

# Review of Texas Books

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## Managing Editors

Holly Carey  
Janet Turk

## Founding Editor

Sally Dooley

## Advisory Editor

R. S. Gwynn

## Business and Subscription Offices

P.O. Box 10023  
Beaumont, TX 77710

## Email

holly.carey@lamar.edu,  
jkturk@yahoo.com

## Web Site

[http://dept.lamar.edu/  
EnglishandModernLanguages/  
RTB](http://dept.lamar.edu/EnglishandModernLanguages/RTB)

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Rob Fink is the author of numerous articles and encyclopedia entries in African American history. A graduate of Baylor University and Texas Tech University, he lives in Abilene, Texas, where he is assistant professor of education at Hardin-Simmons University. Cary D. Wintz is professor of history at Texas Southern University and lives in Houston.

## Featured Publisher

Texas Tech University Press publishes nonfiction titles in the areas of natural history and the natural sciences; eighteenth-century and Joseph Conrad studies; studies of modern Southeast Asia, particularly the Vietnam War; costume and textile history; Latin American literature and culture; and all aspects of the Great Plains and the American West, especially history, biography, memoir, sports history, and travel. In addition, the Press publishes several scholarly journals, acclaimed series for young readers, an annual invited poetry collection, and literary fiction of Texas and the West.

## Editors' Choice: *Playing in Shadows: Texas and Negro League Baseball*

### An Indisputable Influence

Review by Jerry Bradley

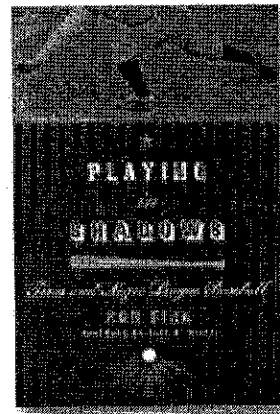
Of the fifteen Texans in the National Baseball Hall of Fame, eleven are African-Americans, and all but two of those (Joe Morgan of Bonham and Frank Robinson of Beaumont) have connections to the various black leagues that preceded the integration of the national pastime.

Baseball came to Texas shortly after the Civil War, and Rob Fink's study documents the rise of black professional and semi-professional baseball in the state, noting that the first officially recognized game occurred in 1867. Segregation, however, kept blacks from participating nationally until 1885 when the Cuban Giants were formed. The first black team in Texas is unknown, although Galveston did field a team in the 1880's.

The influence of black Texans on baseball is indisputable. "Rube" Foster, born in Calvert in 1879, went from Texas's semiprofessional ranks to become the most important person in African-American baseball when he formed the Negro National League in 1920; the NNL grew into the largest black-owned business in the country. Rube's half-brother, Willie Foster, was the top left-handed pitcher in Negro League history; called the "Black Cy Young," Foster won more games than any other Negro League pitcher. "Smokey" Joe Williams of Seguin, nicknamed for his fastball, pitched more than thirty years. Willie Wells, a Hall-of-Fame shortstop from Austin, invented the batting helmet and cut a hole in the pocket of his glove to make it more flexible, thereby improving fielding. Hall-of-Famer Louis Santop, a Tyler native, was the first great black home-run hitter. Giddings-born Hilton Smith won twenty or more games in each of his twelve seasons. "Biz" Mackey, an Eagle Pass native, redefined the defensive skills of catchers and became Roy Campanella's mentor. Chicago Cub great Ernie Banks played for the Dallas Black Giants.

By 1950 the Houston Eagles of the Negro American League were all that remained of

black professional baseball in Texas. They moved to New Orleans in 1951, and, following the lead of the major leagues, the Texas League integrated in 1952. Most of the black ballplayers in Texas, however, toiled in near anonymity, and Fink's research – even though drawing exhaustively from accounts in black newspapers – labors to uncover much on these nearly-forgotten athletes. Consequently, how good these players were remains open to debate since league records were as a sketchy as the leagues themselves. The teams constantly barnstormed and played exhibition games in addition to their scheduled league games, but head-to-head competition against big league stars suggests – and Fink affirms – they were every bit as accomplished as their white counterparts and should be remembered.



FINK, ROB. *PLAYING IN SHADOWS: TEXAS AND NEGRO LEAGUE BASEBALL*. LUBBOCK: TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2010. 224 PP. APPENDICES, BIBLIOGRAPHY, INDEX, MAPS, NOTES, PHOTOS. \$29.95 CLOTH. ISBN 13: 978-0-89672-701-4, 2009044286.

# Texas Country Singers

Phil Fry

Jim Lee

## Just Right for Your Pocket

Review by Jerry Bradley

Part of the Texas Small Book series, *Texas Country Singers* offers thumbnail biographies of twenty-five Texas performers. Given Texas's importance to the world of country music, the ability of co-authors Phil Fry and Jim Lee to reduce the list to twenty-five is remarkable indeed, and their introduction goes to considerable effort to explain the fitness of their choices.

