, and destructive aspects of gambling that were endlessly publicized and romanticized in the thirties, the forties, and the fifties."[32]

The sinister elements of gambling were still too recent to celebrate, or even to dwell upon at length. When considering the essence of Nevada gambling, Cannon elided the strong influence of illegal entrepreneurs, preferring to recall the long-departed pioneer days: "you will see very few trappings of the frontier in the Nevada of 1975, but you will see that the frontier spirit is very much alive in the warm and friendly people of this state who believe, as I do… that a man or woman in Nevada is free to do anything he is big enough to do, so long as he does not hurt his neighbor."[33]

By this time, gambling meant Nevada, and Nevada meant gambling. Industry never took root on a large scale, a 1949 freeport law spurred some growth in warehousing, and the state's mines, while they continued to produce metals and minerals, tailed off. As a result, as Robert Laxalt wrote in 1977, "legalized gambling and its resulting tourism are still the bedrock of Nevada's economy."[34]

That bedrock would itself be shaken soon after Laxalt wrote those words. A recession in the late 1970s and early 1980s saw the state's gaming revenues, adjusted for inflation, fall. Visitation to Las Vegas, by now the undisputed capital of Nevada gambling, declined. Reno and downtown Las Vegas weathered the dip better than the Strip, so Strip operators moved to broaden their appeal to a wider audience. Baccarat tables were out, fast-food

restaurants were in, and by 1985 Las Vegas had begun to reorient itself as a vacation spot for middle-class families who gambled moderately and made up in bulk what they lacked in big spending.

The shift to the middle market tided Nevada's gaming industry over, and by the end of the decade operators on the Strip were looking to build again. Steve Wynn, who had moved to Las Vegas as a small shareholder in the Frontier and in the early 1970s had taken control of downtown's Golden Nugget, opened the ambitious Mirage resort in November 1989. This is considered the start of the next phase of Nevada gaming, known variously as the Mirage era and megaresort era.

The Mirage was significant not just because of its size (more than three thousand rooms, the largest resort to open in Las Vegas at the time) or its luxury, but its incorporation of non-gaming elements and its greater reliance on high-spending guests who might not be big gamblers. This began the shift of the casino resort model away from having lodging, dining, and entertainment as loss leaders subsidized by the casino; the new model relied on all components of the resort contributing to the bottom line. New Strip resorts like MGM Grand, Luxor, Paris, Mandalay Bay, and the Venetian largely embraced the Mirage model. Wynn himself added a lower-budget (Treasure Island) and higher-budget (Bellagio) resort to his collection by the end of the decade. Ten years after the Mirage opened, casinos on the Strip for the first time earned more money from non-gaming sources than from gambling;[35] In the fifteen years since then, non-gaming elements have become even more dominant; in 2013, they represented 63 percent of all casino income.[36]

At the same time, Las Vegas witnessed an explosion of smaller properties throughout its metropolitan areas. These "neighborhood casinos" or "locals casinos" as their name suggests, catered primarily to Las Vegas residents, and their rise was predicated on the growing population of Las Vegas, which was itself due in no small part to the burst of new developments on the Strip. In the neighboring communities of Henderson and North Las Vegas—and in unincorporated sections of Clark County such as the Boulder Strip—these smaller casino hotels still made most of their revenue directly from casinos, though a big part of their appeal was the full range of amenities that they offered locals, from bowling to movie theaters to the ever-present buffets.

Reno and Lake Tahoe in these years did not see the same level of investment as Las Vegas, though casino outposts along the border—particularly in Primm, Mesquite, and Laughlin, sprouted up to cater to nearby residents of surrounding states. This was a sign of the growing American appetite for casino gaming—a hunger that led to the legalization of casinos across the United States. Beginning with New Jersey in 1976, states legalized casinos, seeking to replicate Nevada's apparent success in creating new revenue sources and, in many instances, driving tourism. After Congress passed the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act in 1988, casinos on tribal lands also proliferated.

This growth of casinos has had a curious impact on Nevada. The Las Vegas Strip has seen its gaming revenue increase, thanks in part to the large network of casinos connected to their Las Vegas flagships by customer loyalty programs. But other markets—particularly Lake Tahoe, Reno, and Laughlin—have not been so lucky, and they have seen their gaming wins slip, particularly since tribal gaming expanded in California after 2000. With the consolidation of casinos on the Las Vegas Strip into a few major ownership groups, Nevada gaming is more concentrated than it has been in its entire history. The "industry," such as it was, was intensely local during the first regime of legal commercial gaming (1869-1910), with small operators in Reno, Las Vegas, Elko, and other towns. The second regime (1931 onward) saw some cross-ownership, with investors holding shares in a variety of small operations, particularly in downtown Las Vegas, but until the 1990s, even large operators contented themselves with one or two properties in each market. In the 2000s, consolidation in Las Vegas has led to the emergence of four international powerhouses headquartered on the Strip: Wynn Resorts, Las Vegas Sands, MGM Resorts International, and Caesars Entertainment. The locals market was dominated by Boyd Gaming and Station Casinos, and Boyd held a significant stake in downtown Las Vegas as well. Caesars had Harrah's casinos in Reno, Lake Tahoe, and Laughlin, and MGM maintained Circus Circus in Reno, but for the most part the Strip-centric companies have left Nevada gaming outside of Las Vegas Boulevard to smaller operators.

Casinos everywhere in Nevada were challenged by the recession of the late 2000s. Coming on the heels of increased competition, particularly from tribal casinos in California, the recession continued the downward trend in much of the state, and reversed some of the Las Vegas Strip's gains. There was much trepidation, particularly at the recession's bottom point in 2009-10; the worry was that perhaps Nevada's day as a gambling center had passed. After all, casinos were now legal in much of the United States, and the Chinese Special Administrative Region of Macau passed the Las Vegas Strip in gaming revenues in 2006, and in 2008 earned more from gaming than all of Nevada's casinos.[37] After three quarters of a century, it seemed that Nevada and gambling were no longer to be synonymous.

But, as they have since the territorial days, Nevada gambling operators adapted to the new conditions. With domestic spending on gambling in Las Vegas down, casinos with Asian-facing operations began cultivating with more serious intent international high rollers. Those with Macau operations were particularly well placed to capitalize. As a result, since the recession baccarat has become a true staple on the Strip, and the statewide gaming industry is more dominated by the large operators than it has ever been.

Nevada may no longer be the world's gambling leader by mere volume, but it remains inextricably associated with gambling. Even though Macau makes far more money from gambling than the Silver State, and Americans no

longer have to visit Nevada to play casino games, gambling is still an essential part of Nevada's identity. Indeed, like mining, it is one of the few elements that continues to connect the frontier days with the present, although, like mining, the tools used to conduct gambling today would likely be unrecognizable to our grizzled forebears.

The essence of gambling, however, has shifted. In the early years of statehood, legal commercial gaming was simply an honest carry-over from the uninhibited mining settlements that were instrumental in bringing people to the region. By the turn of the century, some elements in the state considered commercial gaming to be an embarrassing relic of barbarism, and the state criminalized the business of gaming. When commercial gaming returned in 1931, it was initially one of many schemes to counter the effects of the Great Depression on a state with little industrial or commercial development—as Eric Moody has said, "purely a business proposition."[38] In the postwar period, it became a national curiosity and the basis for a tourist industry that made Las Vegas a major metropolis and contributed to the growth of Reno as well as to the development of outlying gaming towns.

Since the opening of The Mirage, the Las Vegas Strip has become more focused on building an all-around vacation (or business travel) experience for visitors, leading to the next transformation of Nevada gaming. It is now one of the bulwarks of the state's increasing relevance to the global economy. People may no longer come to Nevada exclusively to gamble, but the tourist infrastructure that gambling underwrote in Las Vegas has made the city an international destination without peer. Even when gambling isn't the center of the action, it is still a tremendous part of what makes Nevada, well, Nevada.

Notes

[1]Basil Woon, *The Why, How, and Where of Gambling in Nevada* (Reno: Bonanza Publishing Company, 1953), prologue.

[2]Nevada Gaming Policy Board, *Legalized Gambling in Nevada* (Carson City: Nevada Gaming Control Board, 1963), 11.

[3]John B. Reid and Ronald M. James, eds., *Uncovering Nevada's Past: A Primary Source History of the Silver State* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 2004), 65-66.

[4]"Letter from Carson City." *San Francisco Daily Evening Bulletin* (March 17, 1865), http://docs.newsbank.com/openurl?ctx_ver=z39.88-2004&rft_id=info:sid/iw.newsbank.com:EANX&rft_val_format=info:ofi/fmt:kev:mtx:ctx&rft_dat=11A1D0F934745070&svc_dat=HistArchive:ahnpdoc&req_dat=0BB295CEAF424306BCADA379D413C8A3

[5]David G. Schwartz, *Roll the Bones: The History of Gambling. Casino Edition* (Las Vegas: Winchester Books, 2013), 197-98.

[6]*Thompson and West's History of Nevada, reproduction* (Berkeley: Howell-North, 1958), 635.

[7]Nevada Gaming Policy Board, *Legalized Gambling in Nevada* (Carson City: Nevada Gaming Control Board, 1963), 10.

[8]Schwartz, *Roll the Bones*, 198-99.

[9]*Ibid.*, 344. The Lottery's detractors nicknamed it "the Serpent."

[10]David G. Schwartz, "Casinos Amid Convenience: Neighborhood Gambling Evolves in Las Vegas," *Gaming Law Review and Economics* (November 2014), 18:9, 887.

[11]Nevada Gaming Policy Board, *Legalized Gambling in Nevada* (Carson City: Nevada Gaming Control Board, 1963), 11.

[12]Eric N. Moody, "Nevada's Legalization of Casino Gambling in 1931: Purely a Business Proposition," *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly* (Summer 1991), 80.

[13]Russell R. Elliott, *History of Nevada, 2d ed., revised* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1987), 248.

[14]Moody, "Nevada's Legalization of Casino Gambling," 80-82, 95.

[15]Schwartz, *Roll the Bones*, 202-4.

[16]Eric Moody, "The Early Years of Gambling in Nevada, 1931-1945," Ph.D. diss., University of Nevada, Reno, 1997, 189-90.

[17]*Ibid.*, 191-95.

[18]*Ibid.*, 215-17.

[19]*Ibid.*, 252.

[20]David G. Schwartz, *Suburban Xanadu: The Casino Resort on the Las Vegas Strip and Beyond* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 35-36.

[21]*Ibid.*, 44-45.

[22]*Ibid.*, 52-53.

[23]*Ibid.*, 104.

[24]*Ibid.*, 77.

[25]*Ibid.*, 227-8.

[26]*Third Interim Report of the Special Committee to Investigate Organized Crime in Interstate Commerce* (Washington, D.C.: United States Printing Office, 1951. 94.

[27]Nevada Gaming Policy Board, *Legalized Gambling in Nevada* (Carson City: Nevada Gaming Control Board, 1963), 12.

[28]For a full biography of Sarno, see David G. Schwartz, *Grandissimo: The First Emperor of Las Vegas* (Las Vegas: Winchester Books, 2013).

[29]*Ibid.*, 148-50.

[30]*Ibid.*, 105-6.

[31]John Scarne, *Scarne's New Complete Guide to Gambling* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1974), 248.

[32]Commission on the Review of the National Policy toward Gambling, *Transcript of Proceedings: In Re: The Nevada National Hearings of the Commission on the Review of the National Policy toward Gambling* (Carson City: Richard Tuttle and Associates, 1975), 6-7.

[33]*Ibid.*, 9.

[34]Robert Laxalt, *Nevada: A History* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1977), 126.

[35]Center for Gaming Research. *Annual Comparison: Revenue Statistics. Las Vegas Strip Casinos with Gaming Revenue over $1,000,000*, http://gaming.unlv.edu/abstract/lv_revenues.html

[36]Center for Gaming Research, *The Average Big Las Vegas Strip Casino, 2013,* http://gaming.unlv.edu/reports/bigstripcasino2013.pdf

[37]David G. Schwartz. *Major Gaming Jurisdiction: Twelve-Year Comparison,* (Las Vegas: Center for Gaming Research, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas, 2013) http://gaming.unlv.edu/reports/12_year_comp.pdf

[38]Moody, "Early Years of Gambling," 1991.

The Nevada Political Tradition at 150

Michael Green

Richard Hofstadter might seem like an unlikely source to explain Nevada's political history. Twice a Pulitzer Prize-winner who spent much of his career as part of or attuned to the intelligentsia of New York City, Hofstadter dismissed some of the most important elements of Nevada's political past in his work. Attacking what he saw as the backwardness of the Populist movement in his classic *The Age of Reform*, he deemed the linking of silver and Populism nothing more than political hypocrisy. The ideological right still assails him for his critique in *The Paranoid Style in American Politics* of Barry Goldwater and his supporters, who included prominent Nevadans such as Governor and U.S. Senator Paul Laxalt, whose views still affect Nevada politics today. Even Hofstadter's first book, *Social Darwinism in American Thought, 1860-1915*, criticized the belief in "the survival of the fittest" that animated much of late-nineteenth-century America, including Nevada, and that the state's political economy and culture exemplified in so many ways.[1]

Michael Green is an associate professor of history at UNLV and the author of *Nevada: A History of the Silver State*, a new one-volume history of Nevada. He is the former editor-in-chief of the *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly* and the author or co-author of numerous books and articles on Nevada.

