

Come hell or high water.

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REVIEW *of* TEXAS BOOKS



Volume 32/Winter 2017 /Issue 2

...And the high waters came

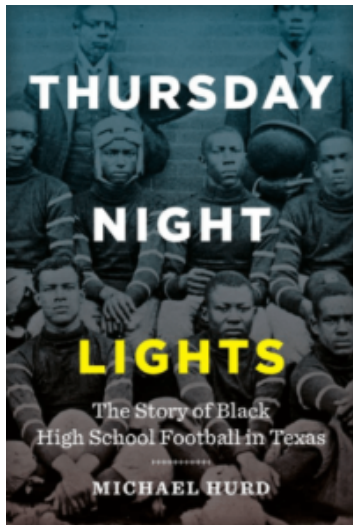
When we published our inaugural issue with the tag line, "Come hell or high water," we did not, in fact, mean it literally. However, come the waters did, and many of us, from Conroe to Orange, Texas sat and waited. Others of us donned rain gear, stepped into boats, and did the hard work of rescuing people and pets. In our region of southeast Texas, holiday decorations have replaced piles of debris, but many are still without homes. My own dear mother, a reader, lost everything she owned in Harvey but boasted that she saved her library books. If that isn't Texan, I don't know what is.

So many people, including our students at Lamar University, headed into the fray to help those in need, and this issue stands as a testament to the indomitable Texas spirit. There's a reason Texas and Texans are legendary, and *Review of Texas Books* celebrates that in its reviews of books by Texans, for Texans. In this special edition, we'll also include an update from a local elementary school affected by the storm, so be sure to read all the way to the end.

With reviews of dazzling picture books, classic backlist titles, and new adult fiction and nonfiction, we invite you to sit back, take a well deserved break, and see what books might float your boat (and yes, we mean that figuratively).

We hope you have a wonderful holiday season and a happy new year, and, as always, happy reading.

*Click on any book cover for its corresponding [Goodreads](#) page.



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Editor's Choice

"In spite of the times and conditions during the PVIL's tenure, when it closed shop in 1970, it could look back on a wealth of success stories and a football legacy that remains one of the most important - and unheralded - in the evolution of the black community in Texas."

Uncovering Black Athleticism in Segregated 60s Texas by Jennifer Ravey

Thursday Night Lights is everywhere at the moment, hitting the presses at a seemingly prescient moment. Amid national controversy surrounding NFL players taking a knee in protest of racial violence comes this well researched book chronicling the hard work and triumph of segregated black high school football players and their coaches in the Prairie View Interscholastic League in the 60s. Friday Night Lights were for white football players; Thursday nights, the stadiums were free, and segregated schools took advantage of empty football fields to square off.

Hurd, a former sports writer, discusses the creation of black schools in Houston and its surrounding areas, including southeast Texas. Football was a big part of those schools, and players achieved hero status depending on their feats on the field. However, without organization, any team could declare themselves "champions" until the creation of the Texas Interscholastic League of Colored Schools (TILCS) in 1920 - formally the Prairie View Interscholastic League in 1963 - which began to set standards based on similar UIL guidelines.

With organization came additional interest and an emphasis on playing college ball, specifically at historically

Awed at so much talent, Coach Leon Bedford remarked, with "all of those industrial places...we used to say it was something in the smoke up there" (114).

A final chapter features integration in Texas schools and UIL. The PVIL was absorbed into UIL, and black coaches and teachers lost jobs, as white parents didn't want their children educated by blacks. While several black coaches indicated their desire for treatment equal to white teams, they also noted their concerns. Coach Joe Washington, Sr. echoed the sentiments of other coaches: "They put those kids in situations that were new to them, and some of them were not able to handle it....We lost too many people in the shuffle. Coaches and teachers lost jobs, kids dropped out of school" (49).

Another problem, unique to football, was the "lust for black running backs and other superstar-quality black players from the new, overflowing pool of black talent from the PVIL" (186). Black football players, in many cases, were superior players, but many were still limited by white coaches who felt they had to feature white players. Black players also faced the pressure to win - but not too well, as Coach Charles Brown discovered after winning a close game and leaving the stadium to a shower of racist epithets. Too, the racial inequity of officials could make play difficult, and many coaches fought for inclusion of black officials for

NFL and profiles a number of those early professional players. He then focuses on those who mentored these students, the coaches. These men did more than teach the sport. Often, they spent their own low incomes outfitting teams in uniforms and buying equipment. As Joe Washington, Sr. said, "We were developers of character and discipline" (86).

An entire chapter is devoted to football in southeast Texas, "Gold in the Triangle," and PVIL schools Charlton-Pollard, Hebert, Lincoln, with additional profiles of exceptional players and coaches. Self-proclaimed as the "pro football capital of the world," the Texas State Senate declared as much with a 1971 senate resolution (114). With a brief primer on Beaumont history, including the 1943 race riots, Hurd describes a community ripe for the unity and pride football brought.

unable to dress or eat inside at certain schools.

Thursday Night Lights opens with the author having attended the PVIL Coaches Association's 2007 Hall of Honor and Hall of Fame Banquet, and he describes the congeniality, the pride, the nostalgia, and the recognition of struggle, as coaches reminisce days past. His book goes a long way in uncovering their stories and those of their players. With firsthand accounts, photographs of ragtag but proud teams, and newspaper articles with scores, *Thursday Night Lights* is a highly illuminating book, perfect for sports lovers, those interested in sports and African-American history, Texas history, and race.

