

Review of Texas Books

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Managing Editors

Holly Carey
Janet Turk

Founding Editor

Sally Dooley

Advisory Editor

R. S. Gwynn

Associate Editors

Joo Nordgren
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Business and Subscription Offices:

P.O. Box 10023
Beaumont, TX
77710



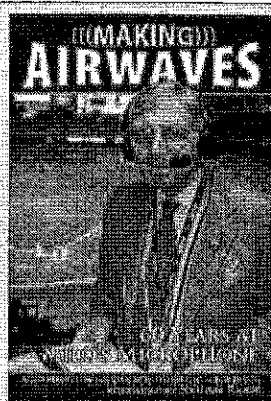
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Editors' Choice: *Making Airwaves: 60 Years at Milo's Microphone* Milo Hamilton, Dan Schlossberg, Bob Ibach

60 Years in the Broadcast Booth

Review by Holly Carey

In his foreword, Nolan Ryan states of Milo Hamilton that he "has a very special broadcast voice and presence on the air." He further notes Milo's ability to express crucial moments of the game. *Making Airwaves: 60 Years at Milo's Microphone* maintains that same certain presence.

Organized into twenty-three chapters, the book in-part chronicles Milo's career as a broadcaster. In an era when games had to be re-created through wire service reports, his first experience behind the microphone was at age eighteen while serving in the Navy during WWII. Afterward, he called Golden Globe boxing matches and high school basketball games for WQUA in Moline, Illinois. His entrance as a major league announcer came in 1953 with the St. Louis Browns, and from there, the book traces his tenure with the Cardinals, Cubs, White Sox, Braves, Pirates, back to the Cubs again, and finally his joining the Astros in 1985.

Other chapters take us into the booth with Milo. He notes some of his most memorable calls: Hank Aaron's breaking the homerun record in 1974, Roger Maris' 61st homerun in 1961, Nolan Ryan's first strikeout in the major leagues—and his 4,000th, and the first triple play in the history of the Atlanta Braves. He also describes his favorite guests, including Chicago Cubs and White Sox announcer Bob Elson, whom Milo insists is "the greatest interviewer ever." Chuck Tanner, Nellie Fox, Joe Torre, and Pete Rose are also favorites. Milo portrays his nine year partnership with Alan Ashby as the "ideal situation." He discusses other partnerships as well, both good and bad, including his tenuous relationship with Larry Dierker in and out of the booth and with Harry Caray. A humorous chapter titled "Miloisms" dissects those infamous expressions we've come to love and mimic amongst ourselves as Astros fans. Of course the signature "Holy Toledo" is included; others such as "screamin' meemie" (a line drive buzzes dangerously close past an infielder) and "leapin' lena" (a ball hops off the pitching mound and onto center field, and neither the shortstop nor

the second baseman can field it) are defined as well.

More critical chapters take us out of the booth. Milo depicts free agency as the biggest change he's seen in baseball and discusses expansion/contraction of the league. He analyzes various baseball commissioners (his career spans all but one), such as Bud Selig's refusal to rid the designated hitter rule, and comments critically on the steroid scandal; Milo advocates a two year ban after the first offense. Finally, Milo describes how umpiring has waned over the years: "if the pitch isn't between the belly-button and a little above your knees, it's not a strike."

There's a personal side to the book as well. The reader glimpses Milo growing up in the Depression and learns that his favorite teams as a kid were first the Cardinals and then the Dodgers. He also pays great homage to his late wife Arlene (they would have had their 53rd wedding anniversary in April 2005) and their two children. He reminisces over hunting trips, some with Nolan Ryan at King Ranch, and tells the story of how he acquired his favorite gun, a Winchester .301.

Black and white photographs, some of which capture Milo in his rather handsome youth, and illustrations accompany the text. One illustration in particular stands out—a portrait of Milo, Alan Ashby, and Mike "the Loose" Cannon in the KTRH booth at Minute Maid Park painted by Opie Otterstad. An appendix and index complete the book.

Milo renders his narrative with the same honesty and objectivity he maintains in the booth and that have earned him induction into the Baseball Hall of Fame in 1992, the Texas Baseball Hall of Fame in 1994, the Radio Hall of Fame in 2000, and in 2005 the Texas Radio Hall of Fame. At the same time, though, through reminiscences of his late wife, stories of hunting, and choices he would make as commissioner, the reader gets to know Milo a little better personally.

Astros fans, put a blue star on this one.

HAMILTON, MILO, DAN SCHLOSSBERG, AND BOB IBACH. *MAKING AIRWAVES: 60 YEARS AT MILO'S MICROPHONE*. CHAMPAIGN: SPORTS PUBLISHING L.L.C., 2006. 252 PP. APPENDIX, ILLUSTRATIONS, INDEX, PHOTOS. \$24.95 CLOTH. ISBN 1-59670-027-0. 2005033234.

Milo Hamilton has been the radio voice of the Houston Astros since 1985 and is a member of four halls of fame.

Dan Schlossberg has authored/co-authored twenty-nine baseball books and is managing editor of Ball Talk, a syndicated weekly radio baseball show.

Bob Ibach is the author of three previous books, including Caught in the Net, soon to be a major motion picture about cheating in college basketball.

Holly Carey has been a lecturer of English at Lamar University since 1997. She teaches developmental writing, freshman composition, and sophomore literature classes.

Featured Publisher:

Sports Publishing L.L.C.

Since 1988, with the publication of its first book, *Lou: Winning at Illinois*, Sports Publishing has been on a mission to be the ultimate source for sports books. In the last few years, Sports Publishing has expanded to cover every part of the country, and since 1998 sportspublishingllc.com has given Sports Publishing a presence on the world wide web. Sports Publishing recently became the #1 fastest growing independent publisher in the country with more than eight hundred different sports titles published and with several hundred more under contract for the future.

Engraved Prints of Texas, 1554-1900

Mavis P. Kelsey, Sr.
Robin Brandt Hutchison

A Publication Milestone in Texas Popular Culture

Review by Stephen Curley

It isn't often that Texas history scholars and fans witness such a significant event in publishing. This 9" x 11" handsomely printed volume attempts to catalog every important engraving that has Texas as its subject. It offers a fascinating glimpse into how Texas was visualized before the twentieth century. According to the foreword by Donald H. Dyal, former director of the Texas A&M University library and archives, this book gives access to the illustrated history of Texas "in a way and on a scale never before attempted." The preface is written by Mavis P. Kelsey, Sr., whose collection of engravings (now in the archives of Texas A&M University library) provide the impetus for this study. As he puts it, there is no denying the "charm, imagination, and personal touch" of engravings which peaked in the 1870s and then began to be replaced by newer photographic technology. For example, an 1844 engraving depicts a City of Houston nestled amidst hills and mountains; it was used—long after it was known to be laughably inaccurate—to attract gullible immigrants to the flatland city.

What is not included? The collection ignores most lithographs (the subject of a forthcoming study), maps, bird's eye views, and generic images of the West. But what is included

amounts to a treasure trove. More than two thousand engravings are listed, with annotations about their dimensions, artist (most are unknown), engraving process, original publication, and archival source. About 470 engravings are reproduced in the book's two-column text. If you're like me, you'll gush over what is illustrated and sigh over what isn't. But our disappointment should be short-lived. Kelsey says that the total collection of images is soon to be available on the Internet. Engravings are arranged chronologically by date of publication and indexed (a fifty-two page index!) by artist, publication title, place name, historical figure represented, and subject. One wishes that the nineteen pages of endnotes, especially those by bookseller antiquarian Dorothy Sloan, were longer, but the authors had to stop somewhere to keep the book to a publishable length. The book starts with a chapter on Texas before 1830 and then includes a chapter on each of the remaining decades of the nineteenth century. Chapter headnotes provide a convenient summary of Texas history.

