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Daily Life on the Nineteenth Century American Frontier

Mary Ellen Jones

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The nineteenth century American frontier comes alive for students and interested readers in this unique exploration of westward expansion. This study examines the daily lives of ordinary men and women who flooded into the Trans-Mississippi West in search of land, fortune, a fresh start, and a new identity. Their daily life was rarely easy. If they were to survive, they had to adapt to the land and modify every aspect of their lives, from housing to transportation, from education to defense, from food gathering and preparation to the establishment of rudimentary laws and social structures. They also had to adapt to the Native Americans already on the land?whether through acculturation, warfare, or coexistence.

Jones provides insight into the experiences that affected the daily lives of the diverse people who inhabited the American frontier: the Native Americans, trappers, explorers, ranchers, homesteaders, soldiers and townspeople. This fascinating book gives a sense of the extraordinary ordinariness of surviving, prospering, failing, and dying in a new land; and explores how these westering Americans inevitably displaced those already bound to the land by tradition, culture, and religion. A wealth of illustrations complement the text of this easy-to use reference.

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