Green is indebted to Sondra Cosgrove, Heather Cox Richardson, and David Tanenhaus for critiquing a draft of this article, and Jerome Edwards for his thoughts on an earlier version presented at a Nevada history conference.

But Hofstadter's most read and most important book provides a template for understanding Nevada politics and policy. Published in 1948, *The American Political Tradition and the Men Who Made It* consists of twelve essays on figures ranging from the Founders to Franklin Roosevelt. Hofstadter mixed irony, sarcasm, drollery, and astute analysis to revise how historians have looked at some of the nation's leaders and their goals. His book helped give rise to a new school of historical writing, the consensus school—a group with which Hofstadter preferred not to be associated. While consensus historians often celebrated their topics or minimized dissent in American history, Hofstadter was more cynical and less celebratory about what he called "the common climate of American opinion." Hofstadter declared that "the major political traditions have shared a belief in the rights of property, the philosophy of economic individualism, the value of competition; they have accepted the economic virtues of capitalist culture as necessary qualities of man…. The sanctity of private property, the right of the individual to dispose of and invest it, the value of opportunity, and the natural evolution of self-interest and self-assertion, within broad legal limits, into a beneficent social order have been staple tenets of the central faith in American political ideologies…." As one of Hofstadter's students, Eric Foner, described it, "Instead of persistent conflict (whether between agrarians and industrialists, capital and labor, or Democrats and Republicans), American history was characterized by broad agreement on the fundamentals, particularly the virtues of individual liberty, private property, and capitalist enterprise."[2]

During its more than a hundred and fifty years as a territory and state, Nevada developed a political tradition that fits well with Hofstadter's analysis, despite (or perhaps because of) its origins. In 1948, when Hofstadter published his book, Nevada's population had yet to reach 150,000, Pat McCarran served as the state's senior senator and the airport in Las Vegas had just been named for him, and the Las Vegas Strip consisted of four hotels (of which only one, the Flamingo, still exists, and none of its original building survives). The city's phantasmagorical growth since World War II has markedly changed the state, but not the components of the Nevada political tradition, which remains rooted in the capitalism that Hofstadter saw as central to the American experience. Yet Nevada had its own traditions that affected or reflected its role in the American political tradition. Before and after World War II, the state's limited population has grown in spurts according to the main economic factor at the time and has usually been confined mainly to one region of the state, empowering the one region at the expense of other parts of Nevada. While its government has expanded as its population has grown, Nevada still has a limited government rooted in the idea of a citizen legislature that has, in turn, often been the willing prisoner of powerful lobbyists and interests, while its politics and policies often continue to be shaped more by individuals than by institutions. These traditions have combined to keep Nevada from doing

all it could have done to combat discrimination against women and ethnic and religious minorities, who fought in turn to reshape their world and the broader society to which they belonged. And Nevadans have both benefited and suffered from forces beyond their state, whether regionally, nationally, or internationally, sitting as they do "east of eden and west of zion," both a colony and a colonizer, a victim and a victimizer. [3]

Dividing history into eras can be problematic at best, since they rarely begin and end cleanly. But Nevada's political history may be roughly divided into three major periods. The first, tied mainly to the Comstock Lode and railroad interests, extended from the state's (and the territory's) beginnings until the early twentieth century. The second, originating with the leaders of the Tonopah-Goldfield boom who then moved to the Reno area, continued until the mid 1950s. The current era has reflected the increasing importance of the gaming industry. Through each era, certain representative politicians and journalists exerted influence, as did reformers working inside or outside the system, but in all cases they had to function within the limits set by the dominant economic players of their time—and in all cases they overlapped in time and interests.

THE COMSTOCK ERA AND THE LONG NINETEENTH CENTURY

These political traditions proved central to Nevada's status as a territory, and characterized its first forty years of statehood. Outside forces, exemplified by the federal government, proved crucial to this process. The miners and ranchers who settled present-day western Nevada had sought territorial status in the 1850s but failed because of their lack of population and power in an outpost of western Utah territory. Adding to their troubles, Congress, battling over the spread of slavery into new territories, had no need for further fighting over a nondescript area. The creation of Nevada Territory on March 2, 1861, reflected the first and greatest national event to mold the area: the Civil War. With the southern states out of the Union, the remaining northerners could more easily legislate their goals, and did so, both before and after the firing on Fort Sumter, which began the war less than six weeks after the territory's creation. They admitted the state of Nevada to the Union on October 31, 1864, to address the needs of the federal government: Abraham Lincoln wanted more electoral votes to secure his re-election, as well as backing for ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment abolishing slavery and congressional support for Reconstruction. Nevada kept its end of the bargain, including joining other Union states in abandoning the commitment to civil rights that animated the beginnings of Reconstruction.[4]

The federal government shaped Nevada in other ways, too. During the war, the Republican-dominated Congress passed legislation to encourage farming in the West, promote the transcontinental railroad, and advance education. While the Homestead Act had little impact on Nevada, the Land Grant

College Act led to the birth of higher education in Nevada. The construction of the Central Pacific fostered urban development, immigration, and the spread of corrupt politics. The Big Four of Charles Crocker, Mark Hopkins, Collis Huntington, and Leland Stanford emulated eastern industrialists who sought to control legislatures, thereby avoiding restrictive legislation at the state and (because lawmakers elected U.S. senators until 1913) national levels.[5]

The construction and completion of the Central Pacific helped establish Nevada as a hotbed for political machines, but the state's major industry did more than its share, too. With silver demanding more intricate and expensive technology than did gold, Nevada's mining industry, almost from the Comstock's beginnings, required corporations and the investment and funding they could provide. Befitting prospectors without much funding or vision, the lode's discoverers quickly sold their interests to corporations. At first these were small, but increasingly they grew larger. Usually based in San Francisco, and often rooted in the Gold Rush and the services its miners required, corporations began to dominate Nevada. They and their representatives—most notably attorney-politician William Morris Stewart—tried to control judicial rulings on mining claims. When territorial judges proved troublesome and faced accusations of corruption, mining interests pushed for statehood and influenced the provisions of the Nevada Constitution to protect their interests. As with the railroad magnates, lobbyists for leading mine owners William Sharon and John Mackay influenced the legislature to elect the U.S. senators they wanted and defeat any taxes and regulations they opposed. Although their industries were different, both mining and railroad officials wanted the same things from lawmakers. Nor did it hurt their chances of obtaining favorable legislation that the citizen legislature created by Nevada's framers met only every other year for about two months; the limits on their time and the lack of professional members or staff gave lobbyists for mining and railroad interests additional power.[6]

The men the legislature sent to the U.S. Senate reflected these power dynamics. During the first forty years of statehood, each U.S. senator had a deep connection to the Comstock Lode, which included representatives of Virginia City interests (Stewart, 1865-75; Francis Newlands, 1903-17) and, indeed, mine owners themselves (John P. Jones, 1873-1903; William Sharon, 1875-81; James Fair, 1881-87), while Stewart also maintained a close association with the Central Pacific Railroad. The only other U.S. senator in this period was James W. Nye (1865-73), who had worked with Virginia City leaders when he was territorial governor, and certainly tried to serve mining and railroad interests in Washington; but when he sought re-election, he suffered not only from health problems but from the presence in the race of two multimillionaire mine owners (Jones and Sharon, whose widespread bribery at the 1873 legislative session became the stuff of legend). Lobbyists and other associates like Darius O. Mills and Henry Yerington regularly made their presence felt at the legislature and with local governments.

These close ties between business and government paid dividends in the policies pursued at the state and local levels, including Stewart's authorship of mining laws that favored his allies on the Comstock and his support for federal legislation that helped railroad interests avoid taxation and regulation. And those industries understood the value of what Stewart and his colleagues had done. As Huntington wrote of Stewart, apparently without a hint of irony, "He is peculiar, but thoroughly honest, and will bear no dictation, but I know he must live, and we must fix it so that he can make one or two hundred thousand dollars. It is to our interest and I think his right." At the more local level, Henry Yerington of the Comstock's Bank Crowd and the Virginia and Truckee Railroad said in 1876 that "we carried the assemblymen, sheriff, county commissioners, treasurer…*all friendly to us* (& God knows they ought to be)…."[7]

The political machines that western mining and railroad magnates created in pursuit of favorable economic policies have received less attention from historians of the Gilded Age of the late nineteenth century than they should. When the state legislature increased taxes on mine owners in the 1870s, the owners refused to pay; lawmakers ultimately capitulated. The governor at the time, rancher Lewis Bradley, vetoed legislation favorable to the "Silver Kings"—John Mackay, James Fair, James Flood, and William O'Brien—who had discovered the Big Bonanza. Bradley later lost his bid for re-election in 1878 to John Kinkead, who had ties to the mining industry and looked upon them more favorably. Similarly, Mackay had become a minority stockholder in Virginia City's *Territorial Enterprise*, justly renowned as the great newspaper that employed Mark Twain and Dan DeQuille, but also a strident voice on behalf of the Republican Party—and Mackay's purchase was cooperative effort with William Sharon, the Bank of California magnate. Despite their joint venture, it would be polite to say that they despised each other. But Sharon had bought the paper to help assure his election to the Senate, which proved successful. When Bradley, a Democrat, rejected a tax break for mining interests, the *Enterprise* declared, "He is old and decrepit, and it would be cowardice to abuse him, but would to God that he was a younger man so that we might publish how much we wish that he was dead." The *Enterprise*'s role in Sharon's political career and Mackay's finances would be neither the first nor the last time that a Nevada newspaper would play a part in politics beyond the usual reporting and editorializing.[8]

Not long after that editorial appeared, in 1877, Nevada's economy was effectively dead, victim of a decline in the Comstock's mines and the lack of any major new mining rush that approached them in profits. Nevadans tended to blame their plight not on the lack of ore, but on the federal government. In 1873, Congress passed and President Ulysses S. Grant signed the Mint Act, which demonetized silver—just in time for the discovery of the Big Bonanza. Nevada politicians responded by calling both for the remonetization of silver, which they expected to inspire mining exploration and profits, and for federal

silver purchases. By the early 1890s, their failure to achieve their goals had prompted Nevadans to form Silver Clubs, which evolved into the Silver Party. Their actions mirrored the Populist movement in the same era: Farmers upset with market and financial issues started creating social groups and finally a political arm, the People's Party, to advocate their cause. When the People's Party platform of 1892 called not only for printing paper money, but also for the remonetization of silver, Nevadans united with the Populists. In 1896, the Democratic Party nominated Nebraska's William Jennings Bryan for president after his speech advocating silver, and both Populists and Silverites shifted their loyalty to Democrats, with Nevadans even calling themselves Silver-Democrats through the first decade of the twentieth century.[9]

The Silver Party has received both more and less attention that it deserves. While scholars of Populism often have differed about whether that movement was reactionary or forward thinking, they have generally agreed that the silver movement's connection to it was a marriage of convenience. The People's Party had called for government ownership of railroads, but enjoyed support from Stewart, whose campaign manager was the Central Pacific's agent in Nevada. But the silver movement reflected another tradition in Nevada politics and society: distrust of the federal government. Although the Mint Act had been one of several measures to contract the money supply—including laws to remove greenbacks from circulation—and other places had produced silver, Nevadans considered themselves its target. Perhaps this seeming paranoia resulted in part from the state's origins—not simply the federal government's role, but also how San Francisco-area interests like the Bank of California had long exerted their influence. Nevadans experienced a loss of control over their destiny, and the silver movement enabled them to express this dismay without necessarily directing their anger toward those who controlled them economically.[10]

The quest for prosperity in the late nineteenth century also prompted the reclamation movement, which sought to build irrigation systems throughout the water-starved West so as to promote farming. Stewart became the first leading Nevada advocate of this approach, perhaps in part because reclamation might reduce the criticism that farmers directed at railroads and help to produce crops that would provide the railroads with profitable cargo. He encouraged Francis Newlands to adopt this issue as his own. The son-in-law of William Sharon, Newlands had moved to the state to advance his family's interests and became, as Gilman Ostrander put it in his muckraking study, "a unique phenomenon in Nevada politics: the man who bought his way into Congress in order to serve the nation." With Stewart's support, Newlands won Nevada's lone House seat in 1892 and began a decade-long effort that culminated with the passage of the Newlands Reclamation Act in 1902 and the creation of the Truckee-Carson Irrigation District and as well as involving the federal government in the dam-building business.[11]