Recommended for all libraries and most collections of Texiana.

KELSEY, MAVIS P., SR., AND ROBIN BRANDT HUTCHISON. *ENGRAVED PRINTS OF TEXAS, 1554-1900*. COLLEGE STATION, TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2005. 498 PP. BIBLIOGRAPHY, ILLUSTRATIONS, INDEX, NOTES. \$60.00 CLOTH. 1-58544-270-4. 2004002328.

New Orleans and the Texas Revolution Edward L. Miller

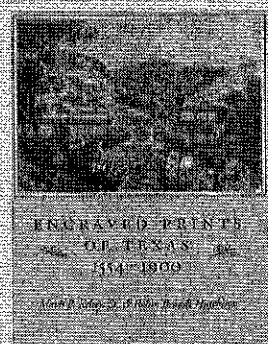
Forgotten Battle

Review by Dale Farris

When serving as president of the San Antonio Living History Association, Edward L. Miller became interested in the New Orleans Volunteer Greys and began his research into this fascinating subject that ultimately led to this marvelous new addition to the vast literature on the Texas Revolution.

One of the least known "battles" of the Texas Revolution occurred not with arms but with words and not in Texas but in New Orleans. In 1835, Creole mercantile houses backed the

Continued on page four



Fifth-generation Texan Mavis P. Kelsey, Sr., has written extensively on art, history, genealogy, and travel. He is a longtime resident of Houston.

Robin Brandt Hutchison is an archivist in the Cushing Memorial Library and Archives at Texas A&M University where she has primary curatorial responsibility for the Mary and Mavis P. Kelsey Collection of Americana and Art.

*Stephen Curley holds a Ph.D. in English from Rice University. He is professor of English at Texas A&M University—Galveston and a frequent contributor to *Review of Texas Books*.*

Author Edward L. Miller has taught Texas history in and is assistant principal of Metzger Middle School in the Judson Independent School District in San Antonio.

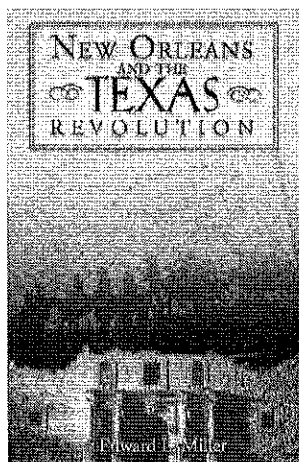
J'Nell Pate holds a Ph.D. in history from the University of North Texas. Now retired from Tarrant County College in Fort Worth, she is also the author of *North of the River: A Brief History of North Fort Worth, Hazel Vaughn Leigh and the Fort Worth Boys' Club, Ronald Slidell Mackenzie, Brave Calvary Colonel*, written for juveniles, and *Document Sets for Texas and the Southwest in U.S. History*, a primary source she edited.

Dale Farris has a master's degree from the University of Texas at Austin and a bachelor's degree from Lamar University. He is a professional reviewer for *Library Journal*, *Quality Press*, and *Quality Progress*.

Continued from page three
forces against Santa Anna. As a result, \$250,000 in loans from two companies known as the New Orleans Greys, was sent to support the upstart Texians in their battle for independence.

Miller has nicely reconstructed the complex chain of events, confirming other historians who argue that Texian leaders recognized the importance of securing financial and popular support from New Orleans. However, he goes beyond these other works to further explore the organizational efforts in New Orleans and the underlying motives of the pro-Texian forces. On October 13, 1835, a powerful group of financiers and businessmen met at Banks Arcade and formed the Committee on Texas Affairs. Miller mines long ignored, obscure documentation of this meeting and examines the military efforts that were based in New Orleans, from the disastrous Tampico Expedition to the formation of the New Orleans Greys and their tragic fate at the Alamo and Goliad. This crucial meeting at Banks Arcade helped influence Texas history forever.

Winner of the 2005 Summerfield G. Roberts Award for a work of creative writing on the Republic of Texas presented by the Sons of the Republic of Texas and finalist for the Texas Institute of Letters award for the book making the most significant contribution to knowledge, Miller's soundly researched, academic treatise on this little known aspect of the Texas Revolution belongs in all academic libraries.



MILLER, EDWARD L. *NEW ORLEANS AND THE TEXAS REVOLUTION*. COLLEGE STATION: TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2004. 288 PP. APPENDIX, BIBLIOGRAPHY, INDEX, MAP, NOTES, PHOTOGRAPHS. \$29.95 CLOTH. ISBN 1-58544-358-1. 2004001179.

America's Historic Stockyards: Livestock Hotels J'Nell L. Pate

The History of the Livestock Business
Review by Dale Farris

J'Nell Pate provides a comprehensive look at America's stockyards between 1865 and the 1980s. Livestock markets for the sale and distribution of meat developed as early as the days of colonial America, and in the mid-nineteenth century, as westward expansion increased and railroads developed, stockyard companies formed in order to meet the demand of a growing nation. The era of big stockyards in the U.S. began with the opening of the Chicago Union Stock Yards on December 25, 1865, and contrary to natural market forces, these unusual companies were centrally organized and managed by a select few principal partners.

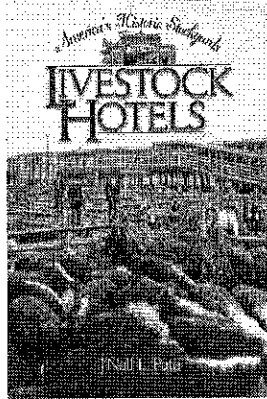
Beginning with an interesting history of the development of the livestock business and stockyard marketing, Pate follows with a concise history of the major stockyards, including St. Louis and Chicago, along with Midwestern markets, such as Kansas City, Missouri, Wichita, Kansas, and Fort Worth, and ends with later stockyards in cities such as Oklahoma City and Houston. While twenty-four major markets dominated livestock sales for a century, Pate also includes brief discussion of the role of smaller yards, including those in Baltimore, Cleveland, Cedar Rapids, Iowa, West Fargo, North Dakota, and, after the Chicago yards closed in 1971, the Joliet, Illinois, yards.

Pate marvelously tells this fascinating story, providing a solid academic analysis of this important part of U.S. history. She draws on numerous original sources, including many relatively obscure government documents, historic stockyard company reports and documents, letters, interviews with current and former stockyard employees, unpublished manuscripts, as well as published articles, books, and dissertations to tell this story that helps readers better understand the fundamental framework of this business, as well as realize the importance of Upton

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Sinclair's classic *The Jungle*, which heavily influenced the overhaul of this business and how it continues to operate to this day.

Highly recommended for all university libraries.



PATE, J'NELL L. *AMERICA'S HISTORIC STOCKYARDS: LIVESTOCK HOTELS*. FORT WORTH: TEXAS CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2005. 240 PP. APPENDIXES, BIBLIOGRAPHY, GLOSSARY, INDEX, NOTES, PHOTOGRAPHS. \$29.95 CLOTH. ISBN 0-87565-304-9. 2004022004.

Shifra Stein's Day Trips From Austin: Getaways Less Than Two Hours Away, 3rd ed.

Paris Permenter
John Bigley

From Tex-Mex Cuisine to Schlitterbahn
Review by Dale Farris

Husband and wife team Paris Permenter and John Bigley update this successful series on fascinating and exciting things to do, many free of charge, most within a two-hour drive of Austin.

Day trip destinations covered include Schlitterbahn, the state's largest water tubing park, the Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum in Waco, the natural beauty of Lake Travis, the Southside Market and tasty B-B-Q in Elgin, the official "sausage capital of Texas," and the restored Hill Country Flyer steam train in Cedar Park, just to name a few. The eighty-five trips are organized by geographical regions around Austin and

include tips on where to go, what to do, what to eat, where to shop, and where to stay, and each trip is clearly mapped from Austin.

