

The Wild, Wild West

I'm ready for some angry responses from this. – JFA

Have you ever wondered why so many movies about the wild west show a piano in the local saloon? I'm not sure if the producers are being true to history or just taking liberties; however, I theorize that this portrayal is strictly factual. These wild west towns were violent, and a piano is an instrument of violence. Often, the saloon keepers even found it necessary to put up signs pleading "Please do not shoot the piano player" because, of course, one's thoughts always turn in that direction when the senses are assaulted by the pounding of piano keys. It's a wonder the town marshal didn't ban pianos after dark.

If a governing council of a wild town had really wanted to stop violence and clean up the town, instead of hiring a fast-gun sheriff, they could have hired a violinist or cellist or, for the really hard cases, a string quartet to play in the town saloons. After a few evenings of the celestial sounds from the strings, even the bad guys would have been so peaceable and polite that the sheriff could hang up a "gone fishing" sign. Had this occurred, the heroes of our western movies would be the Yo Yo Mas, Tossy Spivakovskys, Bob Willses, and Roy Acuffs of that era instead of the Matt Dillon types. Did anyone ever have to post "Please don't shoot the fiddle player"?