As with previous books in the series (*Extraordinary Texas Women*, *State Fare: An Irreverent Guide to Texas Movie*), one of the delights of this little book is agreeing – and disagreeing – with the authors' selections. All the included singers were born in Texas, a methodology that excludes those who merely claimed Texas their home or earned their fame there. There are, of course, the requisite artists who could not be excluded: Ernest Tubb, Hank Thompson, Lefty Frizzell, Ray Price, George Jones, Willie Nelson, and George Strait. Bob Wills? Not a singer – but Tommy Duncan was and he's here. Buddy Holley and Roy Orbison? Too rock. Michael Martin Murphey? Western but not country. Delbert McClinton? Another rocker. Johnny Rodriguez? In. Billie Joe Shaver? Out. Don Walser? In. Rodney Crowell, Lyle Lovett, Robert Earl Keen, Guy Clark? Out, out, out, out. Whatever disagreements may have been a necessary part of the book's process, it is good to see Milton Brown, Vernon Dalhart, and Moon Mullican reassessed and introduced to perhaps new audiences.

Another delight is found in the interesting biographical "trivia" Fry and Lee include. Did you know that Buck Owens was born Alvin Edgar Owens, Jr., in Sherman? Or that Sheb Wooley of "Rawhide"/"Purple People Eater" fame was brother-in-law to Roger Miller (born in Fort Worth) and gave him his first fiddle? Such tidbits, squeezed into a small format, make this book just right for carrying in your pocket.

FRY, PHIL, AND JIM LEE. *TEXAS COUNTRY SINGERS*. FORT WORTH: TEXAS CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2008. 96 PP. \$8.95 CLOTH. ISBN 13: 978-0-87565-365-5. 2007038863.

# The Philosophy of the Western

Jennifer L. McMahon,

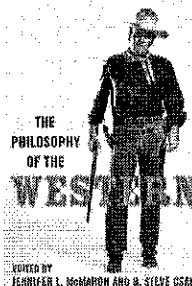
B. Steve, Csaki, eds.

## Scholarly Articles on the Western Movies

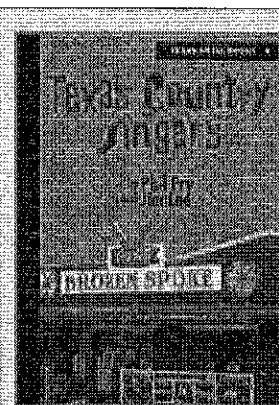
Review by Emma B. Hawkins

As part of *The Philosophy of Popular Culture Series*, this book is a serious collection comprised of seventeen scholarly/academic articles that focus on the aesthetic qualities of western film/movies. The authors examine various aspects of western film in lights of different philosophies, such as those propounded by Aristotle, Emerson, Locke, Hobbes, Kant, Nietzsche, Sartre, Rousseau, and Heidegger. The editors, both of whom contribute an article, hope to encourage and promote further exploration in new areas rather than continued research of old familiar subjects that have been all but exhausted. Divided into four sub-divisions with three to four articles each, the various sections explore (1) the relationship between westerns and the identity of the hero, especially as a solitary figure; (2) the relationship between men and social organizations; (3) westerns that defy the standard code of the West by challenging moral absolutism, moral ambiguity and moral cynicism; and (4) westerns that focus on the "Other," westerns that do not emphasize the typical white male hero, but rather pay attention to the minority, fringe figures, especially those that have been marginalized, excluded, and misrepresented for years.

Two of the more interesting discussions are "No Country for Old Men," by William Devlin, that argues that the film *No Country for Old Men* "demonstrates a decline, or decay, of the traditional western ideal (222)," and "Beating a Live Horse" by Jennifer McMahon that explores the attitudes and behavior of humans toward horses.



MCMAHON, JENNIFER L. AND CSAKI, B. STEVE, EDS. *THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE WESTERN*. LEXINGTON: U.P. OF KENTUCKY, 2010. 368 PP. BIBLIOGRAPHY. INDEX. \$35.00 CLOTH. ISBN 13: 978-0-8131-2591-6.



Phil Fry, a native of Hugo, Oklahoma, has lived in Austin, Texas, for forty years. He is an independent scholar with a Ph.D. in English from the University of Texas, where he worked on both *The Handbook of Texas* and the *Handbook of Texas Music*.

Jim Lee has lived in Texas for almost fifty years, and for all that time has been a fan of country music. Lee is past president and now fellow of the Texas Folklore Society. He is emeritus professor of English at the University of North Texas. He lives in Fort Worth. His latest book is *Adventures with a Texas Humanist*.

Jennifer L. McMahon, associate professor and chair of the English and Languages Department at East Central University, is a contributor to *The Philosophy of TV Noir*, *The Philosophy of Martin Scorsese*, and *The Simpsons and Philosophy*.

B. Steve Csaki was most recently a visiting professor at Centre College, where he taught.

Fred Erisman holds a Ph.D. in American Studies from the University of Minnesota and taught for thirty-five years at TCU. He held the Charles A. Lindbergh Chair of Aerospace History at the National Air and Space Museum, Smithsonian Institution, during the 2002-2003 year. A specialist in American popular literature and culture, he has published numerous studies of science fiction, technological fiction, detective and suspense fiction, and the western. Erisman is the author of *Boys' Books, Boys' Dreams, and the Mystique of Flight*. He lives in Fort Worth.



Lee Merrill Byrd and her husband Bobby Byrd founded Cinco Puntos Press, a publishing company named after their neighborhood in El Paso. Cinco Puntos—a publisher of non-fiction, fiction, poetry and children's literature—is recognized for bringing the multicultural literatures of the American Southwest, the U.S./Mexico border region and Mexico to a national audience.

