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William C. Dear has worked all over the world as a private investigator. He began his career as a police officer in Miami, Florida, and opened his own investigation agency in 1961. As a certified instructor in the field of homicide, Dear is a renowned speaker at conventions and professional workshops. Dear is the author of *The Dungeon Master*, about the disappearance of James Dallas Egbert III. He lives on his ranch in Mt. Calm, Texas.

Editors' Choice: *O.J. Is Innocent and I Can Prove It: The Shocking Truth about the Murders of Nicole Brown Simpson and Ron Goldman*

William C. Dear

Jason Did It

Review by Lloyd M. Daigrepoint

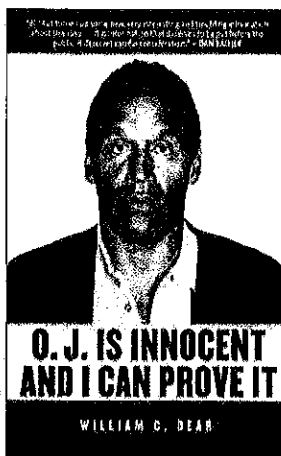
Despite its sensational and evidently popular appeal this volume deserves to be taken seriously. To those who are willing to admit to uneasiness concerning the LAPD's handling of the entire matter and the less-than-satisfactory case made by prosecutors, William C. Dear's *O.J. Is Innocent* provides a satisfying and highly plausible resolution. If O.J. committed the crimes, we wonder, why was so little blood found in his Ford Bronco? How was he able to conceal the weapon, the dark clothing, and the Bruno Magli shoes that left prints all over the crime scene yet carelessly discard the assailant's bloody glove in his own back yard? And what about those blood-stained socks—which appear nowhere in videos taken of O. J. 's bedroom (where they were supposedly found) and which famed forensic pathologist Dr. Henry Lee determined bore evidence of tampering? And wasn't there something "stagy"—on both sides—about the slow-speed car chase? And weren't Marsha Clarke and Christopher Darden a bit too much like Perry Mason prosecutors—destined to lose in their clownish and mean-spirited determination to defeat the Dream-Team, itself a camp creation worthy of *Batman*? "If it does not fit, you must acquit!"

Even to those who remain convinced of O. J. 's guilt or who are indifferent to a "celebrity case" now years in the past, Dear's study points to a major flaw in American justice—the need on the part of police departments and prosecutors to maintain prestige and reputation by quickly identifying and punishing perpetrators of crimes. "From the very outset, long before any physical evidence was analyzed, the LAPD and district attorney's office had jumped to the conclusion that O. J. must have committed the murders" (xxi). In its eager assumption of O.J.'s guilt, the LAPD closed itself to the full range of suspects and even overlooked one very obvious suspect despite his unwillingness to cooperate with police interviewers and despite the very provocative fact that Carl Jones, "a real top-gun criminal-defense attorney . . . specializing in death-penalty cases" (76) was hired for him by his father on the day after the murders.

William C. Dear, a homicide investigator from Dallas, has won national acclaim for his participation in cases such as the Lee Harvey Oswald exhumation and the murder of Dean Milo in Akron, Ohio. Uneasy over the media spectacle of the freeway chase of O. J.'s Ford Bronco by dozens of police vehicles—suspicious of manipulation on the part of both Simpson and the police, Dear began his own investigation only two weeks later. Amazed at the inconsistencies and deficiencies in the supposed "mountain of evidence" to be brought against Simpson, he noticed that "From the moment O. J. made headline news there was a distinct lack of critical thinking . . . The right questions were not being asked because everyone assumed he was guilty. It was merely a question of tunnel vision—finding proof for what they believed to be true and ignoring the rest" (10). One such oversight was the fact that, while police questioned and investigated Arnel Simpson (O. J.'s daughter by his first marriage), they overlooked her brother Jason entirely—the reason, a supposedly airtight alibi provided by his employer Alan Ladd Jackson: on the night of June 12, 1994, Jason Simpson, a professional chef, "was cooking in front of several hundred paying customers" (76).

Adhering to the good detective's motto—"Never assume; always verify"—Dear visited the establishment and quickly determined that it accommodated fewer than one hundred patrons, that business was slow on the evening in question, and that even though a time clock was in use Jason gave handwritten notice of his time of departure. With the possibility of Jason's culpability so easily established, Dear began to look into the history and character of Jason Simpson. He discovered a young man who from youth was given to bouts of depression and rage, sometimes described as having a Jekyll and Hyde complex, having assaulted former employers and girlfriends. Guilt and depression may have stemmed from the swimming pool drowning of his younger sister Aaren (for which he was blamed by his father); he was a "frequent visitor to Cedars-Sinai Hospital where he was

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given Depakote, a drug prescribed for seizures and "manic episodes" (111). Paying the delinquent fee on Simpson's storage locker, Dear discovered, among other things, a photograph of Jason (seated with his dog) wearing a dark stocking cap like the one discovered at the murder scene (which DNA tests determined held strands of hair belonging to an African-American male—not O. J.—and to a dog). He also found a double-bladed survival knife similar to a Gerber Mark I, a "cut and stab" weapon which experts determined could have made the wounds found on the victims. Through simple questioning, Dear also found that Jason was obsessed with Nicole and that she suspected that Jason had been stalking her. Of even greater significance, Nicole had promised to take the family to Jackson's Restaurant in the evening following daughter Sydney's dance recital, where Jason would proudly display his skills as chef and family leader. She changed her mind, however, and brought the family to *Mezzaluna Trattoria*, a somewhat less expensive restaurant (and Ron Goldman's place of employment). There is no evidence that Nicole informed Jason of the change. Feeling angry and betrayed, Dear assumes, Jason may have left work early on a slow night and headed to Brentwood to confront his willful and provocative stepmother.