Hurd, Michael. *Thursday Night Lights: The Story of Black High School Football in Texas*. University of Texas Press, 2017. 248 pp. Photographs. Appendix. Index.

ISBN 978-1-4773-1034-2

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*Dazzle Ships: World War I
and the Art of Confusion*

Chris Barton

Victo Ngai, Illustrator

*"By the end of the war,
more than three
thousand ships had
been painted with
these mesmerizing
designs."*



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Dazzle Ships Dazzles!

Review by Andrea Karlin

This beautifully illustrated nonfiction picture book exemplifies why picture books should have a prominent place in upper elementary, middle, high school, and college classrooms. Barton introduces the reader to a fascinating, yet little known part of World War I history that piques the imagination and informs through the perfect integration of words and Victo Ngai's celebrated illustrations.

Who would imagine that a Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve lieutenant-commander would come up with a most improbable plan that would end up saving countless ships in the British Navy by employing a unique type of camouflage?

Perfectly situated for those interested in history, naval history, World War I, art, English, children's literature, and, perhaps, engineering, this true story is a page turner and an inspiration to think outside the box.

Barton, Chris. Victo Ngai, illustrator. *Dazzle Ships: World War I and the Art of Confusion*. Texas A&M University Press, 2017.

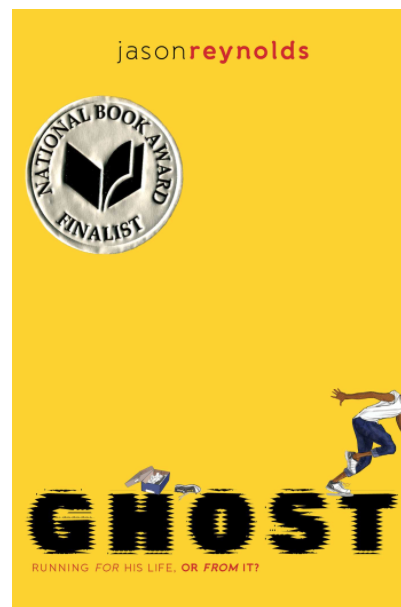
Unnumbered pages. Illustrations. Hardcover.

ISBN 978-1-5124-1014-3



2017 *Texas Bluebonnet Award Winner*

Two weddings (and a funeral) bookend this laugh-out-loud humorous middle grade novel told from the perspective of the slightly clueless 6th grade Archer. Archer is surrounded by a loving family, complete with his grandfather and his



National Book Award Finalist

Castle Cranshaw's self-imposed nickname *Ghost* comes from the moment he keeps running from – the moment his dad turned a gun on him and his mother. When they ran to the corner store for protection, the friendly owner looked like

everything about weddings, including the itchy clothes he has to wear. But something good comes of the event, as he befriends the inimitable Lynette, and Archer recounts their adventures and misadventures in school and life, including when Lynette's mom substitute teaches in his classroom and when the student teacher for his class, also a National Guardsman, lands on campus in a helicopter!

Hijinks ensue: Archer's school is inundated with reporters, and Uncle Paul (who happens to be gay - not that Archer has any idea) has to save the day. Archer also doesn't know that Mr. McLeod is gay until he comes out in front of the school when he discovers a boy has been bullied and harassed. Suddenly it makes sense that Archer has seen so much of Mr. McLeod outside school, and wedding bells may just appear again.

Fun, touching, and, at times, hilarious, *The Best Man* is a fantastic story of growing up, perfect for middle grade readers.

Peck, Richard. *The Best Man*. Dial Books, 2016. 240 pp. Hardcover
ISBN 978-0803738393

not a sport, he thinks. Basketball is. Yet when Ghost challenges a city track team kid and wins, everything is different. His new coach - a former Olympic medalist - and teammates have high expectations, and Ghost, whose mom works every hour she can and takes classes to become a nurse, isn't used to the attention.

He's still the kid embarrassed by wearing cheap, off-brand shoes when his teammates have expensive track shoes. He's still the angry kid who can't let go of the snide remarks of other students at school who make fun of him. But Coach makes it clear that Ghost needs to shape up to run, and slowly Ghost begins to change until all he wants is to be part of a team - a winning team.

A National Book Award Finalist from beloved author Jason Reynolds, *Ghost* is gripping and authentic without ever feeling pat. The first in a series titled "Track," this book is highly recommended for middle grade readers and above.

Reynolds, Jason. *Ghost*. Caitlyn Dlouhy Books, 2016. 192 pp. Hardcover.
ISBN 978-1481450157

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Learning About Texas Culture: The State Dish of Texas
By Cristina Rios

From its beginnings in the 1800s to the common use throughout Texas today, there have been and still are, strong opinions on what ingredients and preparation are needed to make an outstanding bowl of chili. Chili was recognized in a 1977 resolution of the Texas Legislature as the "State Dish of Texas," and *Texas Is Chili Country* is an interesting history of the "art" of chili.

The book contains more than 25 recipes, including various meat and even vegetarian-style chili options. Some of the historic figures who have popularized

chili over the years are named, and Alter includes notes from some of the cook-offs or conferences which are still held to determine and award the best chili, though the pride of winning seems as important as any accolade.

expectation of true experts. The author shares variations on the standard that can be prepared to suit almost any taste, though experts may disagree or even consider these alterations to change the dish beyond recognition.

