
Book Reviews

Judy Nolte Temple. *Baby Doe Tabor: The Madwoman in the Cabin*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2007; 260 pp., b&w illus., notes, bib., cloth, \$24.95. ISBN: 0806138251

The story of Baby Doe Tabor has been the gist of many western tales. A beautiful divorcee mesmerized a wealthy, married mining magnate, who in turn divorced his wife to marry the beauty. As the second wife of silver king H. A.W. Tabor, Elizabeth McCourt "Baby Doe" Tabor was shunned by society, but extremely happy and in love with her husband and their two daughters. The couple's wealth and extravagance, and eventual fall into poverty after the silver crash of 1893, has become legendary. Tabor died penniless.

Baby Doe sought solitude in Leadville at the Matchless Mine, where Tabor earned much of his wealth. Her bazar behavior and actions garnered her the nickname "madwoman in the cabin." After Baby Doe's death in 1935, her papers and journals were locked away in the archives of the Colorado Historical Society, resulting in even more speculation about the Tabors' lives and their legend. Countless authors and researchers attempted to gain access to the locked records through various channels, but they were not released until 1967. What Lizzie Tabor's papers reveal is extraordinary.

Author Judy Nolte Temple, professor of Women's Studies and English at the University of Arizona, and a team of researchers, spent countless hours reading and analyzing Lizzie's small collection of journals and mass of disjointed rantings written on slips of paper and kept in no particular order. The mass of papers, filed in a folder titled "Dreams and Visions," reveal a heart-wrenching account of a lonely and, yes, perhaps madwoman's

life.

Temple weaves together Lizzie McCourt Tabor's life through archival records, Lizzie's writings, and the author's theoretical analysis. The academic scholarship behind this work is impressive, yet, at times, burdensome to the reader. This is a scholarly work, not another romantic legendary tale of Baby Doe and H. A. W. Tabor. However, if your interests lie in biographical accounts of the Tabors or in women's history, do not be daunted. It is a fascinating analysis of a multi-faceted woman, Elizabeth "Baby Doe" McCourt Tabor.

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Virginia McConnell Simmons. *Drifting West: The Calamities of James White and Charles Baker*. Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2007; 210 pp., 22 b&w photos, 7 illus., 11 maps, notes, bib., ind., cloth, \$29.95. ISBN: 0870818740

Zachary A. Smith and John C. Freemuth (ed.). *Environmental Politics and Policy in the West*. Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2007; 229 pp., ref., ind., paper, \$34.95. ISBN: 0870818813.

Diana L. Ahmad. *The Opium Debate and Chinese Exclusion Laws in the Nineteenth-Century American West*. Reno: University of Nevada Press, 2007; 145 pp., notes, bib., ind., cloth, \$34.95. ISBN: 0874176980.

The journal received several books for review this year that do not pertain directly to mining, but include it as an essential element of their stories. *Drifting West* follows the lives and activities of four frontier drifters, two of whom surfaced