Yet a shared interest in silver and reclamation paled in comparison with the political ambition that helped cause political reform. In 1898 and 1899, Stewart sought re-election, and Newlands tried to unseat him in a battle that pitted the Central Pacific machine against the Comstock and Bank of California forces in a break with their usual cooperation. Stewart barely triumphed at a legislative session marked by allegations of bribery and kidnapping. Lawmakers already had sought campaign-finance reform and now promoted the idea of a preferential primary to enable voters to tell them for whom to vote in Senate elections—and, in the process, to provide them with political cover while reducing the prospects of corruption.[12]

This support for reclamation and political reform probably had little to do with the Populist movement to which Nevada's Silverites had attached themselves. More likely, it reflected their state's economic and political realities. With their political machines and limited economy based on depressed mining and ranching industries, they had little room to maneuver. Thus, they also broke with the reformist spirit and Victorian mores of the rest of the country to support prize-fighting and to continue to tolerate legal gambling. But these changes reflected the difficulty of breaking down any history, much less Nevada's, into distinct eras. These actions and Newlands's rise to power proved to be harbingers of the national Progressive Era. They proved minor in comparison with how the Progressive Era and the twentieth-century mining boom demonstrated both the continuity of Nevada's political culture, and the possibilities and limits of change.[13]

The Mining and Reno Era

The beginning of any new century marks a turning point, and this proved especially true in 1900. In Nevada, a gold and silver discovery at Tonopah opened up the south-central part of the state to mining, and a boom ensued, with Goldfield becoming the last gold rush on the western frontier, and boomtowns developing all around them; in White Pine County, to the east, the discovery of copper created a new boom in that region. For the next half century, the dominant figures in Nevada politics spent time in those mining rushes, albeit not as hard rock miners, but in politics and business. Most of these politicians ended up shifting their residences to northern Nevada, especially Reno, as the Tonopah-Goldfield boom petered out in the 1910s. But those who emerged from the mining region influenced the state for half a century.[14]

Nationally, Theodore Roosevelt won election as vice-president and, in 1901, succeeded to the presidency upon William McKinley's death. While Roosevelt alone cannot be considered the creator of the Progressive Era, his ascent marked a key moment at the national level, with the presidency now in the hands of a supporter of increased government regulation and reform. As president (1901-09), Roosevelt, and then his successors William Howard

Taft (1909-13) and Woodrow Wilson (1913-21), sought to break up trusts they considered too large for the good of the public and the economy. They backed conservation measures that preserved areas for natural beauty or recreational opportunities, but also advocated wise use of resources. They tried to improve and expand the role of government to manage business and the economy, but also to promote social justice. And they backed measures designed to force immigrants and Native Americans to give up their cultures and become more "American," while maintaining and even expanding racial segregation. The three presidents and their political parties varied in their commitments to these issues, but all fit the general and often contradictory definition of "Progressive."

Nevadans found it both easy and hard to be "Progressive." The Newlands Reclamation Act represented the apex of "wise use" progressive conservation and attitudes about management. Newlands and those who supported the measure believed in benefiting the greatest number by changing the ecosystem to provide water for farms and communities. After the Progressive Era supposedly ended in 1920, Governor James Scrugham (1923-27) supported the creation of state parks and set aside the Valley of Fire with the idea that such areas should be protected, but they also would enhance Nevada's tourism economy. As of 1914, Nevada law required that miners be able "to speak and readily understand the English language," ostensibly to promote workplace safety, which Progressives advocated. But the measure also had the effect of limiting employment by immigrants or forcing them to learn the English language at once—another, less attractive characteristic of Progressives. Governor Tasker Oddie (1911-14) took great pride in the creation of a banking commission that would regulate a major industry, but resented complaints about the role that bankers and their allies then played in policing themselves.[15]

These policies and politicians may seem contradictory or hypocritical, or both, but they also reflect the reality of Nevada's limited economy. Oddie had won an upset in the Republican governor's primary in 1910 by running against political machines and the anointed candidate, a former judge, William A. Massey. In the general election, though, Oddie campaigned with, and on, the statewide ticket that largely reflected the preferences of the party's two leading lights, Senator George Nixon and his business partner, George Wingfield, who dominated Nevada's mining and banking industries. Also, Oddie directed most of his rhetorical firepower at the political influence supposedly wielded by the Southern Pacific Railroad, the successor to the Central Pacific, and compared himself to Hiram Johnson, who campaigned similarly for governor in California. But the railroad had largely exited Nevada politics a decade before, meaning that Oddie focused on the wrong target—or, for the sake of his political future, the right target.[16]

By 1910, Wingfield had established himself as, at minimum, a force to be reckoned with, and soon became known as the "owner and operator of Nevada"—for good reason. The combination of his partnership with Nixon and his own savvy had elevated him from a Winnemucca and Golconda

cowboy and professional gambler to the co-owner of most of Nevada's leading mines. Later, he became the owner of those mines as well as the banks that Nixon once had controlled. Nixon had worked with Newlands in an unsuccessful effort to overcome the influence of Stewart and his Central Pacific allies in the 1890s before finally driving the old senator into retirement in 1905. In 1907, Wingfield teamed with other mine owners to break a miners' strike and curtail the unionizing efforts of the Industrial Workers of the World. The mine owners, including Wingfield, trumped up murder charges against two organizers, then asked Governor John Sparks, to whom Wingfield had loaned money, to ask the U.S. president to send federal troops. Sparks did as requested, and the organizing and the strike were done.[17]

But Wingfield had only just begun. He and Nixon had amicably ended their partnership in 1909, with the senator concentrating on his banks and Wingfield on mining. After Nixon's death, Wingfield bought the banks from his late friend's widow and declined Oddie's offer of the now-vacant Senate seat, thus becoming known as "the cowboy who refused a toga." More significant, Wingfield explained that his activities in Nevada mattered too much for him to dilute his efforts by adding Capitol Hill to his territory.[18]

Inevitably, Wingfield wielded power with Nevada's federal officials because he owned important Nevada businesses and was willing to use the power that came with his wealth. Historians have debated whether Wingfield actually operated a "bipartisan machine." In the 1910s and 1920s, he shared space in his Reno bank building with attorneys George Thatcher, the Republican national committeeman until Wingfield took the job, and William Woodburn, the Democratic committeeman—meaning in that small area, called "The Cave," sat three of Nevada's most powerful political figures. And Wingfield grasped or at least intuited what many Nevadans have failed to understand, to their detriment: As a small state, Nevada's best chance for influence on Capitol Hill lies in the Senate, with its power and chairmanships based on seniority. Thus, despite his Republicanism, Wingfield saw no need to strain every nerve to defeat Key Pittman, a Democratic senator from 1913 to 1940, who rose to become chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee in 1933, making him one of that body's more important members. From 1921 to 1933, Nevada's other senator, Tasker Oddie, moved up in the ranks of Republicans while that party controlled the chamber during his two terms. In that period, Nevada obtained the naval ammunition depot for Hawthorne, favorable funding for highway building, and new federal courthouses for Reno and Las Vegas, as well as the construction of Hoover Dam. While the two senators could hardly claim credit for all of these, their presence did no harm—another reminder of the importance of the federal government to Nevada's development.[19]

Wingfield also sought to shape his state, but how much he affected it and how much he reflected it might be debated. Wingfield hewed to the libertarian view that has been popular throughout the state's history: Keep government

of all kinds out of his business and Nevada's business. And he believed that what was good for the one was good for the other. Thus, when Governor James Scrugham dedicated his four-year term to hiking taxes for highway construction, setting aside land for parks, and encouraging archaeological digs, Wingfield supported Fred Balzar all the more strongly in the 1926 election. When Scrugham lost, he bought the *Nevada State Journal* with financial help from Wingfield. In 1914, Wingfield opposed women's suffrage and threatened to leave the state if it became law; it did, and he did not. Shortly thereafter, he supported Reno Mayor E. E. Roberts's libertarian approach to issues, including flouting Prohibition, in contrast to the Progressive-style movement for a "better Reno" led by Newlands and other civic-minded residents. After Wingfield had been associated with abortive efforts to make gambling legal in the late 1920s, he made it a point to stay in the shadows in 1931; that time, Nevada's legislators passed the law with far less opposition than previous attempts had generated.[20]

The extent of Wingfield's power may be gleaned from two circumstances. One involved State Treasurer George Cole and State Controller Ed Malley, who embezzled more than $500,000 in state money which had been illegally deposited in Wingfield's Carson Valley Bank. This had occurred when Nevada law, in those days before the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, permitted no more than $75,000 in state funds in one bank. When the bank's treasurer threatened to go public, Cole and Malley went to Wingfield. He directed the attorney general to prosecute them and told the governor to request that the legislature raise taxes to make up for the defalcation. Ultimately, after negotiations, Wingfield paid 30 percent. Cole and Malley went to prison. But that they turned to Wingfield before anyone else, and that their defense attorney argued that they acted as they did only because they reported to Wingfield, whom he accused of considering himself above the law, spoke volumes.[21]

So did the saga of that defense attorney, Patrick Anthony McCarran, who wound up bridging the eras and characteristics of Nevada politics to become one of the most powerful political figures in the state's history. The son of Irish immigrants, McCarran grew up on a family sheep ranch and had just returned from the hills in 1902 when he encountered William E. Sharon. This Sharon was the old Comstock baron's nephew and a cog in Newlands's political machine. Sharon offered to support McCarran for the Nevada Assembly—and, in turn, the young politico would back the congressman in the U.S. Senate race. Thus, McCarran became part of the last remnant of Virginia City's political power: Newlands won the Senate seat and retained it until his death in 1917; by then he had become the leading Progressive in Nevada, helped shape national legislation, and served as an adviser to Woodrow Wilson.[22]

McCarran's move to Nye County to be part of the twentieth-century mining boom made him part of the next phase of Nevada's political tradition. He began practicing law, became district attorney, and thereby joined a group

that would become Nevada's future leaders, including Wingfield, Oddie (who helped start the boom), and Key Pittman. While the others occasionally fought but remained mostly chummy, McCarran showed from the beginning that he had trouble playing well with others. He agreed to represent a woman claiming to be Wingfield's common-law wife in a divorce case as well as the Goldfield union organizers accused of murder—neither case being likely to endear him to the wealthy and increasingly powerful Wingfield. McCarran went on to challenge a Wingfield candidate for the House and decline a judgeship engineered either to win him over or to sideline him, and he eventually returned to Reno in 1909.

Wingfield moved to Reno shortly thereafter, and with Newlands already living there and the Central Pacific having started the city, it became Nevada's political and economic center. McCarran retained his political ambition but continued to be thwarted in his desire to be a U.S. senator, the highest position to which he believed a Nevadan could aspire. It did him no good to battle Pittman within the Democratic Party, especially when he had already antagonized Wingfield. Although a capable Nevada Supreme Court justice in the 1910s and a successful lawyer in the 1920s, McCarran spent most of those years in the political wilderness, running unsuccessfully at least five times for the Senate and seemingly establishing himself as no more than a perennial candidate.

In 1932, McCarran won the Democratic Senate nomination and the right to lose to Oddie, who seemed sure to win a third term. But while some Nevada political traditions—the limited economy and political machines—created obstacles to McCarran's ambitions, other political traditions enabled him to realize them. Just as outside forces long had shaped Nevada's politics, so they did here. Franklin Roosevelt's long coattails aided Democrats around the country, and the worldwide Great Depression hit home in Nevada. As the election approached, Wingfield's banking empire began to collapse. McCarran benefited from the federal government's increased role in Nevada as the driving force behind the construction of Hoover Dam; the dam attracted migrants who had no established political loyalties in Nevada and who blamed Republicans for causing the economic collapse that forced them to move. All they knew about McCarran was that his name had a "D" by it, linking him to FDR and distinguishing him from the political party they blamed for the Depression. Also, McCarran's chances of victory improved thanks to government inaction, when Governor Fred Balzar failed to obtain a federal bailout for Wingfield's banks, which prompted a two-week bank holiday that left Nevadans' accounts in limbo just days before the election. Despite all this, McCarran's margin was small, only a 52 to 48 percentage win.

But McCarran encompassed and reflected the Nevada political tradition, and availed himself of it. He understood the importance of power in Washington, D.C., secured spots on key committees, including Appropriations, and eventually rose to be chairman of the Judiciary Committee—the former

Senator Patrick McCarran in his office, ca. 1942. (*Nevada Historical Society*)

a prime slot for doling out money and the latter for making deals with other senators who wanted their judicial nominees confirmed. These posts positioned him to engage in horse-trading for Nevada and to deliver federal pork, and he contributed to the establishment of military bases and the Basic Magnesium plant for World War II and the Nevada Test Site afterward. Nor did he hesitate to use his power for individual Nevadans: He carved up his staff positions so that he could give patronage jobs to young men going to law school; he hectored the military on behalf of Nevada prisoners of war and students; and he aided constituents having trouble with federal agencies.