Interestingly, the book also contains a section on Texas beer (the typical pairing for chili) and breweries, along with a brief history of breweries before the Texas Revolution.

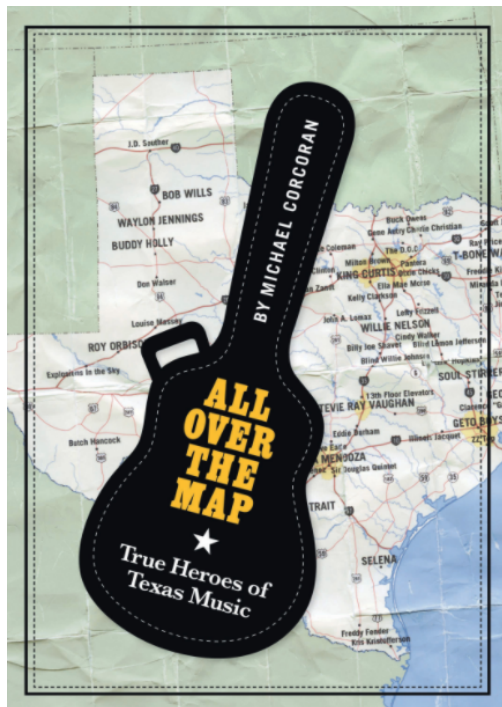
This book would be of interest not only to native Texans but also to anyone who would like to develop a taste for "a bowl of red."

Alter, Judy. *Texas Is Chili Country: A Brief History with Recipes*. Texas Tech University Press, 2015.

128 pp. Bibliography. Index. Photographs. Paperback.

ISBN 978-0-896-72946-9

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Music Across Texas County Lines

Review by Sarah Ridley

Only in a book on Texas musicians could DJ Screw rub shoulders with the elegant country songstress Cindy Walker while the Austin enfants terrible Butthole Surfers jostle the stately Tejano icon Lydia Mendoza. All Over the Map: True Heroes of Texas Music is an apt title for the second edition of Michael Corcoran's book that crosses genres, decades, cultures, and county lines. Throughout the book, Corcoran encourages Texans' (already cocksure) regional pride in local talent and gives hidden-in-plain-sight heroes, like Gulf Coast musicians and Texas music scene movers and shakers, the write-up they deserve.

All Over the Map is a book Texans will want to display and not just because it features homegrown heroes. Each chapter includes several, often full page, black and white photographs of the titular musician or band thanks to Scott Newton, the contributing photographer. The pictures reveal Texas musicians as the patchwork family that they are. Sly Stone, whose chapter didn't make it into the second edition, leans towards the camera, a leather vest open across his bare chest, while on another page, Lydia Mendoza in a gorgeous silken dress evokes the Virgin Mary. Stage lights glint off of Steve Jordan's eye patch, and melancholy Townes Van Zandt stares into a sad future with shadowy eyes. A cowboy hat tips over someone's forehead on almost every other page. In a surprising turn, Corcoran takes the focus off of the stars and superstars, and turns the camera around.

The true surprise in the book is not that Texas is the home of so many musicians in such a variety of genres: the book's best surprise is that the true heroes of Texas music are not just musicians. Corcoran brings the behind-the-scenes heroes into the spotlight alongside the musicians. Producer Tom Wilson, responsible for hits by Bob Dylan and Simon Garfunkel, gets his own chapter under the Waco Area section. All the photographers, label managers, club owners, writers, and music festival directors who worked countless hours

to regions and large cities in Texas; the chapters, which comprise these sections, focus on the performers from those towns and cities. In this edition, Houston musicians and East Texas musicians receive their own sections, and Barbara Lynn represents Beaumont in style in the East Texas section. Eschewing a lengthy bibliography and a flurry of footnotes, Corcoran hits the high notes of the musician or band's biography in each chapter while also highlighting the musical feats and accomplishments that make a musician a pioneer in his or her genre. Often pulling from interviews, Corcoran puts the musician's own words front-and-center and teases out the details die-hard fans want to read. For example, Lynn's fans won't want to miss Lynn's stories about her first electric guitar and her inspiration for her Top 40 hit song. Along with the stories behind the music makers, each chapter includes photographs, the staple of every fan club and merch table.

Heroes section.

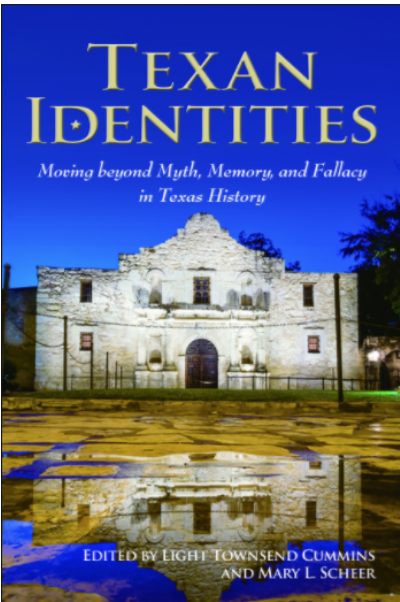
While a cowboy hat is optional, *All Over the Map* is best enjoyed while listening to a soundtrack. In the back of the book, Corcoran provides a playlist of thirty-four of the greatest recordings by Texans or about Texas. This mixtape menagerie includes Pantera, Destiny's Child, Toadies, Blind Willie Johnson, and Jeannie C. Riley to name a few. Through this playlist and throughout the book, Corcoran combines two things that unite Texans and non-Texans of all ages, colors, and tastes: a passion for music and love of the Lone Star State.