## *From Birdwomen to Skygirls: American Girls' Aviation Stories*

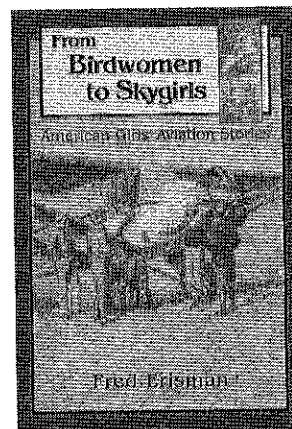
Fred Erisman

Erisman's book explores the portrayal of women in aviation (roughly years 1920-1960) through adventure stories written for young adult readers. He first carefully takes us through the evolution of the adventure story as a genre (with a nod to the "Bobbsey Twins," "Nancy Drew" and "Hardy Boys" stories, among several others) and then moves into discussing adventure tales specifically dealing with aviation (including the *Girl Aviator Series* and Bess Moyers' "Girl Flyers" books). The book is an excellent blend of historical context and analysis of how the female pilot became a popular presence in adolescent literature.

Much of the work details the history of women's participation in aviation, particularly focusing on their work as aviators and stewardesses. Each chapter deals with a specific time frame (such as 1925-1940) in order to give adequate detail not only to the various literary publications but also to the true stories of famous female pilots who were instrumental in the emerging feminist movement and the creation of the "New Woman." For example, Chapter three, "The Earhart Era", discusses at length Amelia Earhart's contribution to aviation through her well publicized flights and her media savvy, but it also shows how Earhart helped to renew the public's dormant interest in women's participation in flying—an interest exemplified by the publication of such works as the "Airplane Girl" books and *The Sky Girl*, by Harrison Bardwell and Dorothy Verrill.

Erisman's text is extremely well researched and serves as not only an exploration of the portrayal of the "aviatrix" in young adult fiction, but also as a good cultural history lesson focusing on aviation and gender in the twentieth century. *From Birdwomen to Skygirls* contains many illustrations and photographs; several of them are images of our earliest well known female pilots, such as Harriet Quimby, a journalist and pilot known for her "purple satin flying suit" (54), Helene Dutrieu, and Matilde Moisant. This book is a fantastic read for those interested in a neglected aspect of women's history in America and also those simply interested in

reading about the exciting early eras of aviation.



ERISMAN, FRED. *FROM BIRDWOMEN TO SKYGIRLS: AMERICAN GIRLS' AVIATION STORIES*. FORT WORTH: TEXAS CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2009. 192 PP. BIBLIOGRAPHY, ILLUSTRATIONS, INDEX, NOTES, PHOTOS. \$29.95 CLOTH. ISBN 13: 978-0-87565-397-6. 2009006782.

## *Juanito Counts to Ten / Johnny cuenta hasta diez—A Bilingual Counting Book*

Lee Merrill Byrd

### **Big Hearted Kisses!**

Review by Andrea Karlin

*Juanito Counts to Ten / Johnny Cuenta Hasta Diez* uses kisses in the form of big hearts to count sequentially from one to ten in English and Spanish. Beginning with one and building to ten, Juanito gives a kiss or kisses to big sister, daddy, momma, teacher, friend Birdie, hair cutter, reluctant friend Beatriz, stray cat, Baby Ed, and last but certainly not least, grandmother.

Simple but bold, colorful illustrations by Francisco Delgado give interesting perspectives that children should relate to and enjoy.

BYRD, LEE MERRILL. *JUANITO COUNTS TO TEN / JOHNNY CUENTA HASTA DIEZ—A BILINGUAL COUNTING BOOK*. EL PASO: CINCO PUNTOS PRESS, 2010. 32 PP. ILLUSTRATIONS. \$6.95 PAPER. ISBN 10: 1-933693-12-6. ISBN 13: 978-1-933693-12-5.

# Saltypie: A Choctaw Journey from Darkness into Light

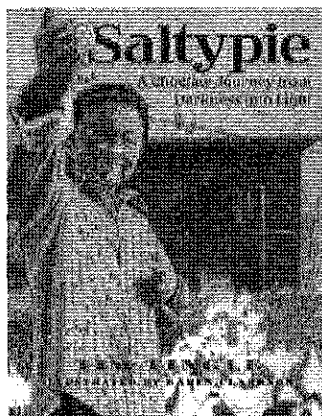
Tim Tingle

## Where Does Saltypie Come From?

Review by Andrea Karlin

*Saltypie: A Choctaw Journey from Darkness into Light* is an unexpected and thought provoking multi-generational story written in a picture story book format that will appeal to and be more appropriate for older readers, not the traditional young children that many associate as the picture book audience. The story, written by award winning Choctaw writer and story teller Tim Tingle, gives insight into some of the cultural background of a Choctaw family as this very touching and personal story unfolds and as the reader learns where Saltypie comes from.

Karen Clarkson's illustrations beautifully portray the emotions of the different family members both past and present and are a perfect compliment to the text. Ms. Clarkson is also a Choctaw tribal member.



TINGLE, TIM. *SALTYPY: A CHOCTAW JOURNEY FROM DARKNESS INTO LIGHT*. EL PASO: CINCO PUNTOS PRESS, 2010. 40 PP. ILLUSTRATIONS. \$17.95 CLOTH. ISBN 13: 978-1-1933693-67-5.