Just as mining and railroad owners had a network of allies throughout the state, patronage enabled McCarran to build a similar political organization. Many of the approximately fifty law students graduated and returned to Nevada, where they served as district attorneys and county commissioners, among other positions. They remained loyal to McCarran and served as his eyes and ears in the communities where they lived, or simply became part of

the Democratic Party apparatus. Ironically, they often proved more loyal to their political party than McCarran did: Even more than Wingfield, McCarran backed candidates according to who and what suited his interests. In his desire to dispose of Democrats he perceived as disloyal, he pitted them against each other in primaries. In the 1950 gubernatorial election, his support and that of his allies went to Republican Charles Russell, a former congressman with whom McCarran had gotten along, instead of to Democrat Vail Pittman; Vail was Key's younger brother and an avowed McCarran enemy who had even challenged him unsuccessfully in the Democratic Senate primary in 1944. Then, in 1952, when the first "McCarran boy," Alan Bible, ran for the Senate and lost the primary, McCarran eventually backed Republican incumbent George Malone rather than the Democratic nominee, Tom Mechling, who had spent the primary and general election campaigns attacking McCarran. Then McCarran's allies released a tape of a conversation in which Mechling offered to ease up on the senator in return for financial help for his campaign.

Like Sharon and Wingfield, McCarran understood the power of the press. In his most famous encounter, he tried and failed to shut down the *Las Vegas Sun*, whose publisher, Hank Greenspun, had been his most vocal Nevada critic. Making the contrast between the *Sun* and other Nevada newspapers all the starker, McCarran enjoyed a close and fruitful relationship with Greenspun's competitors, Al and John Cahlan at the *Las Vegas Review-Journal*, as he also did with Joseph McDonald, the editor of the *Nevada State Journal*. McCarran built goodwill by providing inside information and ample press releases, which editors welcomed as a means of filling space. Nor did the editors have to be Democrats: Jack McCloskey of the *Mineral County Independent* and Walter Cox of the *Mason Valley News*, both Republicans, saw McCarran as doing a good job for Nevada and supported him accordingly, as they later did other Democrats.[23]

McCarran was the only Nevada political boss who lacked wealth, but he appreciated the limits of Nevada's economy. Some of Wingfield's allies—most notably developer Norman Biltz and lobbyist John Mueller—became McCarran's financial angels. He continued the tradition of supporting mining and ranching, but saw the federal government as a means of economic diversification and acted accordingly. He sought to protect the casino industry: when Senator Estes Kefauver's hearings on organized crime led to congressional efforts to tax gambling revenues, McCarran succeeded in blocking the new taxes. He confessed to his friend McDonald, "It isn't a very laudable position for one to have to defend gambling," but "when the gambling business is involved in the economic structure of one's State, one must lay aside pride and put on the hide of a rhinoceros and go to it." In the process of protecting gaming, he contributed further to the rise of Las Vegas, which already had benefited from his quest for New Deal funds and defense projects during and after World War II. Thus the irony: He had benefited in

1932 from newcomers with no particular allegiance to individuals in politics; by the 1950s, another generation of newcomers had arrived and had no loyalty to or real knowledge of him.[24]

Indeed, a telling anecdote explains how McCarran broke from tradition by asserting a measure of independence. Another of the "McCarran boys," a law student on his patronage list named Ralph Denton, had started practicing in Elko. A limousine pulled up outside his office one day and the occupant asked Denton to represent him in his quest for a gaming license before the Nevada Tax Commission. He told Denton, "You've been highly recommended to me. If you will represent me, I'll pay you $10,000, and I'll give you $5,000 now. After the hearing, I'll give you the remaining $5,000." The commission unanimously denied the license, but the applicant paid Denton, who was thrilled to receive the fee. Later, Denton recalled, "The senator asked me: 'Did some people come to you and want you to represent them in connection with a license at the Palace Club in Reno?'" Denton told him the story. "A big grin on his face, and he starts laughing." As McCarran recounted it,

> They had come to Washington to see him. They thought they could get the fix in through him. He didn't promise them anything. "Tell you what you do," he said. "I think if you went out to Elko, Nevada, there's a young lawyer out there by the name of Ralph Denton. If you go out and see him—he's very good—and pay him $10,000, I think everything might be okay." They thought they had the fix in. They misjudged their man.

Denton recalled McCarran saying, "I'll teach those tinhorn sons of bitches to try and buy me." All of which runs counter to the tradition of Nevada politicians—or any politicians, for that matter—in thrall to their contributors.[25]

Yet McCarran served those contributors, as politicians before and after him did. As the Pulitzer Prize-winning columnist Russell Baker recalled about covering the U.S. Senate shortly after McCarran's death, "the Foreign Relations Committee's stately Walter George of Georgia was also the senator from Coca-Cola," and "the oil industry often called the tune for senators like… Lyndon Johnson," the majority leader and a Texan. Pittman and McCarran became well known nationally for their defense of the silver industry, and the mines in the Ely area inspired a nickname for McCarran: "The Senator from Kennecott Copper."[26]

Apropos of Baker's comment, both Pittman and McCarran joined Newlands in serving local interests but also carving out national reputations—but in their case, with less national approval. As Foreign Relations Committee chair, Pittman tried the patience of Franklin Roosevelt and American diplomats at times for his emphasis on promoting silver and going his own way, yet he also proved prescient in warning of the threat that Japan posed in the late 1930s. The term "McCarranism" might have been applied

to the anti-communist crusade associated with Senator Joseph McCarthy of Wisconsin; and McCarran dedicated a great deal of time and effort to rooting out communists long before McCarthy served in the Senate or thought of the issue, prompting one prominent civil libertarian to call him "Grand Inquisitor and Lord High Executioner in charge of the extirpation of heresy." McCarran contributed two pieces of Cold War legislation that earned him considerable ignominy: an immigration act that many now see as discriminating against eastern European Jews, and a security law designed to identify communists but later held in part to be unconstitutional on First Amendment grounds.[27]

These issues addressed the needs of Nevadans less than Stewart's work on mining law or Newlands's on reclamation. Yet those earlier figures, too, involved themselves in national issues, with Stewart taking racist positions on imperialism and Newlands, advocating the repeal of the Fifteenth Amendment, as a Progressive and Mississippian born before the Civil War who doubted that African Americans could assimilate into Anglo-Saxon society. And none of these senators diverged much, if at all, from what most Nevadans believed on such matters as whether the U.S. should drive Spain out of Cuba in 1898 or the issue of communist infiltration in the 1940s and 1950s. In McCarran's last speech, delivered minutes before his death to a crowd in Hawthorne, Nevada, on September 28, 1954, he declared, "It is imperative that a Democratic Congress be elected in order that your senior senator may resume his position as head of the Judicial Committee of the Senate and continue his fight against Communism."[28]

Both Wingfield and McCarran encouraged Nevada's economic growth, but societal and cultural growth were another matter entirely. Women's suffrage advocates had overcome Wingfield's opposition, but the efforts of their leader, Anne Martin, to win elective office failed, and their attempts to shape legislation generally proved minimally successful at best. McCarran was open-minded enough to name as his administrative assistant Eva Adams, a fellow Nevada native who ran his office with great efficiency (and later served as director of the U.S. Mint), but his record on social issues was unimpressive: He wrote the Nevada Supreme Court opinion that upheld criminalizing sodomy; he supported the New Deal but had little interest in or impact on legislation to extend women's rights; and his interest in African Americans seems to have centered mainly on winning their votes in close elections. In this regard he was no better or worse than the overwhelming majority of his fellow Nevada politicians or even his congressional colleagues, and he was similar to Wingfield: He sought to perpetuate his power for himself and for what he considered the best interests of his state.[29]

But while the Comstock's power outlasted the early barons and Wingfield's friends joined with McCarran, McCarran's machine died with him. No politician since has been strong enough, self-centered enough, independent-minded enough, or willing enough to attempt what McCarran did. "McCarran Boys" ran for office, sometimes supporting one another and sometimes

in competition. His financial backers either concentrated less on politics or simply supported whichever candidates seemed best suited to their goals. And by the early 1960s, Reno ceased to be Nevada's largest city, and national and international events conspired to reduce—although not completely—its importance to the state's politics.[30]

The Modern Era

By the time of McCarran's death in 1954, Nevada had been going through a major growth spurt, especially in Las Vegas. Just as Virginia City dominated the early years of Nevada politics, and Reno and the Tonopah-Goldfield boom did in the middle period, Las Vegas has been the epicenter of Nevada political life for the past sixty or so years. Mining has remained a key player, but the gaming and tourism industry supplanted it as Nevada's economic and political leader, and Las Vegas surpassed anywhere else in Nevada in the process.[31]

The rise of Las Vegas benefited from federal inaction and action. The inaction included failed efforts to tax and regulate gambling, ranging from Kefauver's investigation to a national study commission in the 1990s. The actions that most aided Las Vegas were legislative and judicial. The Interstate Highway Act of 1956 and airline deregulation in the late 1970s (the latter mostly Howard Cannon's work) made it easier for tourists to get to the area. The U.S. Supreme Court's decision in *Reynolds v. Sims* in 1964 stipulated "one man, one vote," thereby reducing rural power in state legislatures that had refused to reapportion themselves to reflect recent urbanization. In Nevada, the "one man, one vote" ruling meant the end of the "little federal plan" that had given rural counties in states like Nevada more power in the legislature than their population's warranted. In 1965, Clark County had one of the seventeen state senators and just under one-third of the Assembly despite having more than 40 percent of the state's population, but in 2015, with about 72 percent of Nevada's populace in the southern part of the state, thirty-one of the forty-two assemblypersons and sixteen of the twenty-one state senators (including one in each body whose district included mostly rural Nevada) represented all or part of Clark County. Although northern Nevada retained influence, power clearly had shifted south.[32]

The increased power of Las Vegas manifested itself in a variety of ways, but one in particular reflected several elements of the Nevada political tradition: water. While Mark Twain never actually said "whiskey is for drinking and water is for fighting over," the statement itself is true in the West. Las Vegas used up its underground water supply and relied on the Colorado River and Lake Mead, but drought conditions have reduced the lake and thus the water available to the area. As head of the Southern Nevada Water Authority, (SNWA), Patricia Mulroy enjoyed the support of the dominant player in Nevada's limited economy, the gaming industry, in acting against tradition

in some ways and very much in it in other ways. The SNWA itself reflected a departure for Nevada as the state and county agreed to a government entity with ample powers—but also in the tradition of local officials taking care of problems in the absence of a broadly functioning state government—that involved itself in daily life through conservation regulations, a counter to long-standing libertarian ideals. Mulroy and the SNWA benefited and suffered from regional influences, politically and environmentally, while also seeking a new water source: a pipeline that would come south from White Pine County. And the SNWA bought ranches and sought federal and state aid for the project. Just as Virginia City and the Central Pacific bosses had demanded favorable laws that affected the rest of the state, and Wingfield and his allies had wanted Reno to be the center of a tourism economy and expected other parts of Nevada to go along, southern Nevada leaders believed that the greater good of their area required concessions from rural Nevadans who had previously wielded more influence.[33]

Mulroy became influential in the kind of society and position in which women rarely enjoyed comparable opportunities or power in Nevada. As in the previous era, women and other underrepresented groups worked to reform or refine Nevada life, especially in civil rights and education; without Assemblywoman Maude Frazier, Las Vegas would have had even more problems obtaining a university than it did, and protests and pressure from African Americans helped inspire the passage of civil-rights laws in the Nevada legislature. Civil-rights and women's-rights leaders accomplished some of their goals within the confines of Nevada's political tradition: The desegregation of the Las Vegas Strip and the hiring of women in front-line casino positions involved occasional changes in the law and support from some politicians, but without casino operators who saw the potential for profits, these developments would have happened much more slowly. As minorities gained ground nationally, they did the same in Nevada—and this time, the ground included political office, but with limits. As of 2015, no woman or African American had been elected U.S. senator or governor, and few had even been the Democratic or Republican general-election nominee; Brian Sandoval had been elected governor in 2010 while the Hispanic community voted overwhelmingly for his Democratic opponent, Rory Reid, although Hispanic voters demonstrated their growth and power by providing strong support to Reid's father, Senator Harry Reid, in a tough re-election race.[34]

The power of gaming, demonstrated in the quest for water, became evident soon after McCarran's death. In 1955, revelations that Meyer and Jake Lansky held a hidden interest in the Thunderbird Hotel prompted the creation of the Gaming Control Board and the revocation of the hotel's license. The Thunderbird's owners sued, winning the right to stay open, although the Nevada Supreme Court's decision in *Tax Commission v. Hicks* authorized the state to continue its system of regulation. More important,

casino executives and their lobbyists pushed the 1957 legislature to gut the control board's investigative powers. After Governor Charles Russell vetoed the bill, lawmakers sustained the veto by only one vote, suggesting how much the industry's influence had spread—and how it was willing to spread its influence. Nevada's regulatory system, which has become a standard for other jurisdictions, survived, but gaming executives expressed displeasure with Russell and his successor, Grant Sawyer, ultimately working to defeat them for third terms in office.