The book also provides information on the various chambers of commerce in these destination communities around Austin and a list of the key festivals and celebrations organized by month, and the appendixes cover information for "snow birds" who make their temporary winter home in Central Texas, information on how to contact the various Texas state parks, a guide to common Tex-Mex food terms, and information on the Lower Colorado River Authority (LCRA) parks located near the capital. For Texas Hill Country residents, as well as tourists to this area, this book will serve as a useful reference in planning these day trips.

Highly recommended for all Texas libraries, especially those in the highlighted communities.

PERMENTER, PARIS, AND JOHN BIGLEY. *SHIFRA STEIN'S DAY TRIPS FROM AUSTIN: GETAWAYS LESS THAN TWO HOURS AWAY*. 3rd ED. GUILFORD: THE GLOBE PEQUOT PRESS, 2004. 224 PP. APPENDIXES, MAPS. \$14.95 PAPER. ISBN 0-7627-2748-9.

Adventures with a Texas Humanist

James Ward Lee

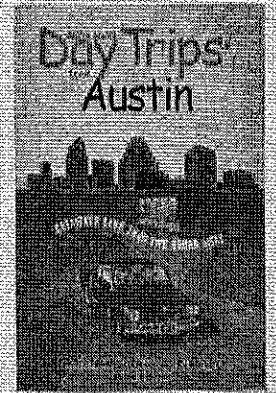
Literary Critic Explores Texas Life and Literature

Review by Mary M. Fisher

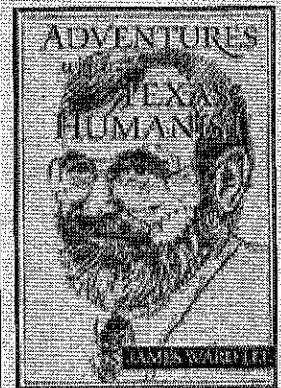
A Texan in his bones if not by birth, Alabama-born James Ward Lee has spent his adult life studying the life and letters of his adopted state. In this engaging book, the former TCU English professor emeritus and president of the Texas Folklore Society combines humor and sound scholarship in a witty and wise assessment of everything and everyone Texas from the movie Giant to humorist Kinky Friedman.

Lee begins with a chapter each on two figures whom he says dominate 20th century Texas literature: J. Frank Dobie and Larry McMurtry. Writings of the former, he notes, were informed by an era of pride and exuberance. McMurtry's work, on the other hand, is

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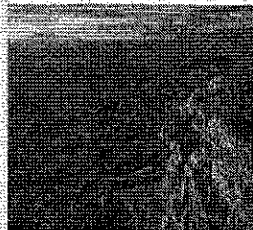


Paris Permenter and John Bigley are editors of the *Lovetrippler.com* Romantic Travel magazine and longtime residents of the Hill Country west of Austin.



James Ward Lee's books include *Classics of Texas Fiction*, *Texas, My Texas*, and *Literary Fort Worth*, co-edited with Judy Alter. Lee lives in Fort Worth and is acquisitions editor of TCU Press.

**Hiking
Big Bend
National Park**



Laurence Parent is a freelance photographer and writer specializing in landscape, travel, and nature. He has written twenty-one books, including seven FalconGuides. He lives in Wimberly, Texas.

Mary M. Fisher graduated with a master's degree in history from the University of Texas at Austin. She is an award-winning journalist now working as a school administrator and is the author of *Rosita's Bridge*.

Continued from page five

colored by a difficult, less optimistic cultural ethos. A chapter that follows compares and contrasts Dobie with Katherine Ann Porter, a pair who despite being born a couple of years and about two hundred years apart, "couldn't have lived in more opposite writing universes."

In the next two chapters, in Lee's literary potpourri, he looks first at the Old South in Texas literature and second at Shelby Hearon. Despite outsiders' views of Texas as entirely western, Lee notes that the state also has a marked Southern preoccupation with history, place and family, as seen in the work of writers such as Dorothy Scarborough. In the chapter on Shelby Hearon, summarizing both her life and works, Lee observes, "Hearon writes about all of us, and I think she deserves a place among the superior observer/narrators of twentieth-century American life."

Subsequent chapters meander from the poetry of Lee's TCU colleague Betsy Colquitt to Texas oil patch fiction to the uses of folklore to Texas sidekicks to a mini autobiography of the author. While the book's contents are not particularly cohesive, its approachable style gives the reader the sense of having had a wide-ranging conversation with a genial, erudite Texas raconteur. It should be required reading for anyone wishing to understand Texas life and letters.

LEE, JAMES WARD. *ADVENTURES WITH A TEXAS HUMANIST*. FORT WORTH: TEXAS CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2004. 296 PP. BIBLIOGRAPHY, INDEX. \$24.95 CLOTH. ISBN 0-87565-288-3. 2004002608.

*Hiking Big Bend
National Park: A Guide
to Big Bend's Greatest
Hiking Adventures*
Laurence Parent

**Hill Country Hiking Guide is a Useful
Resource Despite Deficiencies**

Review by Mary M. Fisher

With its varied topography and spectacular scenery, Big Bend National Park is a magnet for hikers. Nearly a decade ago, Laurence Parent, a noted free-lance photographer and outdoors writer, wrote a comprehensive hiking

guide to the park. His recently released second edition, produced with the help of Big Bend National Park's staff hikers and writers, features forty-seven hikes running from short, easy hikes such as Burro Spring to longer treks, such as the strenuous ten-hour Rancherías Loop in Big Bend State Park.

Each listing begins with brief statistics on the length, time, difficulty, traffic, trail surface and directions to the trailhead. That is followed by a more detailed narrative description of the hike itself, detailing not only its points of interest and challenges but, in some cases, its history. The reader learns, for example, that the Lost Mine Trail, one of the most popular hikes in the park, was built in the early 1940s by the Civilian Conservation Corps, that it is alternately steep and level and that pinon pines and gray-breasted jays will be seen on the way past grand vistas of mountains and canyons.

Listings also include an elevation chart, at least one black and white photograph and a GPS-compatible trail map. They are preceded by a useful introduction that covers basic rules and backcountry ethics of camping and hiking, along with information on safety, conditioning, water, vehicle safety, getting lost, acclimating to the altitude, choosing hiking companions and dealing with unfriendly animals and insects.

While the hiking trail descriptions are all one might ask for, there are a couple of deficiencies in Parent's guide that make it hard to use as a reference: the trails are not grouped geographically or alphabetically, and there is no index. Furthermore, the photo reproduction do not do justice to Parent's black and white photographs. Nonetheless, the guide should serve as a useful general reference for Big Bend Park hikers.

PARENT, LAURENCE. *HIKING BIG BEND NATIONAL PARK: A GUIDE TO BIG BEND'S GREATEST HIKING ADVENTURES*. 2ND ED. GUILFORD: THE GLOBE PEQUOT PRESS, 2005. 224 PP. MAPS, PHOTOS. \$14.95 PAPER. ISBN 0-7627-3142-7. 96-12282.

The Strange Career of Bilingual Education in Texas, 1836-1981

Carlos K. Blanton

The Triumph of Bilingual Education

Review by T J Geiger

Carlos Blanton's work traces the history of bilingual education in Texas. Relying on a variety of sources including reports from county judges who served as de facto superintendents and judicial opinions, Blanton tells how Texas has educated its English as second language (ESL) learners. The story involves state and national trends in pedagogical praxis and how late nineteenth century pedagogues took an organic, community-based bilingual tradition and replaced it through standardization of education with English-Only language instruction and a xenophobic Americanization program.

