plan was dismantled after Roche's death. Still, her many achievements in promoting progressive idealism and change in the coal industry reached well beyond the boundaries of Colorado.

In her meticulous review of Josephine Roche's life, Elinor McGinn provides her readers with a biography of interest to mining and non-mining readers alike. Anyone interested in labor or union history would find McGinn's insights especially thought-provoking.

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Andrew Gulliford. ***Boomtown Blues: Colorado Oil Shale***. Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2003; 336 pp., 37 photos, 18 drawings, 9 maps, bib., ind., paper, $26.95.

Kenneth N. Owens (ed.). ***John Sutter and a Wider West***. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2002; 148 pp., illus., map, ind., paper, $15.

Duane A. Smith. ***Silver Saga: The Story of Caribou, Colorado***. Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2003; 240 pp., photos, maps, bib., ind., paper, $21.95.

Raye C. Ringholz. ***Uranium Frenzy: Saga of the Nuclear West***. Logan: Utah State University Press, 2002; 370 pp., photos, maps, ind., paper, $19.95.

Over the past few years several of the university presses have reissued important books on mining or related resource development issues, often with additional material appended. The University Press of Colorado has reissued Andrew Gulliford's *Boomtown Blues: Colorado Oil Shale*, which it first published in 1989.

This history of oil shale's development, in fits and starts, on Colorado's western slope between 1885 and 1985, emphasizes the most recent boom centered at Parachute, on the Colorado River east of Grand Junction, during the energy crisis of the 1970s. Gulliford sees that latest boom, and the bust that followed in the 1980s, as largely a question of "capital versus community."

Gulliford subscribes explicitly to Bernard DeVoto's "plundered province" view of western development. This time the plundered province was the western slope and the plunderer was the Exxon Corporation, which created a boom by preparing to carry out an unmitigated ecological disaster on this water-poor region, then caused the bust by not undertaking its ecological debauch in the face of low oil prices.

Gulliford concludes that Colorado's oil shale rush of the 1970s and early 80s "was blatantly manipulated from the start without adequate consideration for the people whose lives would be most affected," including Gulliford's. The small-town West, he believes, still suffers from corporate colonialism and economic dependency.

The new edition of Gulliford's book includes a new afterword: "Oil Shale Towns Revisited: Old West, New West, Next West." Although the intervening years haven't completely doused his fire, Gulliford admits he has since learned to become more detached from his subjects. The other thing that time has done is show that the oil bust was not fatal. These communities did survive the hammer blow of Exxon's departure, and are doing reasonably well.

Gulliford also notes, with some irony, that Colorado's modern western slope has become a tourist-based service economy almost devoid of well-paying industrial jobs. So the old problems of making a western livelihood remain. While Exxon's ambitions for oil shale may not have been the best course for the western slope's economic development, neither, perhaps, is a pristine, de-industrial landscape consisting largely of absentee millionaires and minimum-wage service workers. Maybe the real lesson of the boomtown blues is that the demands of resource extraction, environmental preservation, and economic vitality must, as ever, be balanced.

In 2002 the University of Nebraska Press

reissued *John Sutter and a Wider West*, edited by Kenneth N. Owens and first published in 1994. This slim volume is a collection of essays by five scholars, among them several stars of the New Western History, originally given in a lecture series hosted by California State University, Sacramento, in the fall of 1990.

After new and original prefaces by Owens, the volume opens with Sutter's own account of his actions and motives written in 1856 and first published in a San Francisco newspaper in 1878. After Sutter come the historians. Howard Lamar sees Sutter as a "wilderness entrepreneur," one of a class of frontier empire builders, speculators, and colonizers who developed the West while trying to create their own fortunes. Albert Hurtado examines Sutter's relations with Native Americans, particularly as they served as customers of and laborers in his enterprises. Hurtado finds that Sutter "ruthlessly exploited" the natives who produced the larger part of his pre-gold rush success.

Iris Engstrand uses biography to try to separate the human Sutter from the mythic one. She concludes that he was an alcoholic and financially irresponsible rascal perpetually on the run from creditors who used the people around him. Richard White examines the environmental changes wrought by Sutter. White acknowledges that California's Central Valley was hardly a pristine wilderness when Sutter arrived, but believes Sutter's contribution to the region's environmental degradation was his capitalist practice of commodifying and harvesting the area's natural resources.

