

OPIMUM DENS UNDER THE BIG SKY ^{MAS}

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The 19th century opium dens of North America were places where Sino- and Euro-American acculturation occurred. The perceived threat of the seduction of "innocent" Euro-American daughters at the hands of "evil" China Men set the stage for contemporary

drug wars. Through an examination of the historic record, the relative importance of the opium den in the Western United States illustrates that an open market for drugs results in lower rates of addiction than explicit state proscription.