Corcoran, Michael. *All Over The Map: True Heroes of Texas Music*. 2nd ed., University of North Texas Press, 2017. 340 pp. Photographs. Hardcover. ISBN: 978-1-57441-668-8

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Historians Search for the Meaning of Texan Identity
Review by Cristina Rios

This collaborative compendium of essays written by academic historians explores the meaning of being a Texan. The seven essays included in the volume are

An additional slice of the multicultural reality of the Texas identity is reflected in an essay about the experiences and social activities of German-Jewish immigrants who settled in Texas in the nineteenth century. Contrary to accepted myths, these immigrants found Texas a very hospitable place to live. They were able to keep their cultural heritage, participate in social clubs, and interact with the larger German and non-German community. German private academies were founded in several cities and the curriculum supported the maintenance of the German language and culture.

Readers may find especially interesting the essays dealing with civil rights and identity, which address matters not often present in the collective memory. Mary L. Scheer, chair of the history department at Lamar University, analyzes the legal provisions of the Texas Constitution of 1836 regarding the rights of women. Her research indicates that the gender-

portray multiple facets of the Texan identity. Myths, memories, and fallacies in the historical topics analyzed are the main threads that unify the volume.

The first essay discusses myths and misconceptions ingrained in the popular memories about the Alamo and how the collective memory has influence the Texan identity. The many myths surrounding the historiography of the Texas Rangers are explored in another essay in which the author deliberates how the popular media has interwoven fact with fiction. The inclusion of a photograph of actor Tom Mix with a group of Texas Rangers exemplifies how radio and film have had an effect on the collective memory.

Unknown facets of individuals are revealed in two interesting essays - one focused on the role of a San Antonio woman as an art patron and another about the contributions of a Texas rancher to the development of Corpus Christi.

with certain political rights and privileges. The final essay is about civil rights of Mexican Americans and segregation in education. The Delgado v. Bastrom (1948) case demonstrates the Mexican-American efforts for school desegregation and the participation of these Texans in the civil rights struggles.

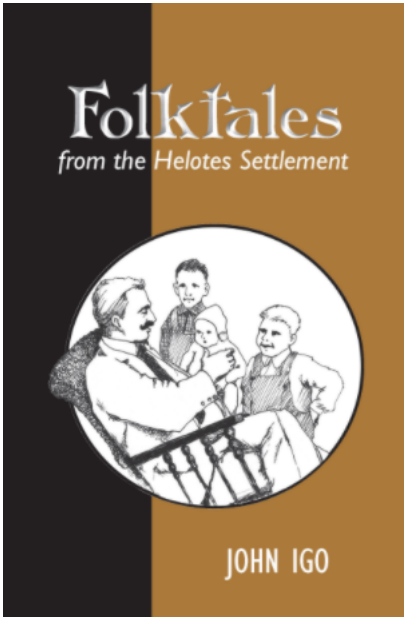
This volume is an excellent resource for courses dealing with cultural identity, school law, or Texas history; highly recommended for university libraries.

Cummins, Light Townsend, and Mary L. Scheer.
Téxan Identities: Moving Beyond Myth, Memory, and Fallacy in Téxas History. University of North Texas Press, 2016.
320 pp. Foreword. Selected Bibliography. Notes. Index. Contributors. Hardcover.
ISBN 978-1574416480

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Preserving a Culture's Stories
Review by Riley Almufti

Shortly after the Texas Revolution in the late 1830s, the modest town of Helotes kept itself afloat as a small farming and ranching community populated mainly by Spanish, German, and South American immigrants. Helotes' history is characterized by extensive conflict

Locals today still struggle with keeping the culture of their hometown alive after being incorporated into urban San Antonio.

John Igo, 50-year member of the Texas Folklore Society, has succeeded in immortalizing facets of Helotes' culture in his work, *Folktales from the Helotes Settlement*. This work is a collection of Igo's personal memories of legends and superstitions that circulated orally through the settlement many years prior to Helotes' incorporation with San Antonio. Igo describes each tale with vibrant imagery and the perfect balance of detail and conciseness, making this collection an invigorating read.

Supplemented by rich illustrations, each individual tale integrates with the next to capture the culture of an age-old community. The tales reveal a blend of Helotes' rich past as well as present, illustrating a panorama of the town's customs and culture. This collection serves as an excellent work to be read for

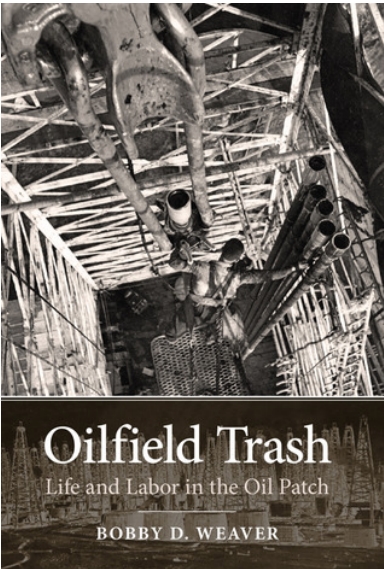
relocated or integrated with society. This created an unusually intriguing mesh of culture that Helotes still reflects today. In the 1970s, the urban sprawl of San Antonio spread to Helotes' outskirts, threatening to swallow the small rural community.