Although McCarran and his machine had died, their influence remained, starting with the elected officials who followed him into office. The winner of the election to finish his Senate term, Alan Bible, had been the first recipient of McCarran's patronage, and went on to serve for twenty years. Sawyer, who went to law school while working in McCarran's office, became perhaps the most influential and important governor in the state's history, and then co-founded the law firm that had the greatest impact on the development of the modern gaming industry. He also served for two decades as Democratic national committeeman, influencing numerous candidates and campaigns. Other leading figures in recent Nevada politics who had been "McCarran Boys" played more of a behind-the-scenes role: Both John Laxalt, whose brother Paul later succeeded Bible in the Senate, and who worked on his brother's campaigns, and Bob McDonald, senior partner at another key law firm, enjoyed a close association with both Bible and Sawyer, and advised several politicians.[35]

Although congressional staffing expanded and changed after McCarran's era, these leaders and others grasped the significance of helping others who could help them. Both Bible and Howard Cannon employed aides like Frankie Sue Del Papa, a future secretary of state and attorney general, and the UNLV political scientist Dina Titus spent a sabbatical as an intern at Cannon's office, subsequently ran for office, and received help from Cannon and his network of supporters. During his two Senate terms, Paul Laxalt enhanced the state's image by bringing numerous Nevadans into jobs in Washington, D.C. They included Reno lawyer Frank Fahrenkopf, who headed the national Republican party and the American Gaming Association; Sig Rogich, an advertising agency owner who became a key GOP imagemaker; campaign aide Barbara Vucanovich, who was later a seven-term representative; and intern Brian Sandoval, who went on to be governor.[36]

While not unique, McCarran's emphasis on serving constituents and providing federal pork provided a guide for his successors. Bible remained very much in the tradition of Pittman, McCarran, and other senators who emphasized mining, even going so far as to battle the Department of Interior's Bureau of Mines for several years when it sought to close a small office it maintained in Boulder City. Bible also chaired a key subcommittee that dealt with national parks and recreation areas, enabling him to build goodwill with

other members of Congress who were trying to win that status for parts of their states. This paid off when he sought a major water project to ease the delivery of Lake Mead water into the Las Vegas valley. Cannon, elected to the first of four terms in 1958, concentrated more on defense and gaming, winning funds for military bases and rebates from a federal slot-machine tax while serving as the main architect of airline deregulation. Walter Baring, a product of the McCarran era, won ten terms in the House of Representatives, in later years without support from most of his fellow Democrats, who resented his disloyalty to party orthodoxy. But his constituents, especially in rural Nevada, adored him not just for his conservatism, but because he took such good care of them.[37]

Like their predecessors, politicians also continued to try to exert influence with the media, but in the more recent era the tide turned: Nevada's media enjoyed far more control over politicians than in the past. Granting that the rise of television, and then the internet, had an impact, three Las Vegas newspapers demonstrated how journalists and journalism could shape the debate and the debaters. Having survived McCarran's attempt to shut him down, and later a federal indictment accusing him of inciting Joe McCarthy's assassination, Hank Greenspun and the *Sun* published an account of local corruption in 1954 that revealed mob control of a Strip hotel-casino and aided the re-election of Governor Charles Russell; Russell subsequently backed the creation of the Gaming Control Board to improve regulation of that industry. *Sun* coverage went on to help elect Paul Laxalt governor in 1966, as well as promoting Mike O'Callaghan's election to two terms in 1970, and 1974; O'Callaghan later joined the *Sun* as an editor and columnist, and became publisher of newspapers in Henderson and Boulder City, which had the effect of contributing to their influence and his own. The *Las Vegas Review-Journal* had been a diehard McCarran supporter and retained political influence after his death as the city and its circulation grew. The main owner, Donald W. Reynolds, continued its Democratic leanings after forcing out the Cahlan brothers: In supporting Sawyer for re-election in 1962 and Cannon in 1964, he virtually barred any mention of their opponents. By the late 1980s, the editorial page had moved steadily to the right, and became a frequent critic of Senator Harry Reid, culminating in 2010 when the *Review-Journal* got national attention for its support of Reid's right-wing Republican opponent, Sharron Angle, and its coverage of that election.[38]

Yet Nevada politics as a whole undeniably became more conservative in the post-McCarran era—or perhaps the issues that affected the state prompted more conservative responses. From 1932 to 1980, the Democratic Party enjoyed primacy in the U.S. and Nevada, thanks to the New Deal coalition built by Franklin Roosevelt and his allies. During that nearly half a century, Democrats controlled Congress for all but four years, and Nevada reflected the national trend: A Republican represented Nevada in the U.S. Senate for only eighteen years (George Malone, 1947-59; Ernest Brown for two months, in 1954; Paul

Governor Robert List with Paul Laxalt and Ronald Reagan, 1982. (*Nevada Historical Society*)

Laxalt, 1974-80), and in the House for only eight years (Charles Russell, 1947-49; Cliff Young, 1953-57; David Towell, 1973-75). Yet none of the Democrats who represented Nevada in those years could reasonably be called liberal, certainly not in comparison with the likes of Massachusetts liberals like Senator Edward Kennedy and Speaker of the House Thomas P. "Tip" O'Neill.

Ronald Reagan and his allies tipped the balance—another outside force affecting Nevada. Laxalt developed a close friendship with Reagan when they served at the same time as governors (1967-71) and worked on issues of importance to California and Nevada. Following Laxalt's election to the Senate, he chaired Reagan's three national campaigns and became known as the "First Friend," giving Nevada entrée to the White House that it had never had before. Reagan's success prompted some conservative Democrats, mostly in the South but including some in Nevada, to switch to the GOP, or at least to vote Republican more often. Nevada also continued to expand in population, and a significant number of its new residents included retirees or those over age fifty-five who had no desire to spend their golden years spending tax money. They also included one-time Californians fleeing higher taxes and greater government regulation—and, with the end of the Cold War and a reduction in defense spending in California, declining economic prosperity.[39]

Most—but not all—of the issues that mattered to Reagan and other conservatives mattered to Nevadans. Nevada birthed the Sagebrush Rebellion, and other western states joined in its demand that the federal government surrender its land in the West; Reagan proclaimed himself a Sagebrush Rebel, but supported selling the land rather than giving it to the states. Reagan stepped up defense spending in the 1980s, benefiting military bases and the Nevada Test Site, but most Nevadans welcomed his decision to stop the plan of his predecessor, Jimmy Carter, to build Missile X, a mobile system of missiles to spread throughout southern Nevada and southern Utah. Yet Reagan's policies were not universally popular in Nevada. While he promised to do all he could to make abortion illegal, nearly two-thirds of Nevadans voted in 1990 that they opposed changing the basics of the 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision. And Bible Belt members who backed Reagan and opposed legal gambling certainly found no allies on that issue in libertarian-minded Nevada—nor, for that matter, did they share common ground with Reagan, who saw gambling as a legitimate business and whose administration allowed the FBI to continue to target some Nevada gaming operators despite protests from Laxalt.[40]

Still, the influx of new residents, especially the middle-aged and retirees, gave Nevada a more conservative cast than it had had before. The political success of John Ensign reflected that change. Laxalt had allied himself with like-minded Goldwater Republicans on the role of government but made less noise on most social issues, although he introduced anti-LGBT legislation in the late 1970s. A veterinarian who followed his father into the resort industry, Ensign won two terms in the House, came within 429 votes of unseating Harry Reid in 1998, and cruised to victory for two Senate terms making clear his social conservatism and taking pride in being among the Promisekeepers, a Christian organization for men. Ensign had to resign from the Senate in 2011 after the exposure of an extramarital affair and ethical questions about payments that his parents had made. That kind of behavior proved more difficult to hide in an age of social media as reporters and voters alike paid greater attention to the personal lives of politicians. Nevadans once might have dismissed such personal matters as none of their business—but Ensign had, to some degree, helped set himself up by condemning others for the same actions in which he engaged. Ensign also represented a throwback to the earlier periods when some mining millionaires ran for office instead of simply supporting others: Ensign's father had been a stockholder in the Mandalay Resort Group, and Ensign had run a couple of its casinos.[41]

By the 1980s, the gaming industry was evolving from the influence of mobsters and old illegal operators to a more corporate entity, which also may have influenced the seeming shift in Nevada politics. Much like their predecessors in the previous two eras, and like the previous casino operators, corporate gaming executives wanted to be left alone as much as possible to pursue their financial interests; thus, little about Nevada's political ideology

changed. Just as William Sharon on the Comstock and George Wingfield in Goldfield and Reno had largely been content to fund candidates, most casino executives remained behind the scenes, although some of them took a different approach. Instead of relying on outsiders, Steve Wynn created an in-house issues-and-polling system not long after opening The Mirage; he targeted certain politicians for support or opposition, and became the first Nevada businessman to associate regularly with major national political figures. Sheldon Adelson, the chief executive of the Las Vegas Sands and builder of The Venetian and The Palazzo on the Las Vegas Strip, went a step further and served as a leading financier of the Republican party, spending more than $100 million during the 2012 presidential election.[42]

Although Wynn and Adelson received ample media attention, they and other business executives inside and outside of gaming continued to rely heavily on lobbyists to influence the state legislature and politics in general. From the 1970s to the present, such lobbyists as longtime political consultant Jim Joyce, one-time Gaming Control Board member Richard Bunker, and advertising agency owner Billy Vassiliadis have helped elect and defeat lawmakers and shape their legislation. Their already significant power increased when Nevada voters, reflecting the state's longtime wariness of government, approved one initiative in 1996 to limit legislators to twelve years in one house and another to require a two-thirds vote for any tax increase. The lobbyists Pete Ernaut and Greg Ferraro talked Sandoval into giving up a lifetime appointment as a U.S. district judge to run for governor in part because they feared that the incumbent Republican, Jim Gibbons, was too scandal-ridden to be re-elected in 2010.[43]

Another Nevada political tradition that continued was support for the individual over the party. Republicans had crossed party lines to support McCarran when they believed that he did a good job of representing the state, and they continued to do so with such Democrats as Bible and Cannon; Russell and Laxalt enjoyed backing from some Democrats, too. Baring survived his break with the Democratic Party largely because of his personal popularity. Richard Bryan served as a legislator, state attorney general, governor, and U.S. senator, carving out a successful forty-year career in politics—including cruising to re-election to the U.S. Senate in 1994, a year of Republican dominance and constant criticism of professional politicians—by representing his constituents, doing a good job, and being likable. The individual in Nevada remained capable of overcoming or outperforming institutions like political parties.

The period also produced the most powerful Nevada politician since Pat McCarran: Harry Reid. Indeed, Reid probably ended up even more influential than McCarran, and similarly reflected many aspects of the Nevada political tradition. Reid had been born in Searchlight, one of the southern Nevada towns associated with the early twentieth-century mining boom; he went to high school in Henderson, a town originally created by the federal government as Basic Townsite to provide housing to the magnesium plant workers. Attending

college, he converted to Mormonism, (not yet so conservative or influential as it would become in Nevada politics), then went to law school in Washington, D.C., through Baring's patronage. Returning home to practice law, he began a steady political rise that culminated in his election as lieutenant governor in 1970, but he then managed a pair of election losses: in 1974 for the U.S. Senate against Laxalt, and in 1975 for mayor of Las Vegas against a longtime assemblyman and county commissioner, Bill Briare. His career seemed finished.[44]

But Reid benefited from the confidence of O'Callaghan, his one-time high school teacher and boxing coach, who in turn was wildly popular and respected in the economic and political arenas. In 1977, he named Reid to chair the Gaming Commission. Neither realized that federal investigations and prosecutions, growing public cynicism, in-depth reporting, and the mob's arrogance would combine to destroy the influence of organized crime and put Reid squarely in the public eye—and sometimes the bullseye. Reid wound up in a public confrontation with Frank "Lefty" Rosenthal, the Chicago syndicate's inside man at the Stardust and Fremont hotels, and he overcame accusations from another mobster, Joe Agosto of the Tropicana, that he did the mob's bidding. Reid parlayed his service as Gaming Commission chair into winning southern Nevada's House seat in 1982, and then succeeded Laxalt in the Senate in 1986.

By the time Reid's fifth term neared its end and his retirement approached, he had much in common with McCarran. Both became enormously powerful. They understood the Senate's intricacies and parliamentary procedures, and, to use a favorite old phrase in that body, they chose to be workhorses rather than showhorses, granting the publicity each of them received. McCarran worked hard as a committee chair while Reid rose through Democratic Party ranks to attain the highest office in that body: majority leader. Serving from 2007 until 2015, he set the agenda for the Senate's actions, and worked closely with Barack Obama after his election in 2008 to pass such legislation as the Affordable Care Act, which dramatically expanded health care in the United States. Reid thus became the biggest lightning rod to represent Nevada since McCarran; McCarran had faced attacks from civil libertarians and liberals, but Reid encountered even more vituperation from those to the political right, as well as from liberals who expected him to pass more and different legislation faster or more easily than he did or could. Like McCarran, Reid also wielded power within his state party, rebuilding it with outside operatives and creating excitement by inducing the national party to hold one of its first presidential caucuses in Nevada, starting in 2008.