Much of the interest of *O. J. Is Innocent* is in its telling, for the author focuses on his own story—his investigation, the numerous obstacles to be overcome, and the moments of fortuitous discovery. The title is misleading although the volume does review the many faults in the case made against O. J. by the LAPD and the DA's Office; for the true purpose is to establish the possibility and probability of Jason Simpson's culpability. To this end, Dear's story is one of painstaking examination of evidence over many years, evidence that dovetails toward one conclusion in a way that so many of the other theories—*O.J. did it, drug dealers, a serial killer, a hit man*—do not. Readers will find Dear's story absorbing—if not absolutely convincing.

DEAR, WILLIAM C. *O.J. IS INNOCENT AND I CAN PROVE IT: THE SHOCKING TRUTH ABOUT THE MURDERS OF NICOLE BROWN SIMPSON AND RON GOLDMAN*. SKYHORSE PUBLISHING: NEW YORK, 2012. 524 PP. PHOTOGRAPHS. \$27.95 CLOTH. ISBN 13: 978-1-61608-620-6.



Grace and Gumption: The Cookbook Katie Sherrod, Ed.

Absolutely Delicious
Review by Sara Hillin

Sherrod's text is a delightful blend of stories, excellent recipes, and a regional feminist historiography of the Fort Worth, Texas area. Each chapter in the text deals with a different aspect of cooking that delves into the social and political lives of some of the most influential women (and groups of women) in North Texas. As a result, the book blends several genres and illustrates an impressive amount of research on the part of its compilers.

Each chapter takes readers through a part of the state's history, focusing on the culinary contributions (some for more esoteric foodstuffs and some for meals that would be more familiar to readers) of specific women. Along with recipes for rum cake, cream gravy, tuna casserole, corn chowder, and the infamous Jello Fruit Mold, which contemporary cooks may want to try their hand at, there are also recipes for more ambitious meals, such as "chili rubbed smoked antelope salad with crispy tobacco onions," "gefilte fish," and "roasted wild pig and filling mixture." The first chapter, "Cooking on the Frontier," offers a bit of history of mid nineteenth century North Central Texas and gives readers a recipe for squirrel. A later chapter entitled "Let My People Eat" gives us a substantial history of the contributions (social as well as in terms of authentic recipes) of Jewish women in North Texas. "Cooking in the Barrio" details several of the Pulido family's most loved recipes, and "Serving the Children" provides an interesting look at how charitable organizations for children, such as the Texas Children's Home and Aid Society, were benefited by the culinary efforts of some of North Texas's well known philanthropists, such as Edna Gladney. One of the later chapters, "Regal Women in

"After 17 years of personally investigating this case, *O.J. Is Innocent and I Can Prove It* uncovers critical evidence pointing directly to a different suspect in this case, and it's definitely not OJ Simpson, claims renowned private investigator and author, William C. Dear. This book includes shocking photographs and new evidence about the murders of Nicole Brown Simpson and Ron Goldman.

Katie Sherrod is also the author of *Grace and Gumption: Stories of Fort Worth Women*, 2007 and *Women of Passion, A Journey to the Cross*, 2007.

Continued on page four

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Cynthia Weill has worked as an educator and in the field of international development. She has been fascinated with Oaxacan crafts since 1996 when she taught in Mexico through the Fulbright exchange. She is the co-author of the very successful *ABeCedarios: Mexican Folk Art ABCs in Spanish and English*—the book that began her series: *First Conce Mexican Folk Art*. Next came *Opuestos: Mexican Folk Art Opposites in English and Spanish*. *Colores de la vida* is the newest edition in the series.

the Garden of Eden,” discusses the history of a talented cooking family (the Cheney's) of Birdville, Texas, which would later become part of Tarrant County, and gives readers their mouthwatering recipes for pecan pound cake, homemade biscuits, and peach cobbler.

The book will appeal to a wide range of audiences, from those who are simply interested in knowing a bit more about the history of women in North Texas to those who are interested in tried and true recipes for meat dishes, sides, and desserts.

SHERROD, KATIE, ED. *GRACE AND GUMPTION: THE COOKBOOK*. FORT WORTH: TEXAS CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2011. 220 PP. \$16.95 PAPER. ISBN 13: 978-0875654010.