After a decade of negotiation, Helotes became an incorporated city, but only after much resistance from the town's residents.

the culture of Helotes before it is lost completely to urbanization.

Igo, John. *Folktales from the Helotes Settlement*.
University of North Texas Press, 2014.
Illustrations. Hardcover.
ISBN 978-1-57447-589-6

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Boom Times in the Texas Oilfields
Review by Jon P. Tritsch

Many people who have studied the oil booms of Texas are probably familiar with the cast of characters involved with them. Names like Pattillo Higgins and Texaco have certainly made their marks of fame on Texas oil patch histories. They had the capital, the expertise and the drive to accomplish the exploration and drilling for crude, and the subsequent transporting and refining into petroleum products. Little has been written about the nameless men in the field who performed the often dangerous tasks necessary for the drilling and extracting the crude oil from the earth. This book rectifies that, as the author actually worked in the oilfields himself.

Author Bobby Weaver's more than 20 years of experience in the oilfields and petrochemical industries makes him well qualified to tell the story of the Texas

The next two chapters stay focused on the Gulf Coast activities but also describe the lives and work of the oil field drillers, teamsters, rig builders, shooters, roustabouts, and casing crews. By the end of these chapters, the reader will certainly become more familiar with these activities and gain a better understanding of the differences between the traditional drilling for oil with cable versus the newer technology of rotary drilling. Each of the next four chapters covers these same topics in the other mentioned major oil boom areas of Texas: North Central Texas 1910-1922, Panhandle 1919-1930, East Texas 1930-1935, and Permian Basin 1923-1960. In addition, the author relates how these boom strikes affected these areas and the problems and solutions that accompanied them. In the remaining chapters, Weaver describes how technology, the Great Depression, the Second World War and improvements in the drilling and transporting of both oil and workers caused oil patch activities to change over the years. The book's final chapter features a glossary of words and phrases associated with the petroleum industry.

For those unfamiliar with the oil industry, this is an accessible book. Weaver does an exemplary job in giving a short paragraph summary at the conclusion of each chapter. There are numerous pictures throughout the book and copious notes for each chapter as well. An extensive bibliography shows the research Weaver put into this work. A minor geographical correction should be noted on page 53 concerning the location

of his book is made up of about 350 oral history interviews he collected from various oral history collections from across the state. Weaver’s introduction also provides an extremely useful map featuring the major oil boom areas of Texas discussed in each chapter. Chapter one features the initial Lucas oil gusher at Spindletop, preceded by a brief mention of the almost forgotten smaller 1894 oil strike near Corsicana, which launched the state’s first oil boom along the Gulf Coast from 1901-1910.

County.

Oilfield Trash: Life And Labor In The Oil Patch, no. 22 in the Kenneth E. Montague series in oil and business history, merits a strong recommendation for public and college libraries and for collections in Texas history and the petroleum industry.

Weaver, Bobby D. *Oilfield Trash: Life and Labor in the Oil Patch*. Texas A&M University Press, 2010. 226 pp. Illustrations. Bibliography. Index. ISBN 978-1-60344-205-3

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The Lives of Migrant Farmworkers: A Classic Work of Chicano Literature
Review by Cristina Ríos

This is a reprint of a famous work of Chicano literature by Tomás Rivera. The author won the “Quinto Sol” literary prize in 1970 for the manuscript that became this short fictional novel. Originally written in Spanish and translated into English by Evangelina Vigil-Piñon, the book has been adapted into a film, which also has received several awards. This edition is bi-lingual. The English translation is accurate and praiseworthy; however, upon reading the novel again, many years after I had first encountered it, I found the Spanish original version more touching than the translated version in English. The colloquial Chicano Spanish gives authenticity to the voices of the characters.



A Brief Narrative History of the Lone Star State
Review by Jon P. Tritsch

For anyone looking for a good general history book about the Lone Star State that isn't too lengthy but covers enough historical highlights and background, David G. McComb's revision of his successful 1989 edition of *Texas, A Modern History*, complete with an additional chapter and appendices, is one to consider.

Like the earlier edition, McComb begins the initial chapter with a description of the topography, flora, and fauna of Texas. Subsequent chapters cover the state's history through the years starting with the familiar topics of the early Spanish explorers, the war for independence from Mexico, the Republic of Texas, annexation into the Union, Civil War, post-

field of Chicano literature and especially valuable for the understanding of the uniqueness of the Chicano identity. There is an extensive body of scholarly work written about this short work.

Throughout the years, Rivera's novel has been analyzed from the perspectives of different disciplines; the range of themes found in the story have permitted the work to be studied not only from the literary point of view, but from historical, sociological, psychological, political, and philosophical angles.

The daily lives of migrant farmworkers are portrayed with realism and make evident the personal knowledge that the author had of the experiences of Chicano farmworkers. Rivera was born in south Texas to a family who followed the seasonal crops from Texas all the way to the northern states of the country. The many struggles and hardships experienced by the migrant community are seen through the reflections of a boy, questioning the fate of his family and the social structures such as school, church, and government that keep them in poverty, despite their hard work ethics.

Highly recommended for university libraries; essential reading for anyone interested in Chicano or Mexican-American literature.