But, like his predecessors, Reid fit into the Nevada political tradition. As Stewart did during the silver movement and Pittman and McCarran did in the first half of the twentieth century, he concentrated on protecting his state. Reid worked with his two-term Senate colleague, fellow Democrat Richard Bryan, behind the scenes against anything draconian in a federal gaming-

study commission; they used all of the means at their disposal to block federal efforts to locate a high-level nuclear waste repository at Yucca Mountain on what is now known as the Nevada National Security Site. Reid also sought federal projects and funds, ranging from the Great Basin National Park and several national recreation areas to a water-rights agreement involving several northern Nevada communities and Native American groups. He helped Bryan and Ensign with the Southern Nevada Public Lands Management Act, which contributed to the growth of Las Vegas by urging the federal government to sell off land and use some of the funds for programs in that area. Reid also worked closely with gaming interests, including making phone calls on behalf of MGM when it encountered financial trouble over construction of its multi-billion-dollar City Center project on the Strip. When the Senate majority leader called, lenders listened, and MGM's marquees thanked Reid by name during a difficult re-election campaign—a reminder of the symbiotic relationship between Nevada politicians and the state's most powerful industry.[45]

Indeed, Nevada politics early in the twenty-first century seemed radically different from the nineteenth century—or even the twentieth. The Culinary Union became a significant factor in Nevada politics as the most politically powerful labor group in Nevada's history. Social media and the internet reduced the traditional media's influence, and technological advances enabled the public to keep up on legislative activities in Carson City—and to testify from afar on bills and bombard their elected officials with their opinions. After generations of discrimination, the number of women, African Americans and Hispanics involved or influential in politics or elected to office had skyrocketed.

But in many ways the Nevada political tradition remained alive and well. At the 2015 legislature, normally anti-tax politicians agreed to the largest increase in the state's history, hiking taxes and fees on a variety of businesses and on cigarette sales. Sandoval proposed the increase, and received encouragement and aid from lobbyists for gaming and mining, the state's most powerful industries. The legislators also weathered the discouragement of the *Las Vegas Review-Journal*, which prepared twenty-five editorials suggesting budget cuts and sent them to state legislators, as well as the opposition and extensive coverage from bloggers and commentators who made up influential segments of the media. While tourism and mining still dominated Nevada's economy, the former continued to try to rebound completely from the Great Recession and faced challenges from Macau, where its investments suffered as the Chinese government cracked down on corruption, and the latter dealt with a world decline in gold prices—another sign of the impact of outside forces. The fight against Yucca Mountain continued, while Reid and several other politicians pushed through the creation of the Tule Springs Fossil Beds National Monument and fought for Gold Butte National Monument, both environmental measures that might also attract tourists, and they also

helped developers near Henderson with plans for mining. Cliven Bundy and his allies continued to fight the federal government over the Bunkerville rancher's refusal to pay user fees and their objections to regulations by the Bureau of Land Management, continuing a long debate about federal land ownership and influence.[46]

If it seems as though continuity and change have characterized Nevada's political history, so they have. Nevada has evolved economically, politically, and socially, but the changes have not been so drastic that they represent a complete break with the past. As Richard Hofstadter noted, "Two special interests, striving to gain control of government policy, will invoke somewhat different ideas to promote their causes. The material interests in good time will be replaced by others as the economic order changes, but their ideas, which already have wide acceptance, will be adapted again and again with slight changes to new conditions." That has been the American political tradition; that has been the Nevada political tradition.[47]

Notes

[1]Richard Hofstadter, *Social Darwinism in American Thought, 1860-1915* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1944); *The Age of Reform: From Bryan to F.D.R.* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1955); *The Paranoid Style in American Politics and Other Essays* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1965). On Hofstadter, see David S. Brown, *Richard Hofstadter: An Intellectual Biography* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006); Stanley Elkins and Eric McKitrick, "Richard Hofstadter: A Progress," in Elkins and McKitrick, *The Hofstadter Aegis: A Memorial* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1974), 300-367; Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., "Richard Hofstadter," in Marcus Cunliffe and Robin Winks, eds., *Pastmasters: Some Essays on American Historians* (New York: Harper and Row, 1969), 278-315.

[2]Richard Hofstadter, *The American Political Tradition and the Men Who Made It* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1948). See the 1973 twenty-fifth anniversary edition, which featured the original introduction and a preface that Hofstadter wrote in 1967 for these quotations at xxvi, xxix, xxxvii, xxxvii; Eric Foner, *Who Owns History? Rethinking the Past in a Changing World* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2002), 39-40.

[3]See Wilbur S. Shepperson, ed., *East of Eden, West of Zion: Essays on Nevada* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1989), frontispiece; William D. Rowley, *Reno: Hub of the Washoe Country* (Chatsworth: Windsor Publications, 1986). See also Don W. Driggs and Leonard E. Goodall, *Nevada Politics and Government: Conservatism in an Open Society* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1996).

[4]See especially David Alan Johnson, *Founding the Far West: California, Oregon, and Nevada, 1840-1890* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992). See also Guy Louis Rocha, "Nevada's Emergence in the American Great Basin—Territory and State," *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly*, 38:4 (Winter 1995), 255-80.

[5]See especially Heather Cox Richardson, *The Greatest Nation of the Earth: Republican Economic Policies during the Civil War* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997).

[6]For detailed accounts of these men, see Russell R. Elliott, *Servant of Power: A Political Biography of Senator William M. Stewart of Nevada* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1983); Michael J. Makley, *The Infamous King of the Comstock Lode: William Sharon and the Gilded Age in the West* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 2006); *idem*, *John Mackay: Silver King in the Gilded Age* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 2008). On the railroads, see especially Richard White, *Railroaded: The Transcontinentals and the Making of Modern America* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2011).

[7]Elliott, *Servant of Power*, 64-65; Gilman M. Ostrander, *Nevada: The Great Rotten Borough, 1859-1964* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1966), 71. Stewart's successor, George Nixon, also owned mines, but in other parts of the state.

[8]See the *Virginia City Territorial Enterprise* papers at the Nevada Historical Society, Reno. Russell R. Elliott and William D. Rowley, *History of Nevada* (Second edition, Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1987), 153-57, is an excellent short summary of the bullion tax fight.

[9]Mary Ellen Glass, *Silver and Politics in Nevada, 1892-1902* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1969) details the silver issue.

[10]On feeling a loss of control, see Florence Williams, "The Shovel Rebellion," *Mother Jones* (January/February 2001), http://www.motherjones.com/politics/2001/01/shovel-rebellion. The most recent study of Populism that also analyzes the silver issue is Charles Postel, *The Populist Vision* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007).

[11]Ostrander, *Nevada: Great Rotten Borough*, 168. On Newlands and reclamation, see William D. Rowley, *Reclaiming the Arid West: The Career of Francis G. Newlands* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996).

[12]Elmer R. Rusco, "Campaign Finance Reform in the Silver Era: A Puzzle—Part One," *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly*, 38:3 (Fall 1995), 133-52; *idem,* "Campaign Finance Reform in the Silver Era: A Puzzle—Part Two," *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly*, 38:4 (Winter 1995), 223-54.

[13]Richard O. Davies, *The Main Event: Boxing in Nevada from the Mining Camps to the Las Vegas Strip* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 2014), 9-61.

[14]See especially Russell R. Elliott, *Nevada's Twentieth-Century Mining Boom: Tonopah-Goldfield-Ely* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1966, 1988); Sally S. Zanjani, *The Glory Days in Goldfield, Nevada* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 2002).

[15]See Dana R. Bennett, "'The Up-Growth of New Industries': Transformation of Nevada's Economy, 1918-1929," *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly*, 52:3 (Fall 2009), 175-96; Paul R. Bruno, "Governor James G. Scrugham and the Search for Economic Prosperity in Nevada, 1923-1927" (M.A. thesis, University of Nevada, Las Vegas, 2009). On Oddie and progressivism in Nevada, see Loren B. Chan, *Sagebrush Statesman: Tasker L. Oddie of Nevada* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1974). Several references to the banking commission appear throughout the Tasker L. Oddie Papers, Huntington Library, San Marino, California. See also *The Coal and Coke Operator and Fuel Magazine* (12 March 1914), 175, on the English-language law.

[16]Anointed candidates have been a hallmark of Nevada politics. See Jon Ralston, *The Anointed One: An Inside Look at Nevada Politics* (Las Vegas: Huntington Press, 2000); this work analyses a much later election, but one that offers lessons for earlier elections. On Oddie, see Chester H. Rowell to Ida M. Tarbell, Fresno Republican Publishing Company, 19 October 1911, in Rowell to Oddie, Fresno, 30 October 1911, Tasker L. Oddie Papers, Correspondence, Ro-Staats, Box 9, Huntington Library.

[17]C. Elizabeth Raymond, *George Wingfield: Owner and Operator of Nevada* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1992); Sally S. Zanjani and Guy Louis Rocha, *The Ignoble Conspiracy: Radicalism on Trial in Nevada* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1986).

[18]George Wingfield to Tasker L. Oddie, copy, Reno, 13 June 1912, Tasker L. Oddie Papers, Correspondence, V-Z, Box 11, Huntington Library; Raymond, *George Wingfield*, 105-106.

[19]C. Elizabeth Raymond, "George Wingfield's Political Machine: A Study in Historical Reputation," *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly*, 32:2 (Summer 1989), 95-110; Jerome E. Edwards, "Wingfield and Nevada Politics—Some Observations," *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly,* 32:2 (Summer 1989), 126-39.

[20]William D. Rowley, "Reno and the Desert of Buried Hopes," in Shepperson, ed., *East of Eden, West of Zion*, 119-33; Jerome E. Edwards, *Pat McCarran: Political Boss of Nevada* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1982), 29-30. See Raymond, *George Wingfield*, for several examples. Also, Michael S. Green, "A Forgotten Forefather: A Political Biography of James G. Scrugham," *Nevada Archaeologist*, 15 (1997), 1-7.

[21]Paul R. Bruno, "The Cole-Malley Scandal: Nevada's Political System Revealed," *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly*, 50:2 (Summer 2007), 119-44.

[22] On McCarran, see Edwards, *Pat McCarran*; Michael Ybarra, *Washington Gone Crazy: Senator Pat McCarran and the Great American Communist Hunt* (New York: Steerforth Press, 2004); Ralph L. Denton and Michael S. Green, *A Liberal Conscience: Ralph Denton, Nevadan* (Reno: University of Nevada Oral History Program, 2001), 61-116. I have relied on these works in the ensuing discussion of McCarran's career.

[23]For insight into these editors, see especially Jake Highton, *Nevada Newspaper Days: A History of Journalism in the Silver State* (Stockton: Heritage West Books, 1990). See also John R. McCloskey, "Seventy Years of Griping: Newspapers, Politics, Government" (Reno: University of Nevada Oral History Program, 1982).

[24]Edwards, *Pat McCarran*, 153-54.

[25]Denton and Green, *Liberal Conscience*, 105-106.

[26]The description of McCarran is from A. M. Sperber, *Murrow: His Life and Times* (New York: Bantam Books, 1986), 328; and Edwards, *Pat McCarran*, 168. Russell Baker, *The Good Times* (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1989), 279.

[27]Alan Barth, "McCarran's Monopoly," *The Reporter* (21 August 1951), 25; Betty Glad, *Key Pittman: The Tragedy of a Senate Insider* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986).

[28]Edwards, *Pat McCarran*, 197; Joseph A. Fry, "Silver and Sentiment: The Nevada Press and the Coming of the Spanish-American War," *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly*, 20:4 (Winter 1977), 223-40; William D. Rowley, "Francis G. Newlands: A Westerner's Search for a Progressive and White America," *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly*, 17:2 (Summer 1974), 69-79.

[29]An excellent short analysis on Nevada's suffrage fight is DeAnna Beachley, "Nevada Women Win the Vote: A Centennial Recognition," http://werehistory.org/nevada-women/, November 16, 2014. On Adams, see Eva B. Adams, "Windows on Washington: Nevada Education—the U.S. Senate—the U.S. Mint" (Reno: University of Nevada Oral History Program, 1982).

[30]Eugene P. Moehring, *Reno, Las Vegas, and the Strip: A Tale of Three Cities* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 2014).

[31]Eugene P. Moehring, *Resort City in the Sunbelt: Las Vegas, 1930-2000* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 2000); Mary Ellen Glass, *Nevada's Turbulent '50s: Decade of Economic and Political Change* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1981).