Colores de la vida— Mexican Folk Art Colors in English and Spanish Cynthia Weill

As Colorful as a Rainbow
Review by Andrea Karlin

Colores de la vida—Mexican Folk Art Colors in English and Spanish by Cynthia Weill is a charming, colorful book which features animal folk art by artisans from Oaxaca, Mexico. All of the fourteen colors presented in the book are introduced in English and Spanish and have a photograph of original folk art in the corresponding color.

Regardless of one's age, this book will appeal to those who love color and appreciate the unique presentation of animals in this wonderful art form.

WEILL, CYNTHIA. *COLORES DE LA VIDA—MEXICAN FOLK ART COLORS IN ENGLISH AND SPANISH*. EL PASO: CINCO PUNTOS PRESS, 2011. 32 PP. ILLUSTRATIONS. \$14.95 CLOTH. ISBN 13: 978-1-933693-82-8.



Calvin Littlejohn: Portrait of a Community in Black and White Bob Ray Sanders

**“The only professional black
photographer in Fort Worth”**
Review by Yves Laberge, Ph.D.

This deluxe book is not just a portrait of the visual works made by African American photographer Calvin Littlejohn (1909-1993), it is as well a visual history of the Black community of Fort Worth between the 1940s and the 1990s. The author of this book, Bob Ray Sanders, is a noted journalist and senior columnist at the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*.

In the era of segregation, African Americans “were treated as second-class citizens” (p. 10); but “while most publicly owned venues were closed to them, except on some special occasions, the Black community had its own ‘public’ spaces” (p. 10). Known as the official photographer of the Black community, Calvin Littlejohn had access to all these everyday and exceptional events, and his images are now like rare treasures of an overlooked past in Texas. In 1934, Calvin Littlejohn used to introduce himself as “the only professional black photographer that had been in Fort Worth” (p. 8).

Most images are in B&W and present the bright side of African American life: portraits, school classes, weddings, churches, or anecdotal moments, for instance at the barbershop or at the beauty school (pp. 56-57). We see as well some famous African American artists like Ruth Brown, Charles Brown, T-Bone Walker, and Nat King Cole performing at the Masonic Mosque in the 1950s (pp. 160-163).

This book only gives a small example of the immense collections of photographs preserved by The Dolph Briscoe Center for American History; it is obviously essential for public libraries in Texas.

SANDERS, BOB RAY. *CALVIN LITTLEJOHN: PORTRAIT OF A COMMUNITY IN BLACK AND WHITE*. FORT WORTH: TEXAS CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2009. 216 PP. PHOTOGRAPHS. \$29.95 CLOTH. ISBN 978-0-87565-381-5. 2009002351.

Historic Homes of Jefferson, Texas

Cheryl MacLennan

19th Century Houses Preserved

Review by Yves Laberge

Located near the Big Cypress Bayou, the city of Jefferson is rich with mansions from the 19th century. This panoramic book generously shows what the casual visitor may not have access to easily: the exteriors and interiors of about 100 of these old houses in Eastern Texas. The first part presents houses from the 1850s while the second half depicts houses built between 1870 and 1890.

Author Cheryl MacLennan defines Jefferson in simple terms: "the town has two thousand residents and two traffic lights" (p. 9). However, the houses themselves are often spectacular, and the selected images – mostly recent photographs taken by the author – concentrate on sub-themes such as hallways (pp. 78-79), boudoirs (pp. 82-83). Some manors, churches, hotels, plus the Jefferson Historical Museum are included too. In the last pages, a few vintage landmarks that still exist are shown: an old gas station, a general store (pp. 108-109). Texts are concise and focus not only on the architecture and design but in some cases provide as well a brief portrait of the houses' owners (see pp. 47-49). In sum, *Historic Homes of Jefferson, Texas* provides a touch from the pride and prosperity from 19th Century Texas.

MACLENNAN, CHERYL. *HISTORIC HOMES OF JEFFERSON, TEXAS*. GRETN: PELICAN PUBLISHING COMPANY, 2011. 111 PP. PHOTOGRAPHS, REFERENCES, MAP. \$18.25 CLOTH. ISBN 13: 9781455614844, 011993.

Empire Builder in the Texas Panhandle: William Henry Bush

Paul H. Carlson

The Frying Pan Ranch

Review by Max Loges

Empire Builder in the Texas Panhandle is the story of the unconventional owner of the Frying Pan Ranch, a large spread just west of Amarillo. I use the term unconventional because

Bush was never a citizen of Texas nor did he actively participate in the activities associated with ranching. On the contrary, Bush grew up in the small town of Martinsburg, New York, and as a young man moved to Chicago where he demonstrated courage and initiative in saving his employers' business during the great Chicago fire. This act was the first in a series of events that would lead to his becoming a prominent businessman operating a wholesale enterprise in men's hats and gloves.

Bush first became involved with ranching in Texas when he married Elva Francis Glidden whose father, Joseph Glidden, in partnership with Harry Sanborn, had established the Frying Pan Ranch. Glidden was the inventor of the most popular form of barbed wire in the old West, a variety which is still used today. After the terrible winters and summer droughts of the years 1885-87, Glidden lost interest in ranching and asked his son-in-law to look out for his interests. By 1894 Bush had sold off all the cattle and began leasing the land to interested parties and selling of rights-of-way to railroads building lines to Amarillo.