The late nineteenth century saw the rise of the Progressive movement in America. In a time of tremendous political and social change, Progressive educators worked for a centralized educational system that could oversee standardization of curricula and certification. Making the schooling of young people a trained and regulated profession was their goal. The unfortunate element of this for non-or-limited-English speaking children was the streamlining of policy so that English became the only accepted language during school hours, not just during instruction.

Blanton describes how English-Only became Texas law until 1968. He compellingly demonstrates that the pedagogy behind this advocated practice dripped with racism and linguistic bias that passed as good science. Eventually, because of the legal and political activism of the Latino community, along with an academic reevaluation of English-Only instruction, bilingual education triumphantly returned to Texas.

This excellent book examines the history of policy affecting language minority students, some of the most vulnerable children in public schools. It is highly recommended for libraries and educators.

BLANTON, CARLOS K. *THE STRANGE CAREER OF BILINGUAL EDUCATION IN TEXAS, 1836-1981*. COLLEGE STATION: TEXAS A&M U.P. 2004. 216 PP. BIBLIOGRAPHY, ILLUSTRATIONS, INDEX, NOTES. ISBN 1-58544-310-7. 2003016351.

The Man from the Alamo

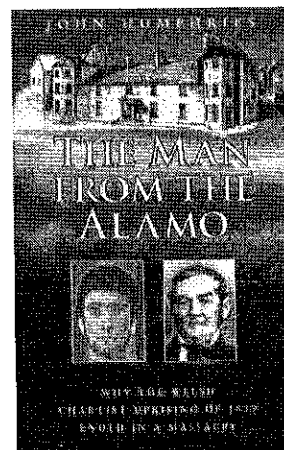
John Humphries

Misleading Title but Detailed Account of the 1839 Chartist Uprising in Wales

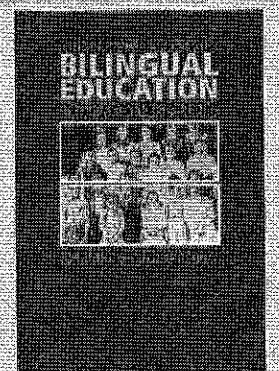
Review by Emma B. Hawkins

If the reader is interested in an investigation of the Chartist Uprising that occurred in Monmouthshire, Wales, in November 1839, or the biographical details surrounding John Frost, the supposed leader, or Henry Vincent, William Jones, and/or Zephaniah Williams who were also closely with the uprising, then this book fills the bill. The author investigates the attack itself, as well as the causes and results. Having consulted official records in libraries, the Royal Archives, and land offices, as well as newspaper accounts, Humphries has gathered details galore about the Chartist march on Newport's Westgate Hotel and the defense offered by approximately thirty soldiers from the 45th Regiment of Foot under the command of Captain Basil Gray.

Unfortunately, the title of the book is misleading. The fourth and fifth chapters constitute a typical rehash of the Texas War of Independence, especially the battles at the Alamo and Goliad, and the War with Mexico 1836-38, except Humphries incorporates occasional references to a mysterious and somewhat disreputable Welsh figure, John Rees, who later played a vague role in the Chartist Uprising. John Rees, alias "Jack the Fifer" is also "The Man from the Alamo."



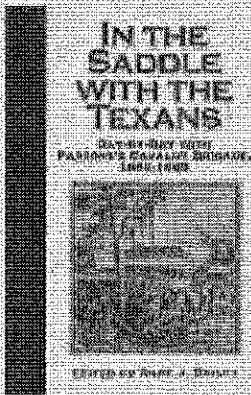
HUMPHRIES, JOHN. *THE MAN FROM THE ALAMO*. GRETNNA: PELICAN PUBLISHING COMPANY, 2005. 324 PP. BIBLIOGRAPHY, ILLUSTRATIONS, INDEX, MAPS, NOTES, PHOTOS. \$17.95 PAPER. ISBN 1-58980-385-3.



Carlos Kevin Blanton is an assistant professor of history at Texas A&M University in College Station. He currently lives in Houston.

John Humphries is a native of Newport, Wales, where the Chartist massacre occurred and is a professional journalist.

T J Geiger holds a B.A. in History and English from Lamar University where he is now an English graduate student and teaching assistant. He has an interest in mid-to-late twentieth century American political and social history.



Anne J. Bailey is the author of six books on the Civil War, including *Texas in the Confederate Calvary*, and is a professor of history at Georgia College & State University.

Marsha Stephens Wilson Rappaport spent years verifying the oral history related to her by her elderly Texas born relatives. She lives in Galveston.

Dr. Max Loges is professor of English at Lamar University. He has published articles on a broad range of subjects including the Civil War.

Trina Nolen is a reference librarian at the Mary and John Gray Library. She holds a MBA from Lamar University and a MLS from University of North Texas.

In the Saddle with the Texans: Day-by-Day with Parson's Calvary Brigade, 1862-1865 Anne J. Bailey, ed.

Simple Facts of Parson's Brigade
Review by Max Loges

Year after year the American Civil War continues to be one of the most popular subjects among readers of history. Accounts by actual soldiers and officers are particularly prized, and when some recently discovered journal makes its way into print, it is quickly snatched up by Civil War enthusiasts. Likely those behind the publication of *In the Saddle with the Texans* are counting on this fervor.

This book largely consists (340 of the 416 pages) of the order book of a brigade of Texas cavalry, known as Parson's Brigade, which exclusively fought in the Trans/Mississippi region. Order books are not frequently published because of their contents are at best mundane and at worst terribly boring. They may be useful, however, in clearing up some point of controversy where there is a dispute as to what or when something was actually ordered. Such situations exist only in brigades that were heavily engaged in fighting or where the controversy involves a situation of some importance. In the four years of war, Parson's Brigade never participated in a real battle or faced a truly organized and determined enemy army. Thus, it does not require a great deal of imagination to conclude where Parson's order book falls on the previous mentioned scale of interest.

The editor, however, is to be commended for her efforts to make the work as useful as possible by including summaries of the unit's activities and brief biographical footnotes about the various officers mentioned in the order book. The book's flaw is not in its efforts but rather in its topic.

BAILEY, ANNE J., ED. *IN THE SADDLE WITH THE TEXANS: DAY-BY-DAY WITH PARSON'S CALVARY BRIGADE, 1862-1865*. ABILENE: MCWHINEY FOUNDATION PRESS, 2004. 416 PP. INDEX, NOTES. \$29.95 CLOTH. ISBN 1-893114-48-1.

The Secret Life of a Black Trophy Wife: A Cultural Autobiography Marsha Stephens Wilson Rappaport

The Freedom to Be...
Review by Trina Nolen

Marsha Stephens Wilson Rappaport's *The Secret Life of a Black Trophy Wife: A Cultural Autobiography* is not what it seems. The title suggests the book is about a housewife's superficial existence as window dressing for her husband's storefront. The title does not do the book justice. This book is much deeper than one woman's life. It is about survival. It is about vision. It is about racism. In the end, it is about life's lessons that ultimately make us stronger.

Marsha Rappaport's voice is strong and confident. Early in the book, she proclaims that "money buys the freedom to play and the freedom to create." This would be the central theme throughout the book as we glimpse into the life of a wealthy young girl as she blossoms into a privileged adult. In the end, we see the reality of the myth.

The book was not what I expected, but that does not make it a bad book. Much attention is given to the author's family heritage. We explore their trials and tribulations as the generations of Stephens rise from depths of slavery to peaks of prosperity. The book does not, however, peer into the author's life as a "Black Trophy Wife." She merely proclaims, "I was basically mute in both of my marriages to Black men."