# Revelation Blind Willie Johnson: The Biography

Douglas N. Blakey

## The Greatest Singer from Texas

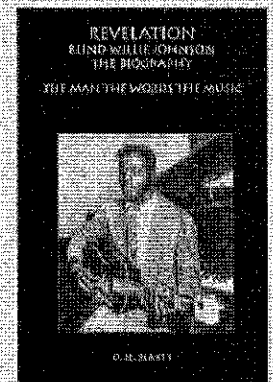
Review by Yves Laberge, Ph.D.

According to biographer Douglas Blakey, singer Blind Willie Johnson (1897-1945) was born "in a small town called Independence near Brenham in Washington County, Texas" (p. 4). Because of his blindness, Blind Willie Johnson worked as a street singer for most of his life and despite his harsh voice, he regularly sang at his local Baptist Church, but also in the streets of Marlin, Temple, Waco, and Beaumont. His repertoire was made of spirituals, gospel, and perhaps some rural blues (although he did not record any blues song). Before the publication of this timely biography, little was known about him, and I remember back in the 1970s the liner notes of his first LPs on the Yazoo label (taken from his 78rpm collected recordings) included very few details about his difficult life and career; scholars in African American heritage were not even sure by then about his dates of birth and death.

This hard-to-find book, the only one ever dedicated to Blind Willie Johnson, does justice to this immense artist and moving singer: we find all the lyrics of the thirty songs he recorded between 1927 and 1930, with an analysis of his main themes and musical style, plus lots of biographical facts. This unique biography written by Douglas Blakey ¾ with Blind Willie Johnson's recordings as prerequisites ¾ are essential to understand how different and "African-rooted" were the early recordings of U.S. Black artists before the 1930s. With his powerful and gravely chest voice coupled with his nervous guitar playing style (known as "bottleneck"), Blind Willie Johnson was a major influence for countless blues singers and guitar players, from Muddy Waters and Howlin' Wolf to Ry Cooder.

BLAKEY, DOUGLAS N. *REVELATION BLIND WILLIE JOHNSON: THE BIOGRAPHY*. RALEIGH: LULU PRESS, 2007. 322 PP. INDEX, ILLUSTRATIONS. \$36.95 PAPER. ISBN-13: 978-1-4303-2899-5.

Tim Tingle, a member of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, is a popular presenter at storytelling and folklore festivals across America. He was featured at the 2002 National Storytelling Festival. In 2004, he was a Teller-In-Residence at The International Storytelling Center, Jonesborough, Tennessee. Choctaw Chief Gregory Pyle has requested a story by Tingle previous to his Annual State of the Nation Address at the Choctaw Labor Day Gathering-a celebration that attracts over thirty thousand people- from 2002 to the present.



The following excerpt from D.N. Blakely is from DocumentRecords.com: "I have been asked to explain what motivated me into writing my book... well firstly of course is a love of the subject matter which for me goes back many years! I was always impressed and moved by the power that came across from Blind Willie's records and wanted to know all I could about the man who created them."

Paul and Lee Malone, husband and wife, also collaborated on *Louisiana Plantation Homes: A Return to Splendor, Louisiana Plantation Homes Postcard Book, The Majesty of the Felicianas, The Majesty of New Orleans, The Majesty of the Garden District, and The Majesty of the Garden District Postcard Book*, all published by Pelican. In each, Paul provided the stunning photography, while Lee wrote the historical background.



The author of more than twenty-five books, Sherry Garland enjoys writing about history and interesting people. Her children's historical picture books *The Buffalo Soldier* and *Voices of the Alamo* have garnered several honors, including selection into the Accelerated Reader Program and a Notable Social Studies Trade Book for Young People designation. Garland is also the author of *Best Horse on the Force*, all three titles published by Pelican. She and her husband live in Bryan.

## *The Majesty of the River Road*

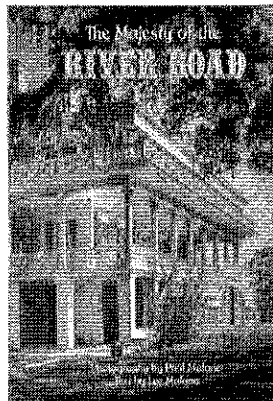
Lee Malone,  
Paul Malone

### **Magnificent Mansions on the Mississippi River**

Review by Yves Laberge, Ph.D.

This short, illustrated book presents a series of villas and mansions on the Mississippi River: from the Beauregard House to the Tezcuco Plantation Home, near Darrow. Most of those were built around 1800, but the splendid color photographs of the outside and interiors were taken around 1988. The most interesting examples date from eighteenth century, that is, during the French Colonial Period, when Louisiana's territory was as big as five states taken together as a part of New France. Among many luxurious sites, we see for instance the wonderful plantation home of Destrehan, near New Orleans, which was built in 1787 (p. 22) and the Mary Plantation Home, which dates from 1773 (p. 56).

This lavish book will be a treat for readers with an interest for architecture, design, furniture, and history of the colonial era. Paul Malone's photographs can magnify many of these wonderful mansions, their living rooms, bedrooms, and antique furniture. Potential tourists who plan to visit this region can organize their tours in advance and select some must-see sites, as many of these houses are now open to visitors. My only quibble would be about the spelling of some of the French words which are sometimes reproduced without any accent, like in "Belle Hélène" (p. 12).