Rivera, Tomás. *...y no se lo Tragó la Tierra / ...And the Earth Did Not Devour Him*. Bilingual Edition. Arte Público Press, 2015.
146 pp. \$18.95 paperback.
ISBN-13: 978-1-55885-815-2.


One chapter is devoted to explaining the Texas mystique in myth and reality. The newly added chapter, "God Bless Texas," discusses the political changes in Texas to the present time, along with the economic diversification that has occurred in the state's major cities. The author provides an "Afterword" where he suggests numerous other Texas history books one can consult. The new appendices give a chronological list of the state's 254 counties beginning with Jackson County's creation in 1835 and ending with Kenedy County in 1921. An excellent bibliography of references for each of the seven chapters completes this general history of Texas. Numerous pictures throughout add to the book's usefulness for the reader as well.

McComb has covered so many topics in this 237-page book that it is not possible to mention all of them. Be assured that this book would be an appropriate addition for any library, including high school. Individuals will want to have this book for their personal collections as well.

McComb, David G. *Texas, A Modern History*. Revised edition., University of Texas Press, 2010.
237 pp. Bibliography. Illustrations. Maps. Index. Maps. Cloth.
ISBN 978-0-292-723166-0

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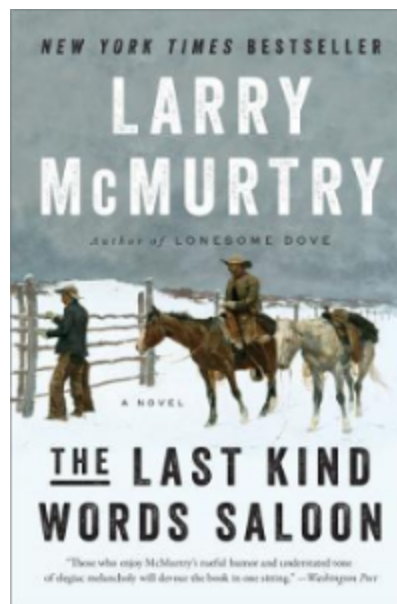


BACKLIST

{fantastic books you may have missed}



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Where Seldom is Heard

Review by Lloyd Daigrepont

Just under two hundred pages in length (a rather brief effort for Larry McMurtry), *The Last Kind Words Saloon* may be the author's most expansive novel. Focusing on and even blending the stories of Wyatt Earp and Charles Goodnight, the novel presents a challenging matrix of allusion to Western history and legend. The narrative imaginatively traces the Earp brothers' gradual movement out of Kansas and through Texas toward Arizona and recounts Charles Goodnight's determined struggle to found a cattle empire, the fictional west Texas town of Long Grass serving as a venue of their crossing paths. While McMurtry's prose is taut and his use of dialogue terse, cameo appearances of legendary figures are numerous. Buffalo Bill Cody tries to sign up Wyatt and Doc Holliday as gunfighters for his Wild West Show. With Goodnight is Boze Ikard, perhaps the most well known black cowboy ever and the original for McMurtry's own Josh Deets in *Lonesome Dove*. Quanah Parker, the last great Comache chieftain also makes an appearance, curious to see the "castle" that Goodnight is building. Kiowa warriors Satank and Satanta lead a massacre of army muleteers – the Warren Wagon Train Affair – for which they are hunted down by William Tecumseh Sherman. Famed Irish journalist William Howard Russel of The London Times arrives in Long Grass hoping to scoop the story of Goodnight's partnership with a British Lord (vaguely suggestive of his historical partnership with the Ulster Scot millionaire and businessman John George Adair).

racing the train" (152) as they blow him kisses in return. Johnny Ringo, the poetry-quoting gunslinger and associate of the Clantons (whom Wyatt Earp is widely believed to have murdered during his infamous Vendetta Ride), is discovered flirting with Wyatt's wife.

Even more numerous are the legendary names mentioned in passing: Bat Masterson, Billy the Kid, Kit Carson, Harry Tammen (the Denver financier who rendered Buffalo Bill's defunct), General George Armstrong Custer, John Wesley Hardin, Annie Oakley, showman Texas Jack Omohundro (a friend of Bill Cody's), a trapper named Caddo Jake (various possible references), stockmen Abel "Shanghai" Pierce and Dan Wagoner, Civil War hero and noted Indian-fighter Colonel Ranald S. McKenzie, Comanche medicine man Isatai (blamed for defeat at the second Battle of Adobe Walls), Curly Bill Brocius (another gunslinger and a rustler in the employ of the Clantons, also later killed by Wyatt Earp), and Michael O'Rourke, aka "Johnny-Behind-the-Deuce" (A professional gambler reputedly saved by Wyatt Earp from a lynch mob in Tombstone). Then there is brief mention of Doc Holliday's consort Mary Katherine Haroney or "Big-Nose" Kate, referred to anachronistically as Katie Elder. And perhaps most poignant is the description devoted to Cynthia Ann Parker, the nine-year-old white girl captured by Comanche and Kiowa warriors in 1836 to become the mother of Quanah - recaptured in 1860 by a contingency of United States cavalry and Texas Rangers that included Charles Goodnight and dying without ever accepting her return to white civilization.

