

[Free download] Cowboy Life: Reconstructing an American Myth

## Cowboy Life: Reconstructing an American Myth

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**From Brand: University of Oklahoma Press : Cowboy Life: Reconstructing an American Myth** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Cowboy Life: Reconstructing an American Myth:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Great Book for Researchers and WritersBy coach WGreat book edited by William savage. He tells a wonderful truthful story of Cowboy days. For researchers or western writers this is a must have. Wish I would have found it years ago.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Cowboy Life: Reconstructing an American MythBy Kindle CustomerIn Cowboy Life: Reconstructing the American Myth the myth of the American cowboy is not so much reconstructed as completely reevaluated.In American culture the cowboy has become a cultural icon, one that has had competition from various sources such as superheroes, but has remained popular for much longer than any competing icon. This book argues that the real-life cowboy does not compare to the extremely exaggerated cultural icon that the cowboy has become in the American consciousness. The cowboy as a historical figure was at the low end of society, and he was seen as a dangerous brute by many of his contemporaries. Life was hard and the money that was actually earned was very low when compared to the often extreme amounts of work that would have to be done at any given time.The myth of the cowboy could only be created once the historical cowboy was becoming less important as an actual working man and this myth would surpass any real world cowboy. This book exposes the evolution of the cowboy myth compared to the actual working life of the cowboy.6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Home on the RangeBy Ronald ScheerThis is a collection of writings from the 19th

and early 20th centuries about cowboys and cattle drives during the "Lonesome Dove" years after the Civil War. The book includes a large selection of full-page monochrome photographs of working cowboys, dating back to the 1880s. Readers can trace the emergence of the cowboy as mythic figure, from his origins as a wild, unsavory character often regarded as a public menace in the frontier towns for his hard drinking and shoot-em-up antics. Readers will learn a great deal about the hard work and dangers of cowboying. And you get a sense of how cowboys on the range (most of them very young) were an elite fraternity of workmen, with specialized skills and a code of behavior that stoically honored bravery, while spending lavishly on saddles and the latest fashions in trail-wear. You also get a sense of how brief this period of history actually was, as the frontier swiftly moved westward and open rangeland was fenced in. My favorite selections in the book are accounts by the cowboys themselves, describing the day-to-day routines and the occasional adventures of life on the trail. Among these is an excerpt from cowboy author, Andy Adams, whose "Log of a Cowboy" is a classic of Western literature. The editor of the collection, William W. Savage, Jr., who holds a PhD from the University of Oklahoma, has written an informative introduction based on what seems to be considerable familiarity with the subject of the American West.

First published in 1975 and now in paperback, *Cowboy Life* continues to be a landmark study on the historical and legendary dimensions of the cowboy. The central figure in American mythology, the cowboy can be seen everywhere: in films, novels, advertisements, TV, sports, and music. Though his image holds little resemblance to the historical cowboy, it is important because it represents many qualities with which Americans identify, including bravery, honor, chivalry, and individualism. Accounts by Joseph G. McCoy, Richard Irving Dodge, Charles A. Siringo, and many others detail the daily trials and tribulations of cowboy life on the southern Great Plains—particularly Texas, Indian Territory, and Kansas—from the 1860s to around 1900. And in a new Afterword, editor William W. Savage, Jr. discusses the directions the cowboy myth has taken in the past two decades, as well as the impact the "new Western history" and films such as *Lonesome Dove* have had on popular culture. This edition contains a new preface and afterword by the author.

About the Author William W. Savage, Jr. is professor of history at the University of Oklahoma and the author and editor of numerous books, articles, and book chapters on the American West.