MALONE, LEE, AND PAUL MALONE. *THE MAJESTY OF THE RIVER ROAD*. GRETNÄ: PELICAN PUBLISHING COMPANY, 2009. 96 PP. MAPS, PHOTOS. \$18.95 CLOTH. ISBN 10: 1-58980-539-9. ISBN 13: 978-1-58980-539-2.

## *Voices of Gettysburg*

Echoes of the Past

Review JoAn W. Martin

Sherry Garland unerringly echoes the voices of Union soldiers and Southern Rebels. A Private in the Union Army asks about the rumors: where would they have to fight the crafty old gray fox, General Robert E. Lee?

Lee's anguished voice comes through when forced to leave his beloved Virginia to march to Gettysburg to fight for his homeland. Too many battles have devastated Virginia, and the fighting has ravaged other southern states. He hopes that once the North has "tasted the bitter harvest of war" as the South has, they will pressure President Lincoln for peace. He has every confidence that his warriors will be successful and the fighting would end.

A seventy-year-old citizen of Gettysburg adds his voice. He picks up his musket and walks to the battlefield to help defeat the Confederates. A Gettysburg schoolteacher speaks from the church where the wagons have brought the wounded begging for water. She admits, "I will cry tomorrow; I do not have time to cry today."

A young soldier who carries the colors, a gunner in Battery B, a photographer, and a magazine artist express their horror for the Gettysburg tragedy.

In addition to the story seen through many eyes, the author captures the reader with colorful expressions: "hungry enough to eat a skunk," "confederate dollars as worthless as dirt" and "I prayed to God and Momma and our ol' dog, Blue."

Judith Hierstein's action pictures take the reader beyond the text: soldiers arguing, sad-eyed men wishing they were home. The illustrator's authentic horses and weapons depict soldiers dying to hold a piece of barren rock in silver fog and misty rain.

GARLAND, SHERRY. *VOICES OF GETTYSBURG*. GRETNÄ: PELICAN PUBLISHING COMPANY, 2010. 40 PP. BIBLIOGRAPHY, GLOSSARY, ILLUSTRATIONS, NOTES. \$16.99 CLOTH. ISBN 13: 978-1-589806-53-5.

# Shake On It and Spit in the Dirt

Lynne Gregg  
Karen Jennings

## Friendship Unites a Community

Review by JoAn W. Martin

Jon goes to spend the summer with his grandparents just as he has for years. This year, however, promises to be different. For one thing, rumors have it that there is a monster in the river that eats dogs, and Grandpa's dog has been killed.

Patches welcomes a friendship with Jon, but when Grandpa finds out about Jon slipping out at night to explore the river, he forbids his association with the white boy and refuses to allow him out on the river at night. The boys talk about their problem with white folks living on one side of the river and black folks on the other: "Why can't black and white folks get along like we do?" Hunting squirrels with Grandpa is great until Jon watches the process of skinning them.

On a trip to town Jon witnesses a white man shove Grandpa out of the way in the store. He doesn't understand why he won't stand up for his rights. When Grandpa gets seriously ill, more tragedy seems inevitable.

Readers will be lulled by the easy camaraderie of two eleven-year-old boys, but soon the adventure turns dangerous. Subtitled *The Mystery on the Big Cypress River*, the authors have quickened the suspense, and the reader must turn pages to find out how they will come out of this alive. The boys attempt the impossible in their decision to capture an almost mythical beast. They dig a pit to catch Hannibal, but a storm puts both of them at risk for their lives.

A celebratory parade is called for, and the two boys say, "Shake on it and spit in the dirt" as a pledge to always be friends. The authors use an epilogue to show how twenty years later this incident brought a divided community together.

GREGG, LYNNE, AND KAREN JENNINGS. *SHAKE ON IT AND SPIT IN THE DIRT*. BLOOMINGTON: UNIVERSE, 2009. 156 PP. \$12.95 PAPER. ISBN 13: 978-1-4401-5517-8.

# Desert Days Desert Nights

Roxie Munro

## Waldo in the Desert

Review by JoAn W. Martin

A *Where's Waldo* book, the search in this oversized picture book is for the reader to find creatures in six North American deserts. Roxie Munro illustrates a list of 275 animals for the "critter-conscious" picture reader to locate.

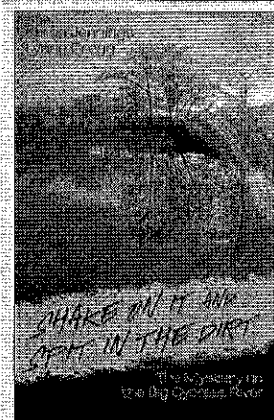
With pen and ink watercolors we find such an abundance of critters unbelievable. We can visit these various deserts in National and State parks to experience the magic, the mystery and romance of desert life. We have to look carefully. Some creatures like to hide.

The surprising information is that these areas with an average rainfall of less than ten inches a year can be so full of life. Readers can find, name and count the animals for day, then count the animals for night. Night and day desert drama!