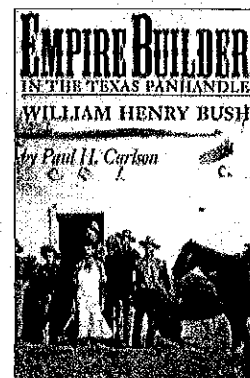
Bush was a genuine Amarillo booster. He was responsible for getting the city its first high-quality hotel, providing land and money for its first hospital, and convincing at least two railroads to extend their lines to the town.

Perhaps as interesting as the history of Bush and the Frying Pan Ranch is the history of Amarillo as it progressed through its various stages of development: first as a terminal for Panhandle herds being sent east, then as a center for the vast wheat production of the area, and finally as a headquarters of the regional gas, oil, and helium fields.

The book is well written and carefully researched. It is one of a growing number of books examining the Panhandle's history. I recommend it.

CARLSON, PAUL H. *EMPIRE BUILDER IN THE TEXAS PANHANDLE: WILLIAM HENRY BUSH*. COLLEGE STATION: TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2009. 204 PP. MAP. 13 B&W PHOTOS, \$18.925 PAPER. ISBN 13: 978.1-60344-1339.

Paul H. Carlson is a professor of history at Texas Tech University in Lubbock. He is the author of six books, including *The Plains Indians* and *The Buffalo Soldier Tragedy of 1877*, both published by Texas A&M University Press.



COL. THOMAS T. SMITH, Garrison Commander, Fort Riley, Kansas, is the author of *The Old Army in Texas*. JERRY D. THOMPSON, Regents Professor at Texas A&M International University in Laredo, is the author of numerous publications, including *Civil War and Revolution on the Rio Grande Frontier*. ROBERT WOOSTER, Joe Frantz Professor of History at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, is the author of many books, including *Frontier Crossroads: Fort Davis and the West*. BEN E. PINGENOT, deceased, was the author of many books, including *Stringo*.



The Reminiscences of Major General Zenas R. Bliss

Eds. Thomas Smith,
Jerry Thompson,
Robert Wooster
Ben Pingenot

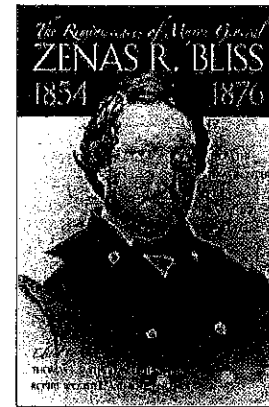
Reminiscences

Review by Max Loges

The Reminiscences of Major General Zenas R. Bliss 1854-1876 is an interesting primary source about the West Texas frontier. Bliss as a young officer comes to Texas directly from West Point and is stationed at several forts such as Duncan, Davis, and Chadbourne recording extended service in the state both before and after the Civil War. An interesting aspect of the work is Bliss's memories of numerous colorful figures in early Texas. There is, however, not much "Indian fighting" information in the book. One draws the general impression that Bliss was an unexceptional officer during his service in Texas rarely confronting hostile savages and expressing great relief that he had missed them when they were near. Most of his memories include general day-to-day activities at forts, interesting fishing and hunting trips he took, and experiences about early horse racing in Texas.

Information of a more interesting and unique nature include Bliss' experiences as a prisoner of the Confederacy in the early days of the war and his significant service as a Colonel of a Rhode Island volunteer regiment at the Battle of Fredericksburg. Bliss also commanded a brigade involved in the ill-fated episode of "The Crater" occurring around Petersburg, Virginia, in 1864. His account of the episode, however, adds little to our understanding of the event.

The new edition of this work is a substantial condensation of the original but preserves much of the best material. It is enhanced by numerous photographs and maps and is a worthwhile addition to any library's Texas collection. However, readers seeking a bit more Indian fighting and other military action of the frontier should refer to other works such as Robert Carter's *On the Border with Mackenzie*.



THOMAS SMITH, JERRY THOMPSON, ROBERT WOOSTER, BEN PINGENOT, EDs. *THE REMINISCENCES OF MAJOR GENERAL ZENAS R. BLISS*. AUSTIN: TEXAS STATE HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION, 2008. 517 PP. MAPS. PHOTOGRAPHS. \$31.00 CLOTH. ISBN 13: 978-0876112267.

Always Plenty to Do: Growing Up on a Farm in the Long Ago

Pamela Riney-Kehrberg

Facing Life's Challenges with Steadfastness, Persistence, and Faith

Review by JoAn W. Martin

Try to explain to 21st century children how boys and girls lived in the early years of the 1900s. It is almost impossible for any of us to believe how hard they worked, how little importance was placed on school. Fifteen authentic historical photographs reveal how different everyday life in rural and urban America is today.

Families produced their own food, clothes, houses and medicines. Their endless chores consisted of weeding, threshing, milking, picking cotton, herding horses, plowing and carrying water. Their whole life depended on the weather.

Some farm children loved being outside, making pets of horses, cows, goats, and chickens. Working alongside their parents the children bore a substantial responsibility for the family's well-being and knew how rewarding and important their work was. Other children hated such hard work, the isolation of farm life away from town and school.

