The Last of the Roundup Boys

Lillian Heil

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Reviewer: Lillian H. Heil  
Reading Level: Intermediate  
Rating: Excellent  
Genre: Historical fiction;  
Subject: Sex role--Juvenile fiction; Coming of age--Juvenile fiction; Ranch life--Kansas--Juvenile fiction; Cowboys--Juvenile fiction; Book-Reviews;

Set in the late 1800's, Seely tells the story of seventeen year old Tom, the son of a poor farmer. Tom finds work as a cowboy on a cattle ranch and has a romance with sixteen year old Evie, daughter of the ranch owner. Evie's parents want her to marry someone suitable, but Evie only wants to be a rancher, which is not acceptable woman's work in her parent’s eyes. Once Evie and Tom negotiate this problem with Evie’s parents they are able to plan a future together.

Told in interchanging voices, the narrative conveys what Tom and Evie think about each event in the story. This technique allows the reader to connect with the emotional reaction of both Tom and Evie in this romance. The issue of women's rights is part of the novel but does not overshadow the romantic storyline. Evie's love of ranching makes the hard work of the roundup sound very attractive and provides a fitting sequel to Seely's novel entitled *Grasslands*. 