RAPPAPORT, MARSHA STEPHENS WILSON. *THE SECRET LIFE OF A BLACK TROPHY WIFE: A CULTURAL AUTOBIOGRAPHY*. FREDERICK: PUBLISH AMERICA LLC, 2002. 167 PP. ILLUSTRATIONS. \$19.95 PAPER. ISBN1-4137-4161-4.

CyberTerror

R. J. Pineiro

Not Quite Quiet on the Western Front

Review by Trina Nolen

CyberTerror is bold and aggressive, and while this novel is certainly entertaining, it is also extremely thought provoking. R. J. Pineiro's writing is vivid, alive, and, at times, graphic. His account of the terrorists' destruction in New Orleans is especially believable in light of the damage caused by Hurricane Katrina two years later. As the complex and intriguing plot unfolds, we see the "good guys," a CIA counterterrorist operative, an FBI agent, and a cocky computer whiz, pursuing terrorists across the United States and through cyberspace. We see cities destroyed and lives lost as the terrorists move beyond the "real world" into cyberspace securing vehicles with which to wreak havoc. The cyber scenes are definitely for "techies," but Pineiro manages to strike a balance between the physical and cyber worlds without leaving non-technical types, such as myself, in the dark.

This action packed techno-thriller makes a political statement too bold to be ignored: the United States is vulnerable and will remain so unless we combat terrorism across all fronts.

PINEIRO, R. J. *CYBERTERROR*. NEW YORK: FORGE, 2003. 384 PP. \$25.95 CLOTH. ISBN 0-765-30393-0. 2002032528.

Threading the Needle

Clay Reynolds

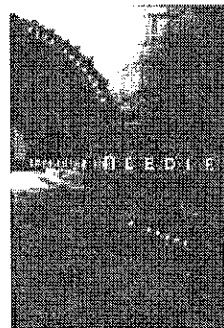
Pump the Accelerator

Review by Steve Zani

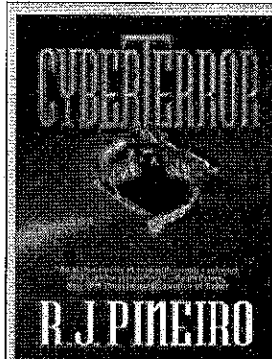
Threading the Needle may come as a bit of a surprise to former fans of Clay Reynolds' "Sandhill Chronicles." The book is the fourth in what was a trilogy of novels revealing the secrets, trials, and inner-workings of small town life in the fictional setting of worn-out north Texas town Agatite. Prior knowledge of the series isn't necessary to open the pages of this work, but new readers may miss out on just what kind of serious shift has occurred here, as Reynolds mixes his familiar themes and wounded characters with a supernatural element. While Reynolds has always been capable of providing surprising twists, the new elements here involve a haunted 1950's drag racing strip, complete with what amounts to a

"Dead Man's Curve" at the end of the line, as well as leather-jacketed bad boys and parents who just don't understand. The basic plot involves a drag racer who returns from the grave to shatter the lives and steal the souls of anyone foolish enough to race him, until one young woman takes it upon herself to end the demonic cycle. That plot description may seem hackneyed, or at least unrealistic for those who were expecting another novel about small town Texas troubles, but the novel reveals that Reynolds has not lost his attention to detail. Even though the narrative is populated with a few stock characters and ghostly stereotypes, the author has enough craft that a single drag off of a cigarette can still reveal something profound and telling about the smoker in question. Moreover, the pacing and structure of the novel mirror the excitement of the very drag races being chronicled. The plot shifts from present to past as if moving from car to car, gathering intensity as it goes.

Initially, cynical readers might think Reynolds has just watched Charlie Sheen's B-movie revenge-film *The Wraith* too many times, but of course the more deliberate homage taking place in these pages is to *Rebel Without a Cause*. Reynolds has the insight to realize that a ghost race with the driver's soul at stake is yet another way to portray the emptied dreams and lost souls that have previously populated his more realistic stories of Agatite. More importantly, he has the skill as a writer to take stereotypes and deliberately work them over, revealing the depths of sentiment and character that made them so enduring as stereotypes in the first place. In short, *Threading the Needle* is an urban myth of a novel that only initially seems out of place as a vision of north Texas life. This ghost story touches upon the exact themes—broken and healing lives, consequences, possibilities and dreams—that made his previous "Sandhill Chronicles" successful.



REYNOLDS, CLAY. *THREADING THE NEEDLE*. LUBBOCK: TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2003. 288 PP. \$27.95 CLOTH. ISBN 0-89672-498-0. 2002155788.

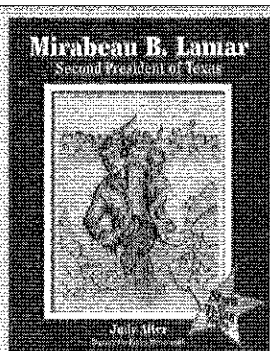
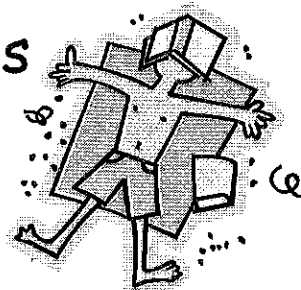
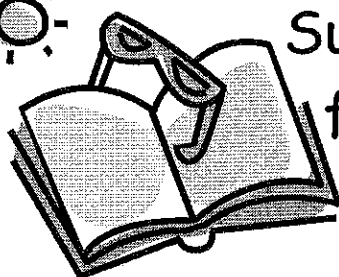


R. J. Pineiro was born in Cuba and grew up in Central America. He has a pilot's license, a black belt in martial arts, and has traveled extensively throughout Europe, Asia and the Americas to conduct research for his novels. He lives in Austin.

Clay Reynolds is professor of arts and humanities at the University of Texas at Dallas. In addition to *Threading the Needle* his published books include *Twenty Questions: Answers for the Inquiring Writer*, *Monuments*, and, more recently, *Ars Poetica*.

Steve Zani has a Ph.D. in comparative literature and teaches in the English and Modern Languages department at Lamar University.

Summer Selections for Children and Young Adults



Judy Alter is the longtime director of TCU Press and author of a number of books for children and adults. She was selected as the 2005 recipient of the Western Writers of America Lifetime Achievement Award.

In addition to *Mirabeau B. Lamar: Second President of Texas*, West Texas artist Patrick Messersmith has illustrated other Stars of Texas Series selections including *Miriam "Ma" Ferguson: First Woman Governor of Texas* and *Henrietta King: Rancher and Philanthropist*.

Mirabeau B. Lamar: Second President of Texas

Judy Alter

The Other President of the Republic

Review by Stephen Curley

This chapter book by Judy Alter presents an accurate picture of Mirabeau Bonaparte Lamar, warts and all. He's the "other" president: while the more colorful Sam Houston gets the press, Lamar gets ignored. Houston promoted Lamar from private to colonel for bravery at the Battle of San Jacinto. It was perhaps the last time the two men agreed on anything.

Lamar wanted to execute the battle's most celebrated prisoner, Santa Anna; Houston spared him. Lamar championed continued Texas independence; Houston wanted statehood. Lamar, unlike Houston, saw no reason to honor land treaties made with Indians. Lamar built the Texas Navy; Houston disbanded it. Houston called Lamar "Miraboo"; Lamar called Houston "the big drunk." Houston tried, in vain, to keep Lamar from succeeding him as president.

Alter portrays Lamar as a quiet, charming man who read and wrote poetry. As president, he accomplished a great deal. He moved the state capitol to Austin, gained the first international diplomatic recognition for the new Republic, and set aside public lands for public education. He is sometimes called the Father of Texas Education.

This large-print book has several enticing features for the young reader. Sidebars highlight bits of trivia, such as Lamar's being named for two heroes of the French Revolution: Count Mirabeau and Napoleon Bonaparte. End matters include excerpts from two of Lamar's poems, a chronology of his life, a glossary, an annotated list of six books

for further reading and five reliable websites, and an index.