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Few of the children were allowed to attend school, and those who did had a meager, basic education. Some ambitious families packed lard smeared biscuits in lunch pails and made sacrifices for their children to get an education. Requirements for a teacher included being sixteen years old and a graduate of eighth grade.

Children used their imagination to devise toys. The great outdoors was always there for them to explore and see wild animals and make collections of insects, rocks, and birds. Wintertime offered many ways to enjoy snow and ice on the ponds, and rural kids thought that they really had more fun than the kids that lived in town. The lucky ones went to the circus or a fair. In time some of the problems of farm life disappeared but so did its advantages.

Always Plenty to Do speaks to all of us that a person of steadfastness, persistence, and faith can face any challenge life has to offer.

RINEY-KEHRBERG, PAMELA. *ALWAYS PLenty TO DO: GROWING UP ON A FARM IN THE LONG AGO*. LUBBOCK: TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2011. 144 PP. INDEX. PHOTOGRAPHS. \$21.95 CLOTH. ISBN 13: 978-0-89672-692-5.

memorial. Gil and his daughter, Maureen begin to suspect that this complicated man is guarding a secret.

The story deepens with Lamar's housekeeper, George's Mary, with Arthur who would follow Ben Clayton into hell. The momentum takes the reader all over Texas - Abilene, Ranger, San Antonio, and Austin. Each setting almost becomes a character.

Harrigan makes an effort to personify the object he is describing rather than merely depicting it. He offers insight into father/son and father/daughter relationships. The plot and characters become engrossing, but never turn out as we expect.

Maureen becomes influenced by the women's movement of the 1920s and gradually emerges from the shadow of her father's subtle tyranny.

Stephen Harrigan's special talent is to mention a character or incident that intrigues the reader to solve the mystery and analyze the connection. Why does Ben's father react as he does? How does George's Mary become defined as an integral part of the story?

Booklist calls it "a stunning work of art" and *The Wall Street Journal* as a "poignantly human monument to our history."

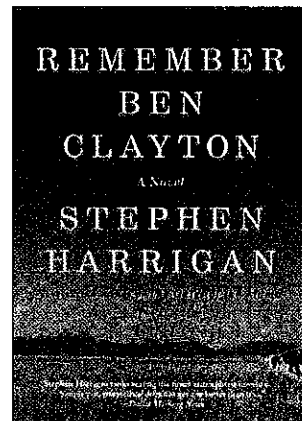
Remember Ben Clayton Stephen Harrigan

Moving On

Review by JoAn W. Martin

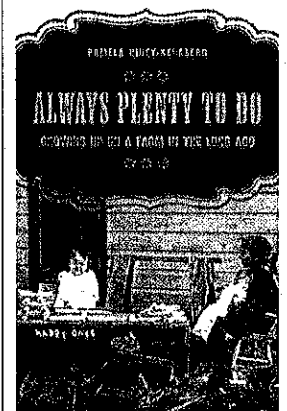
In spite of a WW I battle scene in the beginning, my faith in the author's comments at Sterling Municipal Library pushed me to continue to read. The next scene of a riot in Omaha that destroys the sculptor's finest work indicates that this was not my kind of literature. But as I meet the sculptors, Gil and Maureen and the grouchy old man, Lamar Clayton, I had to investigate the unlikely connection. How can a novel succeed if the protagonist is killed at Saint-Etienne in the first chapter? Other characters serve well to analyze the dead character.

Aging Lamar Clayton couldn't move on from losing his boy until he had positioned a statue of his dead son on top of a lonely mesa. He commissioned well-known Gil to create the



HARRIGAN, STEPHEN. *REMEMBER BEN CLAYTON*. NEW YORK: VINTAGE BOOKS, 2011. 352 PP. \$16.95 PAPER. ISBN 13: 978-0-307-94879-3.

Pamela Riney-Kehrberg, professor of history at Iowa State University, is also the author of the scholarly history Childhood on the Farm: Work, Play, and Coming of Age in the Midwest. Her interest in children's history was inspired by four grandparents who all grew up poor on Kansas farms.



Roger Paulding was born in Oklahoma and attended Daniel Webster High School, Oklahoma State University, and graduated from Hardin-Simmons University in 1948. During his school years, he was active in writing for the school publications and had two short stories and a three part serial published in the *Sunday School* magazines, for which he was paid \$10 each. His last summer at HSU, he managed the Publicity Department.

For twenty years, he was involved with the fashion industry. When he retired, he returned to his first love, writing. In 1997, he became president of the Fort Bend Writers Guild, which eventually became the Houston Writers Guild. He still guides and directs the organization, which has nearly 300 members.

Bought Off Roger Paulding

Shinanigans

Review by JoAn W. Martin

John Henry has always been a friend to the wealthy Upchurches. In fact, he owes his office as prosecutor to Honey, the matriarch of the Upchurch family. He drops by Honey's mansion to impart serious news concerning a naked body in son Alex Upchurch's mansion. Secret revelations show us the truths that have been hiding.