[32]Gary E. Elliott, "Law, Politics, and the Movement toward Constitutional Equality in Nevada: The Revolution in Legislative Apportionment—Part I," *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly*, 39:1 (Spring 1996), 1-19; Gary E. Elliott, "Law, Politics, and the Movement toward Constitutional Equality in Nevada: The Revolution in Legislative Apportionment—Part II," *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly*, 39:2 (Summer 1996), 89-108; https://www.leg.state.nv.us/.

[33]Guy Rocha, "Myth #122: What Mark Twain Didn't Say," www.nsla.nv.gov; Christian Harrison, "Las Vegas in an Era of Limits: Urban Water Politics in the Colorado River Basin" (Ph.D. Diss., University of Nevada, Las Vegas, 2014); Matt Jenkins, "The Water Czar Who Reshaped Colorado River Politics," *High Country News* (2 March 2015), pp. 16-20; David Owen, "Where the River Runs Dry: The Colorado and America's Water Crisis," *The New Yorker*, http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2015/05/25/the-disappearing-river.

[34]James W. Hulse, "Maude Frazier: Pioneering Educator and Lawmaker," in Richard O. Davies, ed., *The Maverick Spirit: Building the New Nevada* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1998), 12-23; Eugene P. Moehring, *UNLV: The University of Nevada, Las Vegas: A History* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 2007), especially 1-20; Earnest N. Bracey, "The African Americans," in Jerry L. Simich and Thomas C. Wright, eds., *The Peoples of Las Vegas: One City, Many Faces* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 2005), 78-97; Joanne L. Goodwin, *Changing the Game: Women at Work in Las Vegas, 1940-1990* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 2014); Mark Hugo Lopez, "The Latino Vote in the 2010 Elections," http://www.pewhispanic.org/2010/11/03/the-latino-vote-in-the-2010-elections/.

[35]See Gary E. Elliott, *Senator Alan Bible and the Politics of the New West* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1994); Grant Sawyer, Gary E. Elliott, and R. T. King, *Hang Tough! Grant Sawyer: An Activist in the Governor's Mansion* (Reno: University of Nevada Oral History Program, 1993); Jerome E. Edwards, "Grant Sawyer: A Liberal Governor for a Conservative State," in Davies, ed., *Maverick Spirit*, 134-49.

[36]Michael Vernetti, *Senator Howard Cannon of Nevada: A Biography* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 2008); Paul Laxalt, *Nevada's Paul Laxalt: A Memoir* (Reno: Jack Bacon and Company, 2000); Richard L. Spees, "Paul Laxalt: Man of Political Independence," in Davies, ed., *Maverick Spirit*, 166-93.

[37]Baring deserves more attention that he has received. See Bob Brown, "Nobody Liked Him But the Voters," in Stanley W. Paher, ed., *Nevada's Official Bicentennial Book* (Las Vegas: Nevada Publications, 1976), 419-21; K. J. Evans, "Walter Baring: The Paradoxical Politician," in A. D. Hopkins and K. J. Evans, eds., *The First 100: Portraits of the Men and Women Who Shaped Las Vegas* (Las Vegas: Huntington Press, 1999), 168-69.

[38]Denton and Green, *Liberal Conscience*, 249; *Los Angeles Times* (26 July 2010), at http://articles.latimes.com/2010/jul/16/entertainment/la-et-onthemedia-20100717.

[39]Heather Cox Richardson, *To Make Men Free: A History of the Republican Party* (New York: Basic Books, 2014), especially 239-342.

[40]R. McGreggor Cawley, *Federal Land, Western Anger: The Sagebrush Rebellion and Environmental Politics* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1993); Karen R. Merrill, *Public Lands and Political Meaning: Ranchers, the Government, and the Property Between Them* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002); Sally Denton and Roger Morris, *The Money and the Power: The Making of Las Vegas and Its Hold on America, 1947-2000* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2001), 332-44. See also David G. Schwartz, "Attesting to Unique Attractions: The President's Commission on Organized Crime (1984-1986) Gambling Hearings," *Gaming Law Review and Economics*, 17:8 (15 October 2013), 560-78.

[41]For a brief summary, *The New York Times* (17 June 2009), p. A17; http://thecaucus.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/05/02/ensign-apologizes-in-farewell-speech.

[42]http://www.nytimes.com/1998/12/06/us/betting-politics-special-report-gambling-impresario-leaves-little-chance.html; http://www.nytimes.com/2015/04/27/us/politics/republican-contenders-reach-out-to-sheldon-adelson-palms-up.html.

[43]http://lasvegassun.com/news/2010/may/09/ties-influential-business-interests-power-sandoval/.

[44]On Reid, see Harry Reid and Mark Warren, *The Good Fight: Hard Lessons from Searchlight to Washington* (New York: Berkley Books, 2009).

[45]J. Samuel Walker, *The Road to Yucca Mountain: The Development of Radioactive Waste Policy in the United States* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009); http://lasvegassun.com/news/2010/jul/09/jobs-citycenter-give-reid-22000-talking-points/; http://www.blm.gov/style/medialib/blm/nv/field_offices/las_vegas_field_office/snplma/pdf/reports.Par.56516.File.dat/SNPLMA-10-Year-Report-to-Congress-wb.pdf.

[46]http://www.reviewjournal.com/opinion/editorial-25-legislative-proposals-25-days; http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/07/01/macau-gambling-revenue-idUSL3N0ZG2HV20150701; https://www.hcn.org/articles/cliven-bundy-documents; http://www.usnews.com/news/politics/articles/2015/06/02/nevada-gop-governor-secures-unlikely-win-with-tax-increase; http://www.nationalparkstraveler.com/2015/01/tule-springs-fossil-beds-national-monument-adds-missing-link-national-park-system26086; http://www.reviewjournal.com/news/henderson-mine-cleanup-redevelopment-ok-d-congress.

[47]Hofstadter, *American Political Tradition*, xxxvii.

Book Reviews

At Pyramid Lake. By Bernard Mergen (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 2014)

Question: What do these celebrities have in common—movie stars Clark Gable, Hedy Lamarr, Tallulah Bankhead, Jane Fonda, Marlon Brando, Marilyn Monroe; filmmakers Samuel Goldwyn, Jack Warner, John Huston; vaudevillians Sophie Tucker, Harry Richman; Rock Stars Jerry Garcia, Jimmy Rogers; artists Salvador Dali, Chris Drury; socialites Mrs. William Randolph Hearst and the Cornelius Vanderbilts; politicos Herbert Hoover, Anna Roosevelt, Teddy Kennedy; and these writers: Dan de Quille, Zane Grey, Robert Pirsig, A. J. Liebling, Saul Bellow, C. L. R. James and Arthur Miller? Answer: Pyramid Lake, the 30-mile long, 10-mile-wide, 361-foot-deep remnant "sink" of prehistoric Lake Lahontan. It is located twenty miles northeast of Reno, Nevada, and is the home of the *Kuyuidokado* (Cui-ui-Eaters). Its 365-foot tufa (calcium carbonate) "pyramid" inspired John Charles Frémont to name it for Dynastic Egypt's Cheops in 1844, when this heart and soul of the Pyramid Lake Northern Paiute Reservation would, as the author of this unique book, might be served if named "*Wono*," after its owners' word for an (upturned) carrying basket.

Well, even if you don't recognize the names Basil Woon, Veronica Pataky, Hugo Marchband, Burch Mann, Alva LaSalle ("Beau") Kitselman, Jr., Walter Van Tilburg Clark, James Sutcliffe, Harry Deckert, and Alida Bowler, David Koch, and Tom Trelease, just wait until you learn about the contributions made by the following indigenous folks, who (like the lyrics of two popular Rock songs went), literally, fought the law and won the good fight that saved what occupies fully 112, 000 acres of this 475,000-acre federal reservation sans "shooting the Sheriff"—Avery Winnemucca, Joe Ely, and Dewey Sampson.

Writing about his boyhood home in the 1940s, Bernard Mergen has devoted a seeming lifetime of research to collecting everything about Pyramid Lake (PL) from the sublime to the (seeming) ridiculous—from the lake's Northern Paiutes' stories about their sacred homeland and entries in his mother's diary to the information that tourist magazines (*Nevada Highways*) and road maps teach us across time regarding the location of pit stops, for example, hiking trails, and the fact that no all-terrain or off-highway vehicles are allowed on the Pyramid Lake Reservation (PLR). Although the author flirts with calling

his encyclopedic work a dirge, if not a tragedy, the more apt analogy I dare say is with The Blues. For as is true in this African-American musical form, the "four" (or fourth note in a major scale and fourth chord), involving the systematic theft of Truckee River water that feeds into Pyramid Lake by non-Indian squatters; the federal government by grants of Indian land to the Central Pacific in 1868 and 1912; as well as the Newlands (so-called) Reclamation Act, which diverted water southward to non-Indian farmers; and a cabal between the California and Nevada governors Reagan and Laxalt to "save Pyramid Lake" by (in Orwellian terms) draining it! Yes, those and other evils led to the "five" (or dominant chord using that musical analogy) of genuine good guys like Secretary of Interior Stewart Udall in 1967 and District Court Judge Gerhard Gesell who ordered stolen water redirected back to Pyramid Lake, which raised its level 30 feet from its all-time dangerous lowering of 100 feet since white "Contact"; yes, those "good guys," along with the passage the Endangered Species Act led to the classic "turnaround" back to the tonic chord in that musical art form, which, so far as the lake was concerned, meant, thanks to three fish hatcheries owned by the Pyramid Lake Reservation Tribe, the restoration of a facsimile of the extinct Lahontan Cut-throat and other threatened species, *cui-ui*, a bony bottom feeder few whites (me, included) have dared even to taste.

Chapters 1-5 focus on the sordid history of these injustices, while chapters 6-10 focus on "topics" that make for the livelier reading—about the painters of Pyramid Lake (Robert Cole Caples, Hildegard Herz, and Ben Cunningham); photographers (Gus Bundy, Jonas Dovydenas, Peter Goin, and Richard Misrach, a lineage impressively beginning with Timothy O'Sullivan, who shot those very first photos (albumin prints) of the lake and of the reservation way back in 1867; poets such as Harold Will, Robert Humes, and the author's mother, Katharine Norrid Mergen, who taught journalism at UNR, and to whom this book is dedicated to; and these four feature films shot at Pyramid Lake—"The Winning of Barbara Worth (1926)," a silent film, of course, considering its date; "Destination Gobi," with the reservation's Paiutes—sorry, Vine De Loria and others still in denial of Beringia and the peopling of these Americas from Asia—realistically portraying Mongolians while speaking in their own Uto-Aztecan tongue; "The Greatest Story Ever Told" (1965), not surprisingly starring Pyramid Lake as the Sea of Galilee (hey, but what about those snow-capped Virginia Mountains in the background? Mergen rightly asks); and lastly, and with an extraordinary detailed excellent plot summary, the American masterpiece, "The Misfits," shot four years earlier, and which was based on a short story by Arthur Miller. A story we learn seems to have been lifted from the extraordinary journalism of A. J. Liebling, who'd previously written "The Mustang Buzzer," a *New Yorker* magazine piece about white men (and one Indian) hunting down Spanish runaway horses originally called *mestenas* from airplanes for the canned pet-food industry—that is, until the

pioneering activism of Nevada's original "Mustang Sally." Whose name we learn was Velma "Wild Horse Annie" Johnston, and that she single-handedly ended that cruel trade in animal body parts.

The writing is always sharp and very often humorous: Discussing Senator Buchanan—excuse me, Nevada's own conservative Pat McCarran, the defender of those Italian-American squatters' "rights," including arguing *they* were the original settlers of Pyramid Lake; and gets slammed as an "equal opportunity bigot"; Dillon Myer, director of the WWII Japanese Relocation Camp, whose years as the notorious Bureau of Indian Affairs "Termination" Commissioner are provocatively if not correctly termed a "reign of terror"; and the most Great Basin cultural anthropologist Julian Steward, whose work on Shoshones has come under recent scrutiny, and is not spared from being called the "Lone Ranger of Anthropology."

At the same time, there are lots and lots more humor and plenty of irony; as for example, Mergen's description of the scheme of one Pyramid Lake "developer" characterized as "when chutzpah meets cui-ui." Or in characterizing the historical attempt by the BIA (Bossing Indian Around, as that old Indian joke about the Indian Bureau today has gone the way of the drain) to enforce a policy among these ancient fishing folks which Mergen cleverly writes, "The only good Indian is not a dead Indian, but a good farmer!" He also reminds us, tourists and fellow travelers, (or aren't we are all becoming travelers in this globalized shrinking planet world), that when you venture to Pyramid Lake, be prepared to enjoy yourself, "but don't forget to pay the tribe for your permit!"