Five eloquent black-and-white drawings by Patrick Messersmith manage to convey history with a sense of motion—even his portraits make it seem as if Lamar has been caught in mid act. The book also includes a facsimile of a poem published by Lamar in 1838.

Alter lets us see Lamar against the background of his era. With style and clarity, this book enables youngsters (about ages eight to twelve) to understand a fairly complex character and his contribution to Texas history. Highly recommended for juvenile readers.

ALTER, JUDY. *MIRABEAU B. LAMAR: SECOND PRESIDENT OF TEXAS*. ABILENE: STATE HOUSE PRESS, 2005. 72 PP. GLOSSARY, INDEX, ILLUSTRATIONS, TIMELINE, WEBSITES. \$17.95 CLOTH. ISBN 1-880510-97-9. 2005013026.

Finding Daddy: A Story of the Great Depression Jo & Josephine Harper

A Young Girl's Challenge to Help Her Father

Review by JoAn W. Martin

Bonnie's teacher asks her to sing at the Thanksgiving Assembly, but when she stands in front of her classmates with everyone looking at her, not a note comes out. She cannot do it, even though everyone is supportive.

When Bonnie and her friends get home, her father joins them in their hide-and-seek game. Bonnie can always find Daddy. After her mother has served them a delicious dinner, her father gets out his fiddle and the family has a sing-a-long. This is Bonnie's very favorite thing to do. Sometimes Bonnie even sings by herself.

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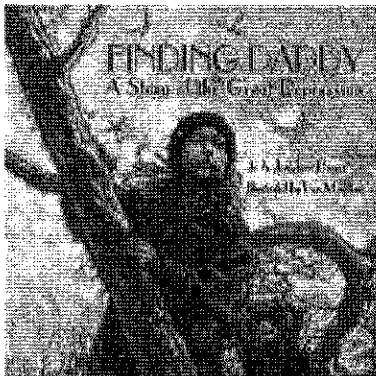
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Life changes for Bonnie when her father loses his job. They still sing, "Happy Days are Here Again," but Bonnie knows it isn't true. When the neighbors criticize her father for not working, he leaves home to find work. Bonnie thinks she has to do something. Remembering their happy hide-and-seek days when she could always find Daddy, she and her dog Caesar set out sure that they can locate him. She doesn't care how far she has to walk. But does she have the boldness to ask strangers to help her?

Jo Harper and her daughter, Josephine, have collaborated previously on *Prairie Dog Pioneers* which won the Willa Cather award for Best Children's Book of the Year. In *Finding Daddy* they have looked back at America's Great Depression and written a picture book for ages five and up. What a great way to explain the dark days of fathers unable to support their families. Our hero, shy, timid Bonnie, reaches deep inside herself to find the courage to rescue her family.

Available also in a Spanish edition, the authors have added a timeline of depression era pictures, a glossary of terms used during that time, and photographs of movies and songs that adult readers will remember.

Ron Mazellan's monochromatic illustrations in oil and acrylics depict faces of the characters filled with fear, despair, and determination. The illustrations add much to the text, with front-piece and back-piece of vintage photographs of the songs and characters of the depression years.



HARPER, JO & JOSEPHINE. *FINDING DADDY: A STORY OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION*. NEW YORK: TURTLE BOOKS, 2003. 42 pp. ILLUSTRATIONS. \$16.95 CLOTH. ISBN 1-890515-31-0.

When Butterflies Sing Michelle Rodman

A Toddler Lesson in Unconditional Love
Review by JoAn W. Martin

Michelle Rodman poses young children's questions for which we adults have few answers. She reminds us that rhyming queries play right into the exuberance of toddlers. The question-answer mode in *When Butterflies Sing* serves as a hook to keep the audience's attention and offers variety to the sound and rhythm of the text.

Not to be taken literally, we laugh at the notion of elephants dancing and cats playing hop-scotch. Eventually, our small questioner bypasses Mommie and Daddy to quiz Grandma and Grandpa. The very repetition is attractive to ears of two-year-olds. A laugh-out-loud page questions: Can roosters cook? Can coyotes kiss? Many pre-schoolers will join the game and ask their own nonsense questions. This easy-to-hold board book models to the child a way to engage adults in conversation. In spite of not knowing all the answers, Mommie assures her little angel, "I'll love you forever till butterflies sing."

Alexandra Harcha-Dellie's art integrates the text with simple illustrations framed around the edge of the page with white space. Designed as a "lap book," this sturdy board book is intended to be read aloud while the child in the reader's lap views the pictures.



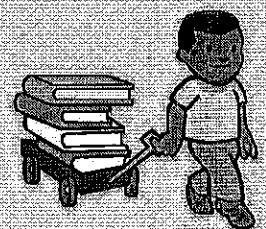
RODMAN, MICHELLE. *WHEN BUTTERFLIES SING*. AMARILLO: WIGGLE WORM PRESS, 2004. UNNUMBERED PP. ILLUSTRATIONS. \$15.00 CLOTH. ISBN 0-974-8351-0.

Jo Harper, grew up in the Texas Panhandle and now lives in Houston with her family. She has authored numerous children's and young adult books.

Josephine Harper has also co-authored *Prairie Dog Pioneers* with her mother.

Ron Mazellan has been a graphic designer and illustrator for more than twenty years and is the author of *The Harmonica*, his first children's book.

After teaching fourth and fifth grade writing/language arts for four years, Michelle Rodman is now a stay-at-home mom to her two children. *When Butterflies Sing* is her first children's book.



Tom Townsend has been a professional novelist and freelance writer for over twenty years. He is the author of twenty-six books. He owns Toyland Combat Vehicles, which provides military vehicles, weapons systems and re-enactors to the motion picture industry. Tom's wife, Jan, started Toyland Farms and raises and sells miniature horses and cattle.

JoAn W. Martin is a retired teacher from Baytown schools and author of a young adult historical novel, *Yankee Girl*. She has published numerous articles and book reviews.

Dennis R. Miller, Jr. has a Ph.D. in Spanish from Florida State University. He has done extensive research on Nicaraguan theater, including *teatro callejero* and children's theatre.



Gypsy Prince: War Horse

Tom Townsend

A Book for Any Age Horse Lover
Review by JoAn W. Martin

Tom Townsend of science fiction and pirate fame has written a compelling story of World War II, but the setting is Bavaria at the beginning of Hitler's rise to power.

When Brunhilda, at almost thirty years, drops her last foal, the stable boy Karl feels a special affinity for the small colt. He determines to bottle-feed and train him, in spite of Josef, the old stable master's opinion that he would never amount to much. The colt's parents were war horses, pulling the big guns, but this little runt will only be able to pull a beer wagon. Karl has his work cut out for himself. He has to force-feed him with goat milk and continue to do his work for Josef who is a hard taskmaster.

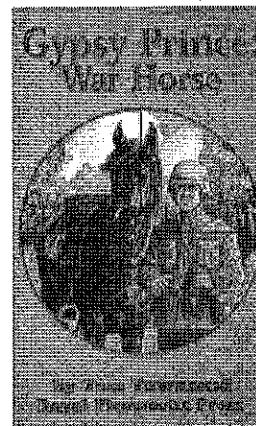
Karl, a proud member of the Hitler Youth, is uncomfortable hearing Josef's diatribes against the government and knows he is duty-bound to report old Josef for his disloyalty to Hitler and the Nazi Party. But at sixteen, Karl is conflicted about informing on his old mentor.