Miss Starlight, AKA as Leon McAdoo, writes the gossip column for the *Harris County News*. Her/His characterizations are priceless although we forgive her for a hilarious mix of metaphors. She doesn't worry about being scooped by other reporters, just so she can get more of the down and dirty information.

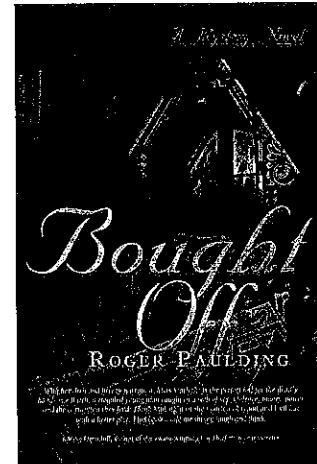
John Henry Davenport resisted being assigned to the who'd-you-say-you-are pile. As the situation heats up, he takes his vacation to Paris, leaving the indictment of Butch Owens to his assistant, Alex Upchurch.

Butch stood out like a rhinestone in a mud pie, but he admitted that he "flew off the handle" sometimes. Miss Starlight painted the scene of cue balls breaking out windows when anyone inadvertently accused Butch of being gay.

Passing himself off as a private investigator, Leon McAdoo talked to Loraine, Butch's high school English teacher, his high school friends, and his mother. For the trial, Butch's flamboyant pro-bono lawyer fitted Butch out in a white linen suit. Miss Starlight thought "he looked as righteous as an eight-year-old baby at its christening."

The ordeal went from sustained to overrule, from objections to observations with a few extraneous remarks thrown in. The judge banged her gavel at the many irrational wacky outbursts. Assistant Prosecutor, Alex, had a talent for making mean comments in a smooth way. You had to think twice before you realized you'd been insulted. It's an unusual trial when the chief apprehender of the county could not be apprehended. The whole trial was better suited for the stage than the courtroom with so many unavoidable theatrics.

Miss Starlight takes the reader on a wild, hair-brain tour of Galveston, Texas. Paulding reveals a city of crime, murder, money, and hustling. But it wouldn't be Galveston without its eccentricities. The city became famous for it. He describes tragic lifestyles with delightful humor. To quote Mike Orenduff, "Think *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil* but with a better plot.



PAULDING, ROGER. *BOUGHT OFF*. NEW YORK: AAKENBAKEN & KENT, 2013. 168 PP. \$14.95 PAPER. ISBN 13: 978-1-938436-09-3.

Extreme Birder: One Woman's Big Year

Lynn E. Barber

One Woman's Big Birding Year
Review by Frances M. Ramsey

The author, board member of the American Birding Association and president of the Texas Ornithological Society, challenged herself to exceed previous records for numbers of bird species seen in continental U.S. and Canada in a single year. In this wonderful adventure she says, "For a whole year, I went wherever there were birds that I wanted to see, explored new and exciting areas for birds that were also new and exciting, and filled every day with birding and plans for birding, nearly nonstop, following my passion."

With degrees in zoology, bacteriology, and law, she is a practicing patent attorney. Encouraged by her husband, she took advantage of rate bird alerts on the internet and traveled to the areas

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where local birders helped her find the unusual species as well as the common ones for the area. In diary format she describes who traveled with her, who aided her search locally, weather conditions, and what birds she found.

In her Big Year, 2008, she saw 723 species of birds and photographed 503 of them. Her beautiful color photographs adorn most pages. Highlighted side bars include her poems which reveal emotional aspects of her venture.

Entertaining as travel adventure, this book may also serve as a resource for birders who visit new places, wonder what they might see, and wonder who will help them find these birds.

BARBER, LYNN E. *EXTREME BIRDER: ONE WOMAN'S BIG YEAR*. COLLEGE STATION: TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2011. 283 PP. ABA CHECKLIST AND CHECKLIST CODES. APPENDICES. INDEX. PHOTOS. \$29.99. FLEXBOUND. ISBN 13: 978-1-60344-261-9. 2010043596.

Elmore Kelton: Essays and Memories

Judy Alter and James Ward Lee, Eds.

Honor to a Great Writer from Family, Friends, and Colleagues
Review by Frances M. Ramsey

The authors of these essays include his editor at TCU Press, a San Angelo book seller, his pastor who gave the eulogy at his funeral, four college teachers of his books, and his rancher, writer son Steve Kelton. Each has written about the man and the insights to be found in his writing.

Although he grew up on a ranch where his father was foreman, he was too near sighted to become a good cowboy, so he listened to their stories and became a reader. After service in World War II where he met his wife, he received a degree in journalism. These essays demonstrate how his employment in ranching journalism supplied real life facts for his novels that lifted them above the usual western romance.

Most of his characters must cope with unwanted change and harsh circumstances of living in an arid land. There is not always a happy ending,

but the characters develop endurance. Extensive quotes from his books demonstrate the qualities of his writing which the essayists admire.

Those who have appreciated his books will enjoy the memories evoked by these friends of Elmer Kelton. Teacher who include his books in their curriculum will find this a rich resource.



