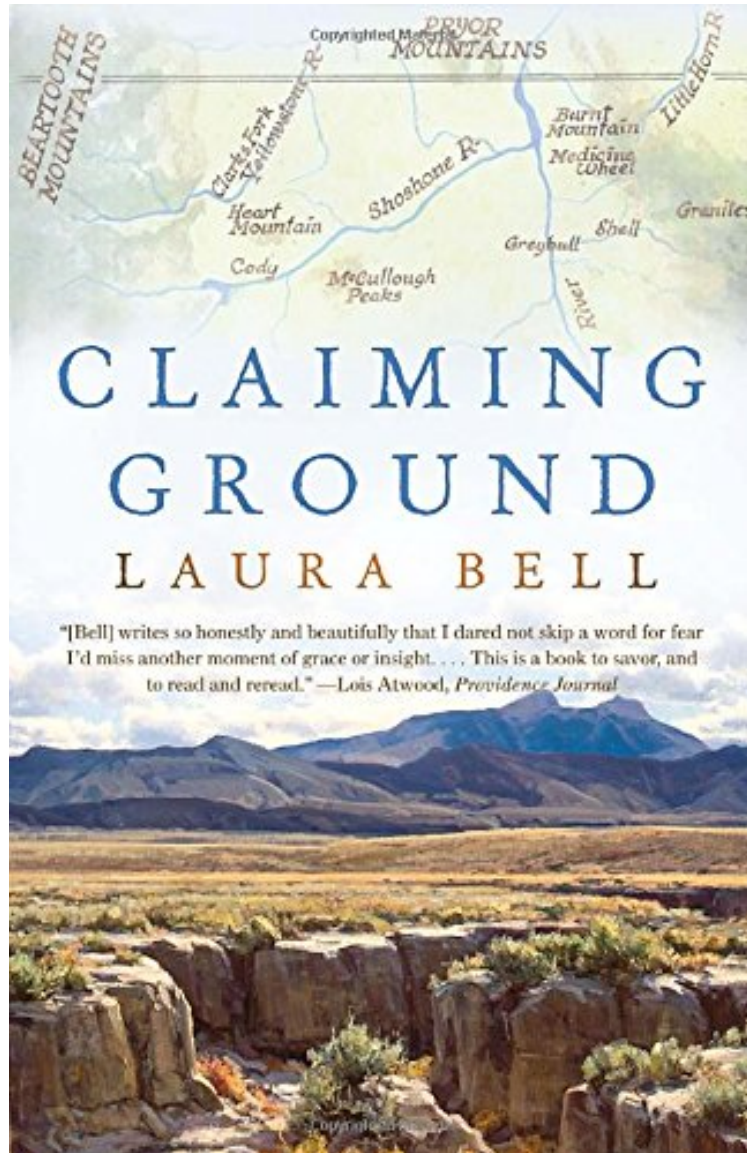


## Claiming Ground

Laura Bell

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#308200 in Books 2011-04-19 2011-04-19 Original language: English PDF # 1 8.00 x .57 x 5.201, .61 #File Name: 030747464X256 pages | File size: 22.Mb

**Laura Bell : Claiming Ground** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Claiming Ground:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Good book but....By Costa Rican Momma In general, I liked this book. I thought it was an honest, insightful, thought provoking look at the author's life. However, the lack of continuity was very distracting to me. The author constantly jumped from one time period to another with no warning, not only from chapter to chapter but from paragraph to paragraph. I found myself frequently stopping to ask, OK, now when

was/is this? Because of this, I found the reading stressful rather than relaxing. I really felt I should give it 3 stars but I'm not a very qualified critic so perhaps this wouldn't bother someone else and it was basically a good book, I thought. 16 of 16 people found the following review helpful. Claiming Ground says it all....By Elaine Casteel I first heard of Laura's book thru a book review. One of the lines quoted from Laura's book caught my attention where she described Wyoming.... "And how, when you're used to sheltering hardwoods and rolling hills, the bare-bones immensity of Wyoming can make you feel like a sacrifice left on a slab for the gods to pick clean." Having moved from back east to Wy. over 18 years ago, I felt that she captured my own feeling for this place. Its a place to be experienced not just seen, and she captures the humbling sense of a wild, rugged land that presents all of its beauty and dares you to stay. One of the first things I noticed about Wy. was the women, single women who had moved here, miles from a shopping center, and claimed it as there own. I was one of those women, so I can appreciate Laura's journey. I also knew some of the people mentioned in the book so it made it even more interesting for me to read. I loved her writing style. She says more in one sentence than most can say in a paragraph! If you've ever thought of stepping outside your comfort zone pick up this book and journey with her, you won't be disappointed. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Fell in love with big sky country, but really was enthralled with Laura and her chosen life. By Customer Second time reading Claiming Ground and it was even better than first time. If you enjoy the journey, struggles and success of a real life women then you will not be able to put this book down. I smiled and cried and celebrated the author's successes and fears. Then there was the man thing. As if we/I can't identify.... Only one issue, Laura please continue your story. I so look forward to another. Thank you.