Against her husband's wishes, the baroness names the colt Gypsy Prince, even though gypsies are held in even lower esteem than Jews. Karl continues caring for Gypsy Prince along with the other larger horses. Uta, a young, skinny girl with big eyes, and Deiter, another stable boy, tease Karl about his attention to the small colt.

Karl on Gypsy Prince and Deiter on Tanzer are requisitioned for a new kind of war called Blitz Krieg, "Lightning War." They find themselves headed east even though the Fuhrer has signed a peace treaty with Russia. War does its disillusionment work. From Karl's and Deiter's Hitler Youth ideology to the gut-wrenching sight of the wanton destruction of a Russian village, Townsend puts us there with the two naive boys. After a series of unbelievable coincidences, Gypsy Prince's life comes full circle, back to Bavaria and his beloved pastures and forests.

Tom Townsend has a unique talent for visuals: moonlight bathes the floor with pools of pale light; their water buckets freeze, and their

breath becomes thin silver clouds. Townsend also puts the reader inside Gypsy Prince's head, and with just the right touch, we view the world through a horse's eyes and feel the emotions of his love for Karl and his hatred for the destruction of the war: it is reported that ten million horses died in Germany's assault on Russia.



TOWNSEND, TOM. *GYPSY PRINCE: WAR HORSE*. UNIONVILLE: ROYAL FIREWORKS PRESS, 2005. 187 PP. \$9.99 PAPER. ISBN 0-88092-433-0.

El dilema de Trino

Diane Bertrand Gonzales

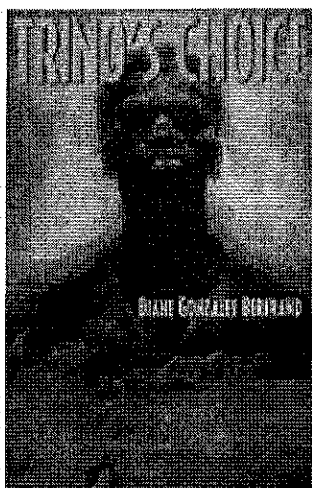
Querer es poder: The Sky's the Limit
Review by Dennis R. Miller, Jr.

First Spanish-language edition of an award-winning book for young adults young, *El dilema de Trino* is a must read for any young adult.

Trino Olivares, a thirteen-year-old Mexican-American, attends a junior high with two antithetical social groups: the *estudiosos* [the nerds] (Lisana and her friends) and the ruffians (Rosca and his group). Initially, Trino aligns himself with the rough crowd, but while fleeing Rosca one fateful day, Trino seeks refuge in a local bookstore. Trino's father has already been killed, and it appears the same fate awaits Trino. However, in the bookstore Trino meets Lisana, some of her friends, and a local poet. Trino's inadvertent trip to the bookstore changes the course of Trino's life because he realizes something significant: he has choices. Towards the novel's close, Trino's mother loses her job, and Beto, one of his younger brother's, becomes violently ill. Since his mother is unable to pay for Beto's medicine, Trino decides to join Rosca and his

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gang one evening at a car wash to "make some money." Because of that fateful decision, one of Trino's friends is shot to death and a wounded Rosca tells the authorities that Trino is the group's mastermind. Trino realizes he made an egregious decision, and the text's message is clear: stay in school and get an education, and the cycle of violence and poverty common in barrios like Trino's can be broken.



GONZALES, DIANE BERTRAND. *EL DILEMA DE TRINO*. TRANS. JULIA MERCEDES CASTILLA. HOUSTON: ARTE PÚBLICO PRESS, 2005. 144 PP. \$9.95 PAPER. ISBN 978-1-55885-458-1. 2005046493.

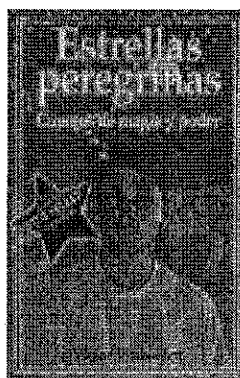
Estrellas peregrinas Victor Villaseñor

Looking Back and Thinking Forward
By Dennis R. Miller, Jr.

Estrellas peregrinas is thematically appropriate for any mature child/young adult. A very personal text, it is divided into three parts: the first relates Villaseñor's most vivid childhood memories, while the second and third sections narrate stories his mother and father shared with him.

The nine stories within the whole novel read as one cohesive unit. *Estrellas peregrinas* is simultaneously a personal and universal text. Intended specifically for young Mexican-Americans, the stories remind these youths to embrace both the spirituality and "fantastical" aspects of many indigenous cultures, stressed in the author's personal, interwoven stories. These tales remind the reader we are all an

integral component of the universe. This mixture of reality and "fantasy" instructs the reader to derive his/her strength to survive from nature and his/her family. The story's universal appeal manifests itself in the different events with which almost anyone can empathize: being ridiculed at school, learning a language at school that may not be spoken at home, coping with the death of a loved one, or the need to sacrifice everything for one's family (during peaceful times or in the midst of the Mexican Revolution, the theme of a few stories). The novel's underlying message is empowerment: by relying on your own strength and intelligence, by not rejecting the beliefs of your (Mexican) ancestors, you will not only survive but *thrive*.



VILLASEÑOR, VICTOR. *ESTRELLAS PEREGRINAS: CUENTOS DE MAGIA Y PODER*. TRANS. ALFONSO GONZÁLEZ. HOUSTON: ARTE PÚBLICO PRESS, 2005. 178 PP. \$9.95 PAPER. ISBN 1-55885-462-2. 2005046492.

Kissing Tennessee and Other Stories from the Stardust Dance Kathi Appelt

Love and Heartbreak at the Stardust Dance
Review by Frances M. Ramsey

Imagine the school gymnasium decorated with glittering stars and filled with young teens celebrating their graduation from eighth grade. Imagine their hopes, fears, uncertainties, and struggles. This is what Kathi Appelt explores in nine short stories told in the voice of each teenager.

Tim needs magic to muster the courage to ask Lucy to dance. Mary Sarah seeks beauty in a hair ribbon as she and her sister recover from

Continued on page fourteen

Diane Gonzalez Bertrand grew up in San Antonio and continues to live there with her family. She teaches creative writing and is Writer-in-Residence at St. Mary's University.

Julia Mercedes Castilla is the author of numerous children and young adult books which have been published in India, Zimbabwe, Colombia, and the United States.

Victor Villaseñor is the author of *Thirteen Senses*, *Rain of Gold*, the non-fiction *Jury: The People vs. Juan Corona*, the novel *Machos*, and the screenplay *The Ballad of Gregorio Cortez*.

Alfonso González also translated *Thirteen Senses* into Spanish. He teaches classes on Mexican and Hispanic American Literature at California State University in Los Angeles.

Kathi Appelt is the author of many acclaimed picture books, including the *Bubba and Beau* series and *Oh My Baby, Little One*. She lives in College Station.

Melanie Chrismer is a fifth-generation native of Houston. She is a descendant of the real Phoebe Clapsaddle.

Virginia Marsh Roeder has explored many facets of the art industry, from graphic design to illustration art.

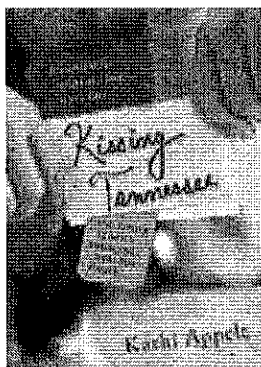
El Paso natives Susan and Denise Gonzales Abraham are the daughters of Cecilia Gonzales Abraham, the title character on *Cecilia's Year*.

Frances M. Ramsey is a retired librarian from the Beaumont ISD. She received her B.S. in zoology from Kansas State University and received her library Certification from Oklahoma State University.