ALTER, JUDY AND JAMES WARD LEE, Eds. *ELMER KELTON: ESSAYS AND MEMORIES*. FORT WORTH: TCU PRESS, 2011. 137 PP. BIBLIOGRAPHY. \$ 19.95 PAPER. ISBN 13: 978-0-87565-426-3.

Houston Classic Mexican Recipes: Recipes from Favorite Restaurants Erin Hicks Miller

Beyond Culture: The Taste of Mexico in Houston
Review by Cristina Ríos

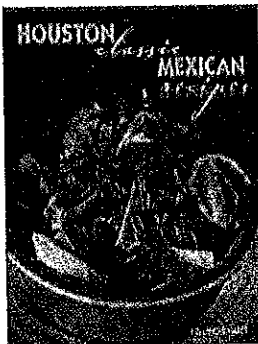
A wonderful collection of delicious recipes from some of the best Mexican Restaurants in Houston, it presents authentic Mexican cuisine from different regions of Mexico. Colorful photographs as well as detailed and clear instructions make this volume a valuable guide for any amateur or experienced cook. Before writing this review, I actually tried some of the recipes included in the book, and I must say that they were easy to prepare and the results really enjoyable. Each recipe provides the name and particulars of different restaurants in Houston; information that can be very useful when visiting the city and looking for a good place to eat. The book includes the famous mural by Diego Rivera

Judy Alter is the former director of TCU Press and author of more than forty books. Her most recent books are *Cooking My Way through Life with Books and Kids*, published by State House Press (2009), and, with Katie Sherrod, *Grace and Gumption: The Cookbook*, published by TCU Press (2010). James Ward Lee is the author of *Classics of Texas Fiction* (E-Heart Press, 1987), *Texas, My Texas* (UNT Press, 1992), *Adventures with a Texas Humanist* (TCU Press, 2007), and *Texas Country Singers* (TCU Press, 2008), among others. He is a fellow of the Texas Folklore Society and a member of the Texas Institute of Letters.

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Buen provecho! from Houston's best Mexican kitchens. With close ties to Mexico, it's no wonder that Houston offers such a peppery punch when it comes to flavorful Mexican cuisine. From Lobster Enchiladas from Cyclone Anaya's and Poblano Soup from Molina's to Tamales from Taco Milagro, Pork Belly Torta from Haven, and Wedding Cookies from El Bolillo, each entry in this vibrant addition to Pelican's Classic Recipes Series represents the favorite flavors from the best and most beloved Mexican restaurants in Houston.



"Dream of a Sunday Afternoon in the Alameda" inside the front and back covers; however, I could not find any acknowledgment or reference to Rivera, anywhere in the book. Recommended for community libraries.

MILLER, ERIN HICKS. *HOUSTON CLASSIC MEXICAN RECIPES: RECIPES FROM FAVORITE RESTAURANTS*. GRETA: PELICAN PUBLISHING, 2011. 96 PP. INDEX, ILLUSTRATIONS, PHOTOS. \$16.95 CLOTH. ISBN 13:978-1589808959.

The Battle of the Snow Cones / La Guerra De Las Raspas

Lupe Ruiz-Flores

Magic Snow on a Summer Day in Texas
Review by Cristina Ríos

Something magic happened on a hot summer day in Texas; perhaps it is just a mirage. An enormous amount of shaved ice overflowing down the hill produced a snow sliding slope for children to glide and refresh from the heat. Dashing through the snow during the summer in Texas is certainly dreamlike. Apparently, the responsible ones are two entrepreneurial ten year old girls that creatively and vigorously compete with each other to attract customers to their own snow cones concession stands. An enjoyable reading for the summer, the art is beautifully done and the illustrations give the impression of real and animated children. Bilingual, Spanish and English. Recommended for elementary school libraries.



RUÍZ-FLORES, LUPE. *THE BATTLE OF THE SNOW CONES / LA GUERRA DE LAS RASPAS*. HOUSTON: ARTE PÚBLICO PRESS, PINATA BOOKS, 2010. 32 PP. ILLUSTRATIONS. \$16.95 HARDCOVER. ISBN: 978-1-55885-575-5. UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA PRESS, 2011. \$19.95. PAPER. 168 PP. ISBN 13: 978-0806141954.

The Big Thicket Guidebook: Exploring the Backroads and History of Southeast Texas

Lorraine G. Bonney

A Guidebook that also Doubles as Your Own Personal Tour Guide by Car to the Big Thicket

Review by Jon P. Tritsch

Anyone looking for a travel guide to the Big Thicket and the surrounding area of Southeast Texas can now have access to a great resource. Lorraine Bonney, with contributions from Big Thicket Association members Maxine Johnston and Pete A.Y. Gunter, has compiled one of the best books available that can tell you everything you wanted to know about the Big Thicket and Southeast Texas counties.