Also included are such interesting fun facts. Scorpions get enough water from eating their prey; a horned toad can actually squirt blood from its eyes to startle attackers; the centipede usually has only forty legs, not one hundred; Two Bighorn sheep's head-to-head fight might last twenty-four hours; Pronghorn Antelope can sprint sixty mph. Turn to the back of the book for fun facts, numerically color-coded answers and sources for further reading in books and websites.

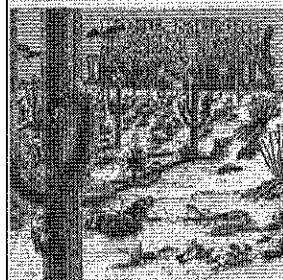
Roxie Munro, author/illustrator of thirty-five books, does not consider herself a naturalist. She lives in New York City with one houseplant and a view from her 10<sup>th</sup> floor window of a few ginkgo trees. But her travels to difficult to reach places help her write books that will "motivate the earth-conscious spirit in all of us." Best of all for the teachers and kids are activities at [www.roxiemunro.com](http://www.roxiemunro.com).

MUNRO, ROXIE. *DESERT DAYS DESERT NIGHTS*. HOUSTON: BRIGHT SKY PRESS, 2010. 44 PP. ILLUSTRATIONS. \$17.95 CLOTH. ISBN 13: 978-1-933979-77-9.



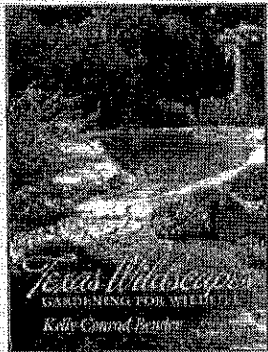
Lynne Gregg earned both bachelor and master degrees in English Education. She taught English for nearly thirty years. She currently lives in Houston with her husband John.

A Texas educator for thirty-two years, Karen Jennings has taught language arts, reading, and English as a Second Language.



Roxie Munro is the acclaimed author and illustrator of twenty-seven books for children, including *Amazement Park*, *Mazescapes*, *Ranch*, and *Wild West Trail Ride Maze*.

Robert Earl Hardy has been a professional writer and editor with an interest in contemporary music for twenty-five years. Also a musician, he has played guitar in rock'n'roll, rhythm and blues, and honky-tonk bands in the Washington, D.C., area since the 1970s. He is currently researching the cultural history of 1960s and '70s garage bands.



Kelly Conrad Bender is an urban wildlife biologist for Central Texas in the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. The former coordinator of the Texas Wildscapes™ program, she is currently based in Bastrop, Texas, where she conducts research and workshops and manages public outreach projects.

## *A Deeper Blue: The Life and Music of Townes Van Zandt*

Robert Earl Hardy

### Elements of an Artist

Review by Charles Popp

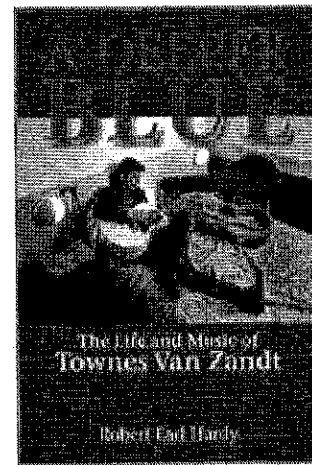
Robert Hardy does a very good job of giving us the overall events of Van Zandt's life. He starts with a chapter that firmly establishes Van Zandt as a member of one of the first families of Texas. We get a quick history of the founding of Texas and of Fort Worth. Van Zandt worked with Sam Houston, helped found a university, and had a county named after them.

All of this is quite interesting, but Hardy does not connect the dots. The connection between this almost royal family and the drug addicted mythical folk singer is not explained or delved into deep enough.

With the chapter where Van Zandt is confined in the Galveston Psychopathic Hospital, one of the doctor's ideas concerned Van Zandt's "feminine elements" (47). Not much more of this is made throughout the book. Was this one of the causes of his drug addiction—Hardy does not devote enough attention to this or many other elements of Van Zandt's life. This chapter ends with, "...he was very likely changed forever" (51). How was he changed? Again, Hardy missed a chance for some analysis of what made Van Zandt the tragic genius.

Several chapters follow which are dominated by dialogue from Fran Peters, Van Zandt's first wife. "...they paid for our apartment and food" (58). "...started playing...to get the ten dollars a night" (59). Statements like these and others make the book interesting from a superficial level, but Hardy's style leaves readers wanting to know more about why Van Zandt was as he was.

Hardy does give a very good and complete analysis of each of Van Zandt's albums, going into detail about what he thinks the songs mean and where they came from using quotes from people in Van Zandt's life to prove his point. If only Hardy would have used this style to connect the elements of Van Zandt's life; a good, if somewhat superficial biography, would have had much more weight.



HARDY, ROBERT EARL. *A DEEPER BLUE: THE LIFE AND MUSIC OF TOWNES VAN ZANDT*. DENTON: UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS PRESS, 2010. 320 PP. APPENDIXES, INDEX, NOTES, PHOTOS.

\$14.95 PAPER. ISBN-10: 1-57441-285-X. ISBN-13: 978-1-57441-285-7.

\$24.95 CLOTH. ISBN-10: 1-57441-247-7. ISBN-13: 978-1-57441-245-2. 2007044532.