And I do wonder, who in these reactionary times, when the very foundation of our nation is challenged by those who would blur the fundamental (not fundamentalism) separation between Church and State in portraying ours exclusively as Christian country," what they will make of Chapter 10, "Pyramid Lake as Theatre." About two religious hucksters: The first, "Brother David" nee William John Hughes, aka Gareth Hughs, a bisexual lover from Wales-cum-theater director-cum-defrocked Pyramid Lake Episcopal priest-cum-quickie marriage-artist in that biggest little city in the world whose claim to fame as divorce capital was what, ironically, truly made Reno famous. And about whom Mergen writes that he chauffeured Brother David to and from Pyramid Lake to Reno, where he served as the required witness in that wedding industry "chapel" where and when "the Puck of Pyramid Lake" married folks. And second that Elmer Gantry/trickster figure's figure at the lake in 1956, Joe Hogben, the "Buckaroo Priest," who incidentally was also beloved by his Indian flock. Only at Pyramid Lake!

Better tote your dictionary, though, while reading; my own vocabulary improvement list, anyway, consists of gandy dancers, naiad, depiscation and repiscation, contrails, oolitic, giardia, byssinusis, cacotopia, borasca, houris, paremiographer, and creel. The latter, not the Pyramid Lake Reservation Indian

agent Lorenzo D. Creel, alternatively a friend and foe with regard to his wards' quest to survive by fishing both for subsistence as well as their (successful!) efforts to compete with the white man in that industry's commercial sales at the time. And Creel's photographic archive is, nonetheless, a stupendous documentation of past time on the Pyramid Lake Reservation.

Although Mergen avoids the controversy surrounding excavated "mummies" near the lake, he certainly deserves a purple heart for his discussion of the "Origin of Stone Mother." Or what is the other outstanding lake tufa formation on the Pyramid Lake Reservation. It, we learn, was initially written about in 1937 by Frank Hudson, a local teacher, who put that striking human-like figure on the cultural map after it surfaced from beneath 50 feet of the lake's lowered level. And as is true of other "invented traditions" which have achieved sacredness through time, that mother and child invention are part and parcel of the Pyramid Lake creation story today. Mergen not only fully tells this story, but likens the remarkable facsimile of a seemingly hooded woman clutching an infant, and whose tears are used to explain the very origin of the lake to a bronze sculpture by Augustus St. Gaudens called "Grief" as well as to the Lincoln Memorial. But sadly know, too, that because vandals and graffiti "artists" unfortunately have forced the tribe to close off the sacred site to the public since 2011.

Without intending to sound cavil, I found four errors: Willard Z. Park's first name is wrongly given; Dewey Sampson's name is misspelled once in the direction of the famous Biblical strongman Samson; and Monty Clift wasn't a "rising star" at the time of filming the "Misfits"—he'd been in show business since 1941, with numerous Broadway successes as well; and the name of Mabel Wright, the Pyramid Lake Northern Paiute Reservation woman whose elegiac prayer I was happy to see included, and not only because I recently analyzed it for this journal, was misspelled twice.

Kudos, though, for solving the mystery regarding the event in 1907 that crippled Chief Winnemucca's amazing grandson, the linguist, social activist, and painter Gilbert Natchez—a train accident. Even though I do wonder about the author's reasoning for analyzing this Northern Paiute's canvases exclusively devoted to his beloved Pyramid Lake apart from the discussion of its non-Indian painters?

And along with my heart's delight in seeing the name Wovoka cited thirty-eight times—while curiously appearing only thrice in the index—probably it's correct to read that "The Woodcutter" was a "skilled showman"—or aren't they all? But not "a real prophet"? Not!

Arguably the fun and strength of this unique encyclopedic work is that it can be read as a compendium of "Did you know that fact?" Depending on your own trash versus treasure bin, we learn, for example, that Pyramid Lake was voted the third best sports-fishing spot in the country in 1988, as well as the venues for "best trophy fishing," by the Federation of Fly Fishersmen, and

is also the site of the world's first artificially spawned trout in North America. And we're told that pelicans, 4,500 of them still breeding today on Anaho Island in the lake, fish in communal circles like indigenous Indian fishermen. This island which hegemonically was stripped from the reservation by President Woodrow Wilson in 1913, then returned following passage in 1990 of the historic Truckee-Carson-Pyramid Lake Water Settlement Act that thankfully restored some of Pyramid Lake's original water.

Bad pun, doubtless, to say that what seems like everything including the kitchen sink gets thrown into this fascinating—as, for example, the fact that Pyramid Lake was used as a torpedo-and-bombing range by the U.S. Navy until 1946. But along with the author's riffs on ill-fated Grateful Dead Concerts, hydroplane races, annual triathlons, compilations of dude ranches, and New Age Scientological-type retreats with—yes, you probably can make this up, the promises of "Pyramid Power"—there is also Mergen's excellent account of a Sacred Vision Powwow he attended in 2012, and whose important theme was "Bringing the People Home."

All that said, the really terrific news is that the water level of Pyramid Lake is at least tolerable both for subsistence and commercial fishing of those two indigenous fish, which are doing reasonably perfectly fine, thank you, partly thanks to the "Friends of Pyramid Lake," as well as federal and corporate funding. And mainly to the good works of those three hatcheries owned and operated by Numus (Northern Paiutes) of the Pyramid Lake Reservation Paiute Tribe.

Dr. Michael Hittman, emeritus
Long Island University-Brooklyn

Vegas at Odds: Labor Conflict in a Leisure Economy, 1960-1985. By James P. Kraft (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press: Baltimore, 2010)

This is an excellent study of labor relations in the Las Vegas resort industry. The author relies on a variety of sources beyond the usual newspaper accounts and union archives. He skillfully uses oral histories of ordinary workers to portray the culinary and other unions from the member's perspective. In addition, management's side of the story is based on corporate archives, including those of the Nevada Resort Association. This is supplemented by the author's own interviews with some of the key players, an approach that helps fill gaps in the printed sources.

The book correctly notes that the Las Vegas unions formed before many resorts were built and long before the arrival of private corporations in the early 1970s. This, along with the postwar spurt in national income and casino profits, allowed workers to secure large pay and benefit increases until the 1970s when changing market conditions, that included more competition and smaller profits, forced management to cut back. In an effort to reduce labor expenses, the resorts strengthened the 1965 Nevada Resort Association by hiring experienced contract negotiators and agreeing to stick together and lock out union members if any hotel was struck. Over time, the postwar consensus between management and labor broke down and a confrontational atmosphere replaced it. Labor relations in the 1970s and 1980s resembled the national trend, as unions lost power and management concessions diminished. Eventually and gradually, management won the upper hand. It successfully blocked the unionization of dealers, a legacy that currently afflicts the fledgling effort by Caesars Palace dealers to organize against Harrah's. Other victories for management included the signing of separate agreements with each union rather than a master contract with all, which allowed the hotels to drive a wedge between powerful Culinary Local 226 and the smaller unions. It also helped destroy a valuable union weapon, the sympathy strike. And there were other victories, especially during the Reagan years. Inspired by the president's mass firing of the nation's air-traffic controllers and a similar firing of workers during a 1983 strike at Phelps Dodge in Arizona, Steve Wynn successfully opposed a strike at the Golden Nugget by threatening to replace employees on the picket line. The threat of using replacement workers, sanctioned by a Supreme Court decision in the late 1930s, was effective, and over the years encouraged more defections within union ranks while also hampering the recruitment of new members.

The book is particularly informative regarding the major strikes of 1976 and 1984, but its coverage of numerous work stoppages in every decade demonstrates the continuing tension that marked labor relations in Las Vegas after 1960. There is also good coverage of civil rights and the battle waged by African-American workers to gain more of a foothold in both union and resort

management. This eventually led to the federal consent decree of 1971, which both labor and management were slow to obey and the government was slow to enforce. In the end, both African-Americans and Hispanics were less satisfied with the outcome than this book implies.

Perhaps the book's only shortcoming is its periodization. It ends in 1985, and the brief Afterword (which mentions events through 2008) hardly does justice to the changed circumstances arising since the advent of the "New Las Vegas." While it is true that a tight job market in the 1990s and early 2000s helped the Culinary Union more than double its membership and raise wages and benefits beyond those of resort workers in other cities, the Las Vegas boom also created many new resorts that even the Culinary Union failed to organize. In addition, management's importation of alien workers from all over the world helped diversify the workforce, but also made it easier for many resorts to fend off union recruiters. Someday the author might consider extending his work in perhaps a new edition to cover the effects of the 2008-10 Recession, which has resulted in the layoff of more than 10 percent of Culinary Union members, the deferral of negotiated pay hikes, and the creation of a health care plan for laid-off members.

These concerns aside, Kraft has written the best book so far on labor relations in the Las Vegas resort industry. It should be the standard reference work on this subject for a long time.

Eugene P. Moehring
University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Nevada
Historical Society Quarterly

Call for Papers

The *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly* is actively seeking articles for future issues. We invite and encourage papers related to any aspect of Nevada history, the Great Basin, and the West.

While our focus is original scholarly research, the *Quarterly* accepts shorter articles for a section called "Notes and Documents." This could include shorter essays of interest to our readership as well as commentary upon particularly interesting or important primary sources.

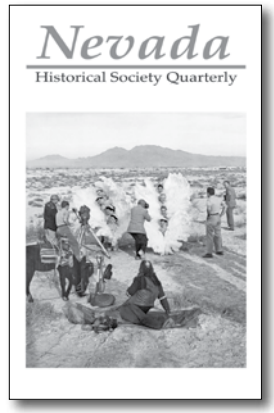
Instructions for Submissions and Abstracts

Please send paper drafts or proposals to the Editor-in-Chief (jreid@tmcc.edu). Full manuscripts should be sent in electronic form to the editor and should be between 4,000 and 7,000 words. Please include at least one photograph of image to accompany your article. For the "Notes and Documents" section, please submit short proposals only. Although electronic submission is preferred, paper submissions are acceptable and should be sent to the Nevada Historical Society in Reno.

Nevada Historical Society

Nevada Historical Society Quarterly
Advertisement Guidelines

The advertisement guidelines are the basis for promoting publications of historical merit based upon regional history including the West, the Great Basin and Nevada. The quarterly publication assists in fulfilling the mission for the Nevada Historical Society.



Publication Trim Size:

7" x 10"

Sizes & Specs:

Black & White Ads only
Artwork format: 300 dpi PDF

Ad size	*width*	x	*height (no bleed)*
Quarter page	3"	x	2.5"
Half page	6"	x	5"
Full page	6"	x	9"

***NHS Quarterly* Advertising Rates:**

The *NHS Quarterly* gives discounts for the purchase of multiple advertisements based upon number of ads and ad size. The general location of the advertisements will be located at the end of the quarterly.

Ad size	*4x*	*2x*	*1x*
Quarter page	60.00	70.00	80.00
Half page	100.00	120.00	140.00
Full page	150.00	175.00	200.00

Premium Location: Back Inside Cover	*1x*
Half page	200.00
Full Page	275.00

***NHS Quarterly* Deadlines:**

Issue print date	*Reserve date*	*Artwork due*
Spring (March)	December 10	end of December
Summer (June)	March 10	end of March
Fall (Sept)	June 10	end of June
Winter (Dec)	September 10	end of September

Sheryln L. Hayes-Zorn
775-688-1190, ext 222
SHayesZorn@nevadaculture.org

Nevada Historical Society Membership Form

Experience Nevada's history with the oldest museum in the state

A membership in the Nevada Historical Society is the perfect way to embrace your fascination with Nevada's rich heritage. A year's membership includes: four issues of the *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly* publication, unlimited free admission to all seven museums in the Nevada Division of Museums and History, personalized membership card, e-newsletter, membership ***eBlasts*** are regular email announcements to upcoming and current exhibitions, free exhibit events and programs, and a 15% discount in all the museums' stores. Another bonus, any amount over the initial $20 that is paid toward membership fees is tax deductible. These fees support educational programming at the Nevada Historical Society.

Membership is more than benefits—it's about supporting one of Nevada's cultural institutions. Thank you for your support!

Membership Categories

___ Yes, I want to become a member of the Nevada Historical Society at the following membership level:

___ Yes, I want to renew my membership at the following level (renewal date_____)

___	Individual	$35
___	Family	$60
___	Institutional	$50
___	Sustaining	$100
___	Contributing	$250
___	Patron	$500
___	Benefactor	$1,000
___	Student*	$20 *(proof of ID required)*
___	Senior*	$20

**The student and senior levels do not include the Nevada Historical Society Quarterly. If you would like to receive the Quarterly, membership at the higher levels, beginning at $35, is available.*

___ No, I do not wish to be a member of the Historical Society, but please accept my tax deductible donation in the amount of $_____

Name(s) _____

Address_____

City _____ State_____ Zip_____

Phone: Home_____ Business_____

Email _____

The Society respects your right to privacy. We will not share your e-mail address with other organizations.

Mail this form and your check to:

Nevada Historical Society

Attn: Membership, 1650 N.Virginia St. Reno, NV 89503

775-688-1190 • www.nevadaculture.org