Most of McMurtry's minor characters are historical as well - the Earp brothers, Morgan, Virgil, and Warren - Newman Haynes "Old Man" Clanton (killed in the so-called Guadalupe Canyon Massacre, which may have been engineered by Wyatt as McMurtry strongly suggests), his sons Ike and Billy, and young ranchers Frank and Tom McLaury, who along with Billy were shot down and killed in the infamous Gunfight at the OK Corral. Briefly appearing as mistress of Lord Enderle is the beautiful San Saba (based upon San Antonio madam Fannie Porter). The strong and benevolent Mary Goodnight appears at significant intervals, evidently in love with her ambitious and hard-nosed husband yet perpetually frustrated in her desires for intimacy, justice, preservation, and the amenities of civilized existence. Similarly vying with Wyatt is "Jesse," a composite of Earp's three wives - Urilla Sutherland, Mattie Blaylock, and especially Josephine Sarah Marcus, who remained with Wyatt until the end of his life, just as Jesse is seen by reporter Nellie Courtwright (a fictional creation from McMurtry's own Telegraph Days).

The Last Kind Words Saloon is a brief novel but not one that can easily be put away. Readers will find much to wonder about, question, discuss, and even research. The many allusions may comprise McMurtry's point - that the legendary West was about completed by the time Charles Goodnight and Wyatt Earp entered the setting, signaling a new era in which businessmen and law enforcement would supersede the forces that had nearly eradicated the buffalo and placed most of the Indians on Reservations. Even the horrific torture and killing of muleteers by Kiowa warriors is seen as an act of desperation, "the best revenge for what the whites had taken from them" (22). Wyatt's penchant for sudden and ruthless violence is abetted by the law and subsidized by Wells Fargo. In the final segment of the novel, when Nellie Courtwright visits Wyatt and Jesse/Josephine in their "dilapidated little bungalow" in San Pedro, California, she finds that the former gunfighter is "now a rheumy-eyed old man who spent his days spitting tobacco into a coffee can" (195). Like Warren Earp's saloon sign - which Nellie Courtwright rescues from a junk heap in Wyatt's yard - *The Last Kind Words Saloon* invokes melancholy remembrance.

McMurtry, Larry. *The Last Kind Words Saloon*. Liveright Publishing Corp., 2014.
199 pp. Photographs. Hardcover
ISBN 978-0-87140-786-3

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Aviation History with a Twist: All Eyes on Texas Pilots and Planes

Review by Sara Hillin

Barbara Ganson's *Texas Takes Wing: A Century of Flight in the Lone Star State* is a fascinating read and a welcome addition to other recent texts that are adding to our body of knowledge on the history of aviation. The work is thorough and clearly the effort of years of research that has taken the author from resources such as the Woman's Collection at Texas Woman's University to special collections like the "History of Aviation Collection" at the University of Texas at Dallas. Along with snapshots of the careers of more well known Texas pilots such as the infamous Howard Hughes and the resourceful and brave African American pilot Bessie Coleman, who enlisted editor Robert Abbot's help in financing her flight instruction in France, Ganson also introduces us to lesser known figures such as Bonnie Caputo, the first woman to fly for American Airlines, and Ormer Locklear, who "initiated a nationwide craze for wing walking and daredevilry" (45).

game changer for discourse on aviation history. Not only does Ganson offer a discussion of the WASPs (Women Airforce Service Pilots), which many readers will have some familiarity with, but she also goes back in time to recover the contributions of some of the much earlier women aviators such as Edna Gardner Whyte and Frances Harrell Marsalis, both air racers of the 1930s.

Ganson's text is written in a series of engaging and well researched vignettes that blends general aviation history with the specifics of various pilots' pioneering contributions to the field. The timeline takes readers from 1910, when L.F. "Creary" Smith and Leslie L. "Shorty" Walker, created and flew the first Texas-based aircraft, to 2012, the year in which the first flight of the Boeing 787 Dreamliner took place at George Bush Intercontinental airport.

The two appendices offer a general timeline of aviation events as well as a list of Tuskegee Airmen from the Lone Star State who, between 1942 and 1946, earned their military wings. The many images included of both pilots and their aircraft offer readers an engaging supplement to a century's worth of events packed into the text. *Texas Takes Wing* should be of great interest to history buffs and aviation enthusiasts alike, not to mention those who seek a more thorough discussion of women's prominent achievements in this area.

Ganson, Barbara. *Texas Takes Wing: A Century of Flight in the Lone Star State*. University of Texas Press, 2014. 294 pp. Photographs. Hardcover. ISBN: 978-0-292-75408-9

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Should Texas Be Considered a Southern or Western State?

Review by Jon P. Tritesch

The question of whether the Lone Star State should be described as a Southern or Western state has probably been discussed several times in essays, articles and books. But Glen Sample Ely approaches the question from a different angle. He argues that Texas was originally linked closer to the old Confederacy as was emphasized by historians for decades after the Civil War. These historical versions were sanitized by focusing on the more romantic versions of the Old South (“The Lost Cause” theme being a prime example). In later years when less savory topics like the widespread Reconstruction lawlessness and the oppression of African Americans began to be recorded, the state’s identity shifted more toward its western frontier as if to mask the embarrassment of its Confederate past. Even here, the Texas identity of cowboys and cattle became likewise sanitized with the less desirable problems of the region not being emphasized. With this theme in mind, Ely takes a closer look at West Texas and its relationship and differences with the rest of the state.