Patricia Limerick concludes the essays by attacking the myth of Sutter's success by exposing the reality of Sutter's failure. She argues that Sutter was always a failure, but created his own tale of victimization in an effort to win compensation from Congress. Westerners have been only too happy to subscribe to the Sutter legend, concludes Limerick, because the Sutter myth reinforces "that great, vanity-satisfying myth of American destiny." Fortunately, in the years since 1990 the New Western historians have rescued us from our ignorance.

In 2003 the University Press of Colorado reissued one of the classic mining town biographies, Duane Smith's *Silver Saga: The Story of Caribou, Colorado*, with a new chapter appended. The Caribou deposits were discovered in August 1869 high in the Rockies about thirty miles west of Boulder. The camp grew though the 1870s, then stabilized as the better mineral bodies played out and costs rose due to the depth and flooding of the mines. Before the end of the 1880s the rush, such as it was, was over. The 1890s brought decline, and fires in 1899 and 1905 decimated the physical remains of a community already dead in enterprise and spirit.

Smith ably describes the thirty-five years of Caribou's life, and he uses the town as an example of the life of an ordinary nineteenth-century mining town, one much more typical than a Comstock or a Cripple Creek. Caribou, and most other such towns, had much more to do with decline than with success. *Silver Saga*, first published in 1974, details patterns of development and decline that have since become familiar to scholars, but that in those days were only discussed seriously in a few places (Jackson's *Treasure Hill* being another).

Smith notes the camp's constant need of eastern and foreign capital, and the price it paid for that money in independence. With the capital came consolidation of all of the best mines under one or two absentee ownerships. Larger and more efficient operations were possible, but return on investment often trumped rational development. Often absentee owners, who had generally made their fortunes in other lines, had little understanding of or patience with the complexities of mining and milling. Others had no patience no matter what their expertise, since their object was speculation, not development.

Smith makes the distinction between speculating capitalists and town-building capitalists,

chief among the latter being the merchants who lived in Caribou, promoted it, and rode its fortunes up or down. These people's profits rested on permanence, for which they fought incessantly, and on stability, which they encouraged. Not for them the red light and the shoot-'em-ups. Smith believes that in this, Caribou's experience was more typical of the frontier silver camps than Tombstone's. *Silver Saga* also considers the daily life of the town, covering everything from costs and wages to Cornish superstitions to the impact of women upon this rough alpine hamlet.

This edition has a new epilogue and photo essay. In the epilogue, Smith summarizes the working of the district in the years since the 1905 fire. Development was fitful. A modest uranium flurry in the decade after World War II might have marked the end, but in the 1970s the district found a new champion in Tom Hendricks, who has been running a small but efficient operation there ever since. In his preface to the present edition, Smith reminds us that the value of Caribou's story is its typicality, that "the chronicles of the Caribous . . . are the heart and soul of the people who ventured optimistically and hopefully into the mining West." That silver continues to be extracted from Caribou a century after the town died seems to justify that optimism.

Raye C. Ringholz's *Uranium Frenzy: Saga of the Nuclear West*, published by W.W. Norton in 1989 and reissued by Utah State University Press in 2002, examines the uranium mining boom, uranium processing, and atomic testing that so deeply affected the Four Corners region in the 1950s and 1960s. The most extensive uranium mining occurred in extreme western Colorado and eastern Utah, about fifty miles south of Grand Junction and thirty south of Moab, respectively. The development of these deposits led to the establishment of uranium processing plants at Grand Junction, Uravan, and Naturita, Colorado, and Moab and Monticello, Utah, during the postwar period.

The uranium rush featured Geiger counters and surplus jeeps rather fire assays and burros, but some of its other features will be familiar to mining historians. More money could often be made through stock speculation than mineral production. In some ways uranium mining was a throwback to frontier mining, often conducted by small operators on an almost ad hoc basis, with success for a few, but failure for most. Litigation often found those who found uranium. The stampede made boomtowns out of sleepy desert hamlets—Moab chief among these—with the shortages, high prices, and alienation that seem to attend any mineral rush. On the positive side, the significant improvements to the infrastructure of this isolated region, particularly to roads, survived the uranium era and helped to vitalize and modernize the area.

The big difference this time, of course, was the significant and imperfectly understood physical dangers involved in mining, refining, and using the material. In this edition of *Uranium Frenzy*, Ringholz includes more discussion of the consequences of atomic testing, of the health issues that beset uranium workers, and of the environmental impacts of uranium recovery and disposal. She also adds to her discussion of the regional activism that developed to confront these legacies of the uranium frenzy.

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