## *Texas Wildscapes: Gardening for Wildlife* Kelly Conrad Bender

### Gardening for Wildlife

Review by Frances M. Ramsey

This beautifully illustrated volume is an outgrowth of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department's effort to replace lost wildlife habitat by utilizing urban landscapes. Beginning with the importance of wildscaping and the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department programs to encourage changes in backyard plantings, the author continues with the differences in the ten ecoregions of Texas.

Methods of providing the basics of food, water, and shelter are outlined through plantings, extra feeders, or water features. Step by step suggestions are made for planning the space to accommodate both wildlife and family activities.

Bird box specifications are given for twenty-two different species. Birds common in Texas are discussed and illustrated. The chapter on hummingbirds includes two pages of plants which will attract these tiny flying jewels.

A chapter on mammals, reptiles, and  
*Continued on page nine*

*Continued from page eight*

amphibians includes the needs of rabbits, squirrels, and bats followed by similar information about turtles, frogs, and toads. Snakes are pictured to make recognition of the beneficial species and identification of the poisonous ones easy.

Explaining that most insects are beneficial, some are pictured with brief descriptions. The most space is devoted to butterflies and the plants that attract them.

The chapter on troubleshooting deals with raccoons, opossums, rabbits, snakes, deer, cats, sparrows, starlings, fire ants, and wasps. There are lists of shade tolerant and deer resistant plants. A final chapter warns against invasive exotic plants. The DVD includes plant and animal lists, tables, pictures, and other detailed information in a fully searchable format. The glossary, bibliography, and reading lists are added benefits.

*Texas Wildscapes* is a pleasure to browse, full of useful information, and an inspiration for gardeners. This kind of back yard or school garden would be a great way for children to learn about the natural world.

BENDER, KELLY CONRAD. *TEXAS WILDSAPES: GARDENING FOR WILDLIFE*. COLLEGE STATION: TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2009. 160 PP. BIBLIOGRAPHY, DVD, GLOSSARY, ILLUSTRATIONS, MAPS, PHOTOS, READING LIST. \$24.95 PAPER. ISBN 10: 1-60344-085-2. ISBN 13: 978-1-60344-085-1. 2009007468.

## *The F Factor*

Diane Gonzales Bertrand

**Dreaded Broadcasting Class Opens the Way to Respect and Growth**

Review by Frances M. Ramsey

Javier Avila, the acknowledged smartest sophomore in his Catholic boys' high school, dreads the new elective Media Broadcasting Class to which he has been assigned. When he and Pat Berlanga, who sleeps in most classes, are chosen to be the first anchors on the closed circuit telecast of morning announcements, he is upset and then surprised by the way they work together and become good friends. Upper class athletes antagonize the lowly sophomores until Javier and Pat earn their grudging respect and mutual understanding develops.

Ms Bertrand, who has experience in San Antonio single gender parochial schools both as pupil and teacher, excels at revealing the anguish and joys of teenagers striving for acceptance and growth. The conversations, personalities, and events of high school life ring true. Developing relationships and unexpected events move the narrative at a quick pace.

What is the F factor? Is it fear of failure, fear of being a fraud, wondering who is a real friend, or comparison of a rich but distant family with a warm and supportive one? Each of these factors plays a part in an outstanding young adult novel that will enlighten and inspire. Highly Recommended.



BERTRAND, DIANE GONZALES. *THE F FACTOR*. HOUSTON: ARTE PUBLICO PRESS, 2010. 246 PP. \$12.95 PAPER. ISBN 10: 1-55885-598-X. ISBN 13: 978-1-55885-598-4. 2010000645.

## *The Far Canyon*

Elmer Kelton

**Is the Canyon for Buffalo, Comanches, or Cattlemen?**

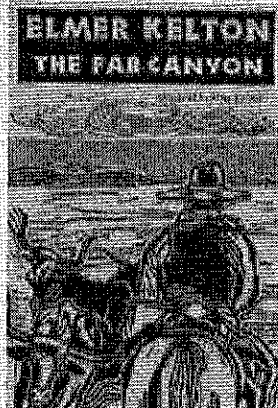
Review by Frances M. Ramsey

According to the Afterword, Kelton's emphasis on "history as it was" rather than how "it should be" has made him unique among writers of western fiction. This sequel to *Slaughter* does this by revealing the attitudes and actions of Comanches, Mexicans, and Americans from both north and south.

Confederate veteran Jeff Layne becomes disgusted with the buffalo hunters who take only the skins for eastern markets and leave

*Continued on page ten*

Diane Gonzales Bertrand is the author of numerous books for children and young adults. Her books for teens include *Trino's Choice*, which was named to the Texas Lone Star Reading List and winner of the Austin Writer's League Teddy Award, and *Trino's Time*, which was named to The New York Public Library's Books for the Teen Age 2002. A native of San Antonio, she teaches writing at St. Mary's University where she is Writer in Residence.



Elmer Kelton was voted All-Time Greatest Western Author by Western Writers of America. He received seven Spur Awards, four Wrangler Awards from the National Cowboy Hall of Fame and Museum, and lifetime achievement awards from WWA, Western American Literature Association, and the Texas Institute of Letters. He was the author of more than fifty novels.

# COWBOY CONSERVATISM



TEXAS AND THE RISE  
OF THE MODERN RIGHT

SEAN P. CUNNINGHAM

Sean P. Cunningham, assistant professor of history at Texas Tech University, has published articles and book reviews in *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* and the *East Texas Historical Journal*, among others. He lives in Lubbock, Texas.