Continued from page thirteen
their father's abuse. Another boy tries to go on with life without the girlfriend who was killed in an accident. Cub seems to question his sexual orientation. Becca wishes she had not gone out the restroom window to meet an older boy who took advantage of her. Peggy Lee is floating because her next door neighbor kissed her! Mason does not meet Carrie's idea of Prince Charming, but she wishes he would ask her to dance.

This slim volume will appeal to middle schoolers facing similar problems or seeking to better understand their peers.



APPELT, KATHI. *KISSING TENNESSEE AND OTHER STORIES FROM THE STARDUST DANCE*. SAN DIEGO: HARCOURT, 2004. 132 PP. \$5.95 PAPER. ISBN 0-15-205127-9.

Phoebe Clapsaddle Has a Tumbleweed Christmas Melanie Chrismer

Christmas with Phoebe Clapsaddle
Review by Frances M. Ramsey

Those who enjoyed Phoebe Clapsaddle's first experience as sheriff and her effort to tame the Tumbleweed Gang will enjoy her further adventures in celebrating Christmas near Buzzard, Texas, which is south of Big Spring, west of Marathon, north of Terlingua, and east of El Paso.

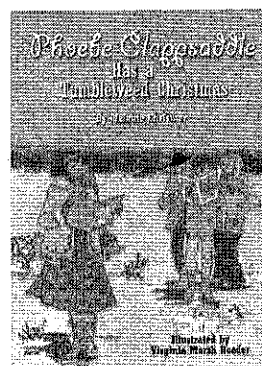
When mule mailman Festus mixes Phoebe's Christmas mail with that of the Tumbleweed brothers, she rides through a gathering storm to exchange their parcel for her card. Elmo and Clifford complain about Eustace's cooking since he started reading cook books. They suspect one another in the theft of a hat, a shirt, and a bandana. Phoebe calms their fighting with gingerbread cookies and invites them to

Christmas dinner.

Festus and his wife and the Tumbleweeds arrive with gifts of brown sugar, candy, and new puppies. They have a rollicking good time making a tumbleweed Christmas tree and decorating it with a barbed wire wreath, a rattlesnake garland, and Phoebe's sheriff's star.

Colorful, lighthearted illustrations by Virginia Marsh Roeder propel the story and provide interesting details for further contemplation.

Recommended for western collections for children.



CHRISMER, MELANIE. *PHOEBE CLAPSADDLE HAS A TUMBLEWEED CHRISTMAS*. GRETNAL PELICAN PUBLISHING COMPANY, 2004. 32 PP. ILLUSTRATIONS. \$15.95 CLOTH. ISBN 1-58980-241-1. 2004003455.

Cecilia's Year Susan and Denise Gonzales Abraham

Generational Differences within Hispanic Culture
Review by Janet K. Turk

This young adult novel presents Maria Cecilia Gonzales, a fourteen-year-old dreamer. Cecilia's mother does not understand her daughter's desire for more education and a job in the big city. Mrs. Gonzales believes Cecilia's highest aim should be to cook, sew, and raise children. Mama sees the books her daughter reads as "trouble," while Cecilia views them as "treasures." The gripping question raised early in the novel is whether Cecilia will be allowed to attend high school, thus furthering her education.

This novel offers a perspective of family dynamics and their consequences on people's
Continued on page fifteen

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actions and reactions, the generational debates between parents and children, and the encompassing love that allows children to grow and mature in to the adults they wish to become. Likewise, the story presents a fascinating look at the Hispanic culture surrounding the Gonzales family. Highly recommended for all public and private libraries.



ABRAHAM, SUSAN AND DENISE GONZALES. *CECILIA'S YEAR*. EL PASO: CINCO PUNTOS PRESS, 2004. 216 PP. \$16.95 CLOTH. ISBN 0-938317-87-3. 2004013374.

The Ghostly Rider and Other Chilling Stories Hernán Moreno-Hinojosa

Ghosts and Goblins Galore
Review by Janet K. Turk

Hernán Moreno-Hinojosa's title story, "The Ghostly Rider," offers the chilling tale of Roberto Rodríguez's encounter with a beautiful young woman on a public transit bus. He loans the woman his coat while walking her home from the bus stop. When he goes to retrieve the jacket the following week, Roberto finds out that the beautiful woman is a corpse in a local cemetery. When he goes to verify the tale about the woman, he finds his coat resting on her tombstone. This collection of twelve ghost stories offers folk legends, bizarre encounters, shaper-shifters, monsters and more, all with the flavor of Hispanic culture mixed in and some with life lessons embedded.

While the stories are diverse and fairly interesting, children are unlikely to be scared or chilled by the plots unless the setting for reading the tales adds a spooky ambience. On a positive note, the brief juvenile book concludes with a glossary of Spanish words and phrases used in the various stories. Recommended for public libraries.

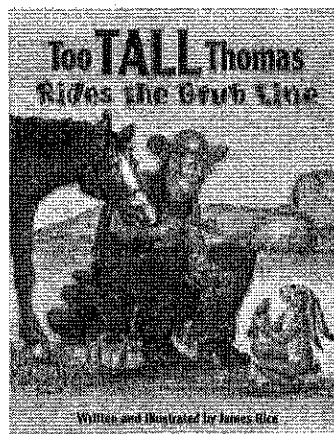
MORENO-HINOJOSA, HERNÁN. *THE GHOSTLY RIDER AND OTHER CHILLING STORIES*. HOUSTON: PINATA BOOKS, 2003. 144PP. GLOSSARY. \$9.95 PAPER. ISBN 1-55885-400-2.

Too Tall Thomas Rides the Grub Line James Rice

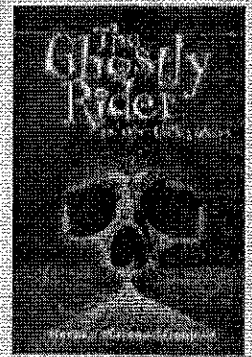
A Cowboy Finds His Calling
Review by Janet K. Turk

In this delightful picture book, author and illustrator James Rice presents Thomas, a cowboy who has finished a long trail drive and must ride the grub line southward. Riding the grub line means performing odd jobs at ranches for food and shelter. When Thomas begins making his way home, he finds that riding the grub line is not suited to his personality. The first ranch in the grub line offers beans and a bed for fence repairs; the second offers fatback and cornbread for weeding a winter garden. With each job, Thomas comments that the work is not fitting for a cowboy, but he completes the tasks anyway. As he enters West Texas, Thomas encounters a ranch foreman with an offer the cowboy cannot refuse: all winter in a saddle with "stinkin' cows and a horse for company." Finally, Thomas has a job worthy of a cowboy.

This juvenile book is worthwhile for two clear reasons: the illustrations are sure to delight both children and parents, and Thomas offers a subtle moral about performing tasks to the best of one's abilities even if the work is not pleasant. This book is highly recommended for all public libraries and homes with little buckaroos.



RICE, JAMES. *TOO TALL THOMAS RIDES THE GRUB LINE*. GRETNA: PELICAN PUBLISHING COMPANY, 2004. 32 PP. ILLUSTRATIONS. \$15.95 CLOTH. ISBN 1-58980-177-6. 2003018921.



Hernán Moreno-Hinojosa's work has appeared in various magazines and print media. He grew up in the part of South Texas that used to be known as "el desierto muerto," a region that served as the inspiration for many of his stories.

James Rice is widely acclaimed as the South's leading illustrator of juvenile books, and is quickly becoming a master of the real cowboy story for children. He was born in Coleman County, Texas, and now lives in Hico, Texas.

Janet K. Turk has been a lecturer of English at Lamar University for eight years. She teaches freshman composition, sophomore literature, and distance learning classes.

Review of Texas Books

Department of English and Modern Languages
Lamar University
P. O. Box 10023
Beaumont, TX 77710

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