To acquaint the reader with the Big Thicket, the first seven chapters in Part I give some historical background information on topics including the area's geology, early native inhabitants and settlers in the region, the timber industry, and the Trinity River. Part II's chapters likewise relate relevant histories on some of the major cities and towns connected with the Big Thicket: Batson, Beaumont, Jasper, Kountze, Liberty, Saratoga, Silsbee, Sour Lake, and Woodville. The best part of the guidebook, Part III, describes 15 tours and 39 automobile trips one can take for touring and sight-seeing in the Big Thicket and surrounding area. The trips are generously described in detail down to a fraction of a mile, so your car's trip odometer will become a needed accessory on these trips. Bonney and her contributors have also provided very useful maps and numerous pictures to enhance the usefulness of this guidebook. To complete this work, contributor Johnston devotes a few pages describing the authors and the work that went into compiling the guidebook. Finally, contributor Gunter has compiled an extensive bibliography of additional works that can be consulted for additional research.

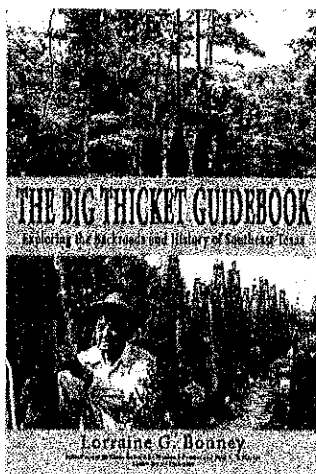
The Big Thicket Guidebook: Exploring the Backroads and History of Southeast Texas, number 6 in the Temple Big Thicket series, should be acquired by all public and academic

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libraries for their collections. Individuals will want to buy their own copies for the sight-seeing trips suggested in the guidebook.

Hopefully, the cost of gasoline will not inhibit any planned weekend tours for automobile drivers and their families!



BONNEY, LORRAINE G. *THE BIG THICKET GUIDEBOOK: EXPLORING THE BACKROADS AND HISTORY OF SOUTHEAST TEXAS*. DENTON: BIG THICKET ASSOCIATION/UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS PRESS, 2011. 850 PP. BIBLIOGRAPHY. ILLUSTRATIONS. INDEX. MAPS. \$29.95 CLOTH. ISBN 13: 978-1-57441-318-2. 2011-31977.

Still the Arena of Civil War: Violence and Turmoil in Reconstruction Texas, 1865-1874

Kenneth W. Howell, ed.

While the Ruling White Democratic Establishment in Texas Lost the Civil War, They Eventually Prevailed During the Subsequent War of Reconstruction
Review by Jon P. Tritzsch

Civil War historian Kenneth Howell has previously edited *The Seventh Star of the Confederacy: Texas During the Civil War*, a collection of essays concerning the state's involvement in the conflict on the home front. He and fifteen other historians continue the story in this latest anthology of essays that now examine Reconstruction Texas from 1865 to 1874.

The consistent theme throughout the essays is the battle by the defeated Democratic establishment to keep the antebellum political and social status quo in Texas. Their targeted enemies fell into three broad categories: the emancipated slaves (Freedmen), native white Texans who supported the Union (Republicans), and the Yankee occupiers (the military & agents of the Freedmen's Bureau). As Howell mentions in his introductory essay, "The chapters survey various forms of disorder, cruelty, and bloodshed and identify the social, political, and economic impact on the Texas citizenry." The chapters themselves are grouped into four parts. The first part contains chapters focusing on the struggles against the military occupation, the Freedmen's Bureau agents, and local lawmen. The essays in part two describe the rise and attributed violence of the Ku Klux Klan in Texas, the involvement of the Democratic Party against the agents of Reconstruction, and the coverage of the turmoil in Texas by the state's newspapers. In part three, the chapters examine the effects of the violence and persecution on the Freedmen, African-American women and Tejanos. The last three chapters in part four survey the effects of Reconstruction on the frontier, the lawlessness in Lavaca County, and the incidences of violent acts in the lower Brazos River Valley counties of Austin, Brazoria, Brazos, Fort Bend, Grimes, and Washington.

In all, this is a very fine group of essays by the contributors. The numerous bibliographical end notes after each chapter show that the authors did extensive research with their essays. There are a few minor typographical errors, the most notable being a misidentification of neighboring Harris County on the eastern border of Fort Bend County as "Houston County" (p. 403). *Still the Arena of Civil War: Violence and Turmoil in Reconstruction Texas, 1865-1874* should be a highly recommended acquisition for Texana and Civil War collections in academic and public libraries. History professors will no doubt want to consider this anthology of Texas Reconstruction essays to be on their reading lists for students.

HOWELL, KENNETH W., ED. *STILL THE ARENA OF CIVIL WAR: VIOLENCE AND TURMOIL IN RECONSTRUCTION TEXAS, 1865-1874*. DENTON: UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS PRESS, 2012. 445PP. ILLUSTRATIONS, MAPS, TABLES. END NOTES. INDEX. \$34.95, ISBN 978-1-57441-449-3. 2011-42256.

Born and educated in Canada, Lorraine G. Bonney married Houston attorney Orrin H. Bonney. Together they co-authored books on the Grand Tetons and Wyoming climbing. Since Orrin's death, Lorraine has completed The Grand Controversy: History of Climbing in the Tetons to 1934, and Wyoming Mountain Ranges. She divides her time between Kelly, Wyoming, and Conroe, Texas, deep in the Big Thicket.

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