A Providence Journal Best Book of the Year In 1977, Laura Bell left her family home in Kentucky for a wild and unexpected adventure: herding sheep in Wyoming's Big Horn Basin. The only woman in a man's world, she nevertheless found a home among the strange community of drunks and eccentrics, as well as a shared passion for a life of solitude and hard work. By turns cattle rancher, forest ranger, outfitter, masseuse, wife and mother, Bell vividly recounts her struggle to find solid earth in a memoir that's as breathtaking as it is singular.

From Booklist A Kentucky minister's daughter and a pretty college grad, Bell didn't seem destined to live alone in the high, lonesome hills of Wyoming, herding sheep and cattle. But all she could conceive of doing was to feed her hunger for horses, dogs, and open space. Writing with the restraint and precision of someone who both cherishes and distrusts language, Bell recounts her Bighorn Basin sojourn, beginning with her brash arrival in 1977, on through long, grueling horseback days of epic heat and cold, rain and snow, and bracing nights in a small sheep wagon beneath the stars. The only woman among older male herders, many bedeviled by alcohol, Bell holds her own with tenacity and grace through punishing work and annealing solitude, love, and tragedy. In finely tooled, indelible prose, Bell moves through the decades, lovingly portraying her intrepid parents, damaged husband, beautiful stepdaughters, and all the animals that opened and healed her battered heart. Now working for the Nature Conservancy, Bell has created an exquisite yet humble praise song to a wild-knit life. --Donna Seaman [Bell] writes so honestly and beautifully that I dared not skip a word for fear I'd miss another moment of grace or insight. . . . This is a book to savor, and to read and reread. Lois Atwood, Providence Journal A fresh, wonderful piece of writing, about the isolated and attentive kind of life almost nobody lives nowadays, or ever did. Kent Haruf, author of Plainsong Remarkable. . . . Exquisite. . . . Bell may have grown up in the South, but she writes like a Wyoming native. . . . Tender and touching. New West The finest memoir I've read. Mark Spragg, author of An Unfinished Life Beautiful, moving, and graceful. The Boston Globe The American West has asserted itself as a powerful muse for . . . a group of remarkable women writers that includes Annie Proulx [and] Terry Tempest Williams. . . . Claiming Ground, Bell's debut, marks her elevation into that group. Bell's metamorphosis slowly unfolds in prose that is both rustically piquant and lyrical. The Christian Science Monitor Luminous. . . . Can be savored for the lyricism of its language, its insight into a distinct American region and a meditation on physical work and the role it played in one woman's life. Minneapolis Star-Tribune Part lyrical remembrance of a deeply intense relationship with nature in a sweepingly majestic landscape, part unswerving self-analysis, Claiming Ground delivers both beauty and unabashed reflection. BookPage Bell loves the solitude for its grandeur and for connecting her to the wildlife, all of which she renders in a luminous and flinty prose attuned to the country. The Free Lance-Star (Fredericksburg, VA) Unique and engaging. . . . Well worth reading. San Francisco Chronicle If you couldn't put down Elizabeth Gilbert's Eat, Pray, Love, you must go out right this minute and buy Laura Bell's Claiming Ground. . . . Worth is rarely the measure of a book's success, but if ever a memoir deserved to be a bestseller, Claiming Ground surely does. . . . Brave and honest. . . . Endlessly inventive. Nashville Scene Weekly Quietly powerful. . . . Bell's writing elegantly balances pain and love, solitude and family ties, finding solace both in human relationships and in relationships to animals and the Western landscape. Big and open-hearted like the Wyoming sky, this memoir is a pleasure to read. Sacramento Book Brings a unique point of view and tremendous writing talent to [the America West]. . . . A portrait of the inextricable link between a person and a place. Salt Lake City Weekly Bell tenderly writes about the people in her life with grace and reverence, never sacrificing honesty. The Billings Gazette Has brought more than one reader to tears. . . . Vivid. The Cody Enterprise A heart-wrenching ode to

the rough, enormous beauty of the Western landscape. The Nature Conservancy Bells gift for observation, generous analysis, and her ability to turn a place and people into words are uncommon traits she shares with the likes of Normal McLean and Wallace Stegner, but few others. . . . [A] fine book. Metro Pulse (Knoxville, TN) Open, honest, strong and unflinching. The Durango Herald A wonderfully written, refreshing story. William Kittredge Intriguing and eloquent, by turns guarded then vulnerable, and always written with honesty and keen observation, Laura Bell's Claiming Ground merges exquisitely the human condition of wonder, celebration, fear and longing with the western landscape that so arouses and nurtures these same senses. Rick Bass Deeply felt. . . . Each twist of the story [is] viscerally evoked by Bells wrenching, raw, and honest prose. Orion magazine [Bell] describes a world that most would have trouble imagining what the inside of a sheepwagon looks like, how to spot a cow in labor, what little luxuries fit best inside saddlebags. . . . Bell watches the land with an attentiveness gained from years of scanning the horizon for wayward sheep, and she captures its sights and sounds with startling beauty. High Country News About the Author Laura Bells work has been published in several collections, and from the Wyoming Arts Council she has received two literature fellowships as well as the Neltje Blanchan Memorial Award and the Frank Nelson Doubleday Memorial Award. She lives in Cody, Wyoming, and since 2000 has worked there for the Nature Conservancy.