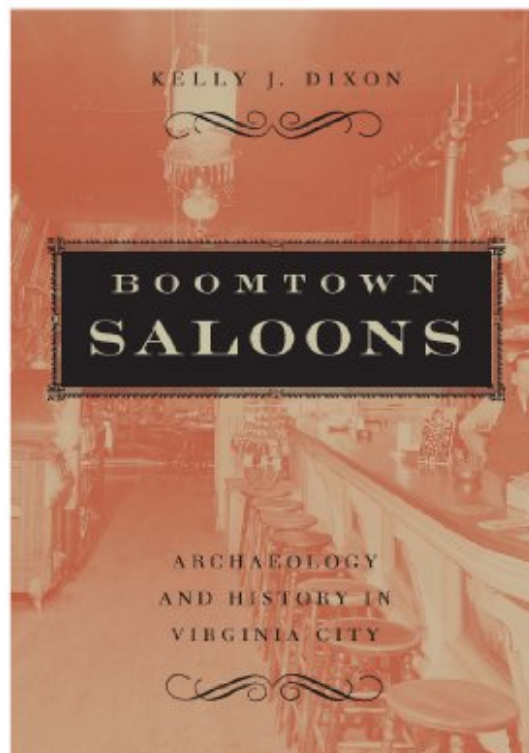


(Read free) Boomtown Saloons: Archaeology And History In Virginia City (Shepperson Series in Nevada History)

Boomtown Saloons: Archaeology And History In Virginia City (Shepperson Series in Nevada History)

Kelly J. Dixon

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Kelly J. Dixon : Boomtown Saloons: Archaeology And History In Virginia City (Shepperson Series in Nevada History) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Boomtown Saloons: Archaeology And History In Virginia City (Shepperson Series in Nevada History):

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Interesting read, aimed at the layman, entertainingBy Rough CustomerAn entertaining book, fairly well written, no hypo-technical jargon for which archaeologists are well known...and for that I am thankful. Very adequate photographs of the artifacts, good descriptions. Includes short fictional accounts of what may have transpired in each saloon, based on the artifacts found. My only critical points on this book are these: one i would expect a hardbound books of some size, for the price of over 21 bucks and this is a softbound, very small and short book of 166 pages not counting the exhaustive notes, so there is not much bang for the

buck. Secondly, the mishmash of the various saloons and excavations is confusing in the book, the author switches from one saloon excavation to another time after time, so that you are never sure exactly where you are. Not exactly the flowing words of Ivor Noel Hume, but still a nice book, thus my four star rating. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Interesting StudyBy Baurak AleThis book attempts to correct modern perceptions of the "wild west" as they are proliferated through contemporary film and television. Dixon also demonstrates that history and archaeology can work together to inform our understanding of the past. This book is well written and concise. I would recommend it to anyone studying the 19th-century American west, specifically in Nevada. 3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. A cutting-edge delve into the fine nuances of what archaeology can tell us about America's past. By Midwest Book ReviewWritten by anthropology professor and American West historical archaeology specialist Kelly J. Dixon, Boomtown Saloons is an exciting account of the excavation and analysis of four nineteenth-century Virginia City, Nevada saloon sites. Dixon personally participated the excavation projects, and offers a firsthand view of the evidence, and what its analysis tells us about the people and society of Virginia City well over a century ago. From the style of saloon architecture to reconstructed menu items, saloon serving ware, vices and amusements that saloons offered, and much more, Boomtown Saloons is a cutting-edge delve into the fine nuances of what archaeology can tell us about America's past.

The image of Old West saloons as sites of violence and raucous entertainment has been perpetuated by film and legend, but the true story of such establishments is far more complex. In Boomtown Saloons, archaeologist Kelly J. Dixon recounts the excavation of four historic saloon sites in Nevada's Virginia City, one of the West's most important boomtowns, and shows how the physical traces of this handful of disparate drinking places offer a new perspective on authentic life in the mining West. During the second half of the nineteenth century, the Comstock Lode's mineral wealth attracted people from all over the world. At its peak, Virginia City had a cosmopolitan population of over 20,000 people. Like people everywhere, they sought to pass their leisure time in congenial company, often in one or another of the four saloons studied here. Dixon's account of the role these four establishments played in the social and economic life of Virginia City offers keen insight into the businesses and people who made up the backdrop of a mining boomtown. The saloons in this study were quieter than legend would have us believe; they served relatively distinct groups and offered their customers a place of refuge, solidarity, and social contact with peers in a city where few people had longtime ties or initially any close contacts. Boomtown Saloons also offers an equally vivid portrait of the modern historical archaeologist who combines time-honored digging, reconstruction, and analysis methods with such cutting-edge technology as DNA analysis of saliva traces on a 150-year-old pipestem and chemical analysis of the residue in discarded condiment bottles. The book is illustrated with historical photographs and maps, as well as photographs of artifacts uncovered during the excavations of the four sites. Dixon's sparkling text and thoughtful interpretation of evidence reveal an unknown aspect of daily life in one of the West's most storied boomtowns and demonstrate that, contrary to legend, the traditional western saloon served an vital and complex social role in its community. Available in hardcover and paperback.

"Boomtown Saloons illustrates how historical archaeology is evolving into a scholarly discipline that can expand upon written history. Today, Virginia City is a living ghost town that attracts tourists seeking the Old West. This delightful study gives us a better picture of life in a Nevada boomtown than we have ever had before." -- Mark Michel
From the Publisher 79 black and white photos; 2 maps
About the Author Kelly J. Dixon is a professor of anthropology at the University of Montana. She specializes in historical archaeology in the American West, and in addition to her investigations among the ruins of western saloons she has recently conducted research at the site of the ill-fated Donner Party encampments in the eastern Sierra Nevada. This is her first book.