Throughout the five chapters in this book, Ely shows that this part of the state was definitely not in sync with their counterparts east of the 100th meridian. This geographical boundary marked the many differences between East and West Texas. For one thing, the inhabitants, mostly Tejanos and Germans, had little in common with the populations of the rest of the state and never did accept secession from the Union. In addition, there were numerous instances of desertions of these people from the army and unapologetic business dealings (mostly selling cattle) with Union forces in New Mexico. Unlike federal forces, the state’s military never could defend the western frontier from marauding Indians and renegades, which did not endear it to the settlers already unhappy with the state government. There is a chapter that highlights the problems of race relations between Anglos and Tejanos in the region: a truth that counters the western cowboy identity of Texas.

In another chapter, the author discusses the environmental realities prevalent in West Texas. East Texas usually has sufficient rainfall for dry-land farming. The West must depend on irrigation for growing crops since the area west of the 100th meridian averages less than 20 inches of precipitation in a year. High salinity values in the Pecos River basin and in some aquifers make farming even more difficult. Contrary to what is portrayed, this part of Texas is not necessarily the paradise of lush grasslands and bounty for agricultural interests.

Finally, Ely does a fine summary of the topics covered in the book’s last chapter. So, is Texas a southern or a western state? The answer is both. Texas has its southern leanings westward to the 98th meridian. Between the 98th and 100th meridian is

and a southwestern culture in the Trans-Pecos region to El Paso. Texas indeed has multiple identities and cultures.

This book, part of the Texas Tech University Press "Plains histories" series, has numerous chapter notes and a fine bibliography of print and online sources. *Where The West Begins* would be an excellent acquisition for college libraries and for Texas history professors looking for topics for class assignments.

Ely, Glen Sample. *Where the West Begins: Debating Texas Identity*. Texas Tech University Press, 2011.

201 pp. Illustrations. Maps. Bibliography. Index.

ISBN 978-0-89672-724-3

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Southeast Texan Elementary School Librarian Rebuilds Collection

After over a decade teaching 5th graders, Sommer Reynolds (Lamar University alumna), newly hired and completing a Master's in Library Science, was working to update the library at Mauriceville Elementary before the start of school. Creating eye-catching book displays and preparing a cozy area for story time, Reynolds was ready to get started.

"Hurricane Harvey had other plans for us, though. The flood waters devastated our community. Not only did many students lose their homes, but their school, a place where they can escape life's troubles, was also flooded. For days, the school held contaminated water," said Reynolds.

In the weeks that followed, Reynolds knew the damage would be bad, but what she didn't expect was the extent of the damage. "As a lover of books, it was so sad to see almost all of my books destroyed from water and mold," she said.



Photo by Sommer Reynolds

Rather than sitting back and bemoaning the situation, however, she began writing grants and started a social media campaign to spread the word about opportunities for giving. Her classmates and professors in her online degree program offered encouragement, and months later, Mauriceville Elementary has been the recipient of several grants. Thousands of dollars in donations have come from individuals as well as Bound to Stay Bound Books, which will donate four books for every one purchased for Mauriceville Elementary.

When students were able to start back to school, Reynolds became a traveling librarian, roaming from classroom to classroom to share her store of books with students. Now in a more permanent location, Reynolds says, "Yes, we have cement floors, plastic walls, no bookshelves, and lost almost our entire collection, but that doesn't mean we can't

It's so humbling the number of people that have gone out of their way to take care of us, and we truly appreciate their kindness and generosity. I hope to one day repay that kindness and pay it forward."



Photo by Sommer Reynolds

Cataloging all the books and preparing a new system for student checkouts sounds daunting, but Reynolds isn't swayed: "I'm ready to start rebuilding. This experience has been challenging, but it's a blank slate, and I look forward to rebuilding the Mauriceville Elementary Library one book at a time."

You can donate to the Mauriceville Elementary Library [here](#). If you're interested in helping other libraries in the region recover from storm damage, [American Libraries](#) offers [a variety of links](#) to organizations giving aid. The [Laura Bush Foundation for America's Libraries](#) is also accepting donations.

Reviewers

Lloyd M. Daigrepoint teaches in the Department of English & Modern Languages at Lamar University. He teaches courses in American literature, and he serves as Co-Editor of *Lamar Journal of the Humanities*. He has published articles in journals such as *Early American Literature*, *American Literary Realism*, and *Southern Studies*.

Andrea Karlin earned a Ph.D. in curriculum and reading instruction at the University of New Mexico and is associate professor of education specializing in children's literature at Lamar University.

After she earned her Bachelor's in English from

Jon P. Tritsch is Associate Professor and Coordinator of Cataloging in the Mary & John Gray Library at Lamar University. He holds an M.L.S. from Emporia State University and an M.A. in history from Sam Houston State University.

Jennifer Ravey is the Writing Center Director at Lamar University. She teaches in the Department of English & Modern Languages and serves as Managing Editor of the *Review of Texas Books*. She is also an avid reader and has reviewed books for a number of online publications.

Sara Hillin is an Associate Professor of English at

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Master's in English with a thesis on Early Native American and British Literature. She is currently the Coordinator of Tutoring and Supplement Instruction at Lamar University.

Riley Almufti is an undergraduate student at Lamar University, studying psychology. Riley also works in the Lamar University Writing Center as a consultant.

Cristina Ríos is Associate Professor of Education at Lamar University. She is the author of several books and numerous articles.

composition theory.

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