*Continued from page nine*

carcasses to rot. He leaves Dodge City for his former home in south Texas hoping to live in peace on a cattle ranch. His newly married partners, a young frontier woman and her English husband, an old camp cook, and a rash cowboy accompany him. He finds only strife between Mexicans, cheated out of their home, and his greedy, hate-filled long time enemy. After renting grassland and collecting a large herd of cattle, he and his partners with a crew of cowboys move slowly north seeking a canyon he has remembered fondly.

The army is trying to get all Indians onto the reservation. Crow Feather and his young family are separated from the rest of their group as they move to winter camp. He manages to find a secure hidden camp for them in a canyon. When he is captured and forced to walk to the reservation with a rope around his neck, he desperately keeps trying to escape to take care of his family. Kelton summarizes thus:

*"In taking this herd up onto the plains, they were opening a new doorway for Texas... Once the buffalo were gone the Indians could never return, and the Texas plains would open for settlement as those in Kansas had. It would be for future generations to argue the right and the wrong of it. For Jeff's generation, few except the Indians themselves would even debate the point."*

The hardships of life on the trail, joys of family and friendship, and the tensions of distrust and hatred impel the reader to the last page while learning much about the cost of the life we enjoy today. Highly recommended for all who enjoy a real western.

KELTON, ELMER. *THE FAR CANYON*. FORT WORTH: TEXAS CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2010. 336 PP. \$18.95 PAPER. ISBN 13: 978-0-87565-411-9. \$26.50 CLOTH. ISBN 13: 978-0-87565-42-6. 2009043071.

## *Cowboy Conservatism: Texas and the Rise of the Modern Right*

Sean P. Cunningham

**Transforming the Political Landscape in  
Texas from Reliably Democratic to  
Consistently Republican**

Review by Jon P. Tritsch

It has not been too long ago that Texas was truly a one-party Democratic state in elections.

"From the White House to the Court House" has been a favorite electioneering slogan when casting the ballot for Democrats on Election Day. Obviously, something has been happening that has changed the Lone Star State's voting habits. In this book, *Cowboy Conservatism: Texas And The Rise Of The Modern Right*, Sean Cunningham explains how this change has transpired during a twenty-year stretch from the Kennedy years of the early 1960s to the election of Ronald Reagan in 1980. These were the formative years that laid the groundwork for the rise of the modern right as personified in the Republican Party.

Cunningham aptly describes the roots of Texas's political culture: a tradition of independence, loyalty to the Democratic Party, and populist conservatism. Against this backdrop was another key factor: the factional power struggle within the Texas Democratic Party between the conservative establishment and the progressive liberals. By 1960, the New Deal coalition uniting these factions was beginning to show early signs of unraveling. Texas liberals would show their protest against conservative establishment candidates by deliberately supporting and voting for the Republican candidate or by simply staying home on Election Day ("gone fishing for the day.") This resulted in the breakthrough of GOP candidate John Tower's election to the United States Senate in 1961. The author shows that by doing this, Texas liberals were hoping to facilitate realignment in the parties: they would have the state Democratic Party for themselves and the conservatives could go to the Republicans. The state's Republicans were only too happy to oblige their counterparts with their desires, but were too weak to accomplish this alone. Still, it took the occurrence of several events on both national and state levels, plus some adroit campaigning by Republican candidates, for this realignment to take place.

Cunningham brings out several examples of these key events: the explosive growth in the state's economy that attracted the in-migration of outsiders (e.g. "Yankees"), extremism of the national Democrats and their politicians (e.g. George McGovern), the "law and order" riots of that time, relations with the Mexican American voters, the influence of the Christian right, the untimely in-state scandals involving Democrat politicians (e.g. the Sharpstown scandal), and John Connally's switch to the GOP. However, it was the ineptness of the

*Continued on page eleven*

*Continued from page ten*

Carter administration in the late 1970s that gave the needed push to establish the Republican Party as a viable force in Texas politics. The election in 1978 of Bill Clements as the first Republican governor in Texas since Reconstruction (later elected again for a second term in 1986) was further proof that realignment was happening. But, more than anything, it was Ronald Reagan that was the catalyst for completing the transformation of Texas into a two-party state. Reagan was viewed as the mainstream populist in keeping with the state's political culture of independence and populist conservatism. As for loyalty to the Democratic Party, it was also Reagan who gave the GOP the respectability it needed to be a player in Texas politics and aided the warring factions in the state's political parties toward their goal of political realignment.

*Cowboy Conservatism: Texas And The Rise Of The Modern Right* is the latest addition to the New Directions in Southern History series of the University Press of Kentucky. The bibliography and notes show the extensive research that the author did for this excellent work on the rise of the modern right in Texas politics. This book should be a needed addition for the political science and Texana collections of all academic and public libraries.

CUNNINGHAM, SEAN P. *COWBOY CONSERVATISM: TEXAS AND THE RISE OF THE MODERN RIGHT*. LEXINGTON: UNIVERSITY PRESS OF KENTUCKY, 2010. 312 PP. BIBLIOGRAPHY, INDEX, MAPS, NOTES, PHOTOS. \$40.00 CLOTH. ISBN 13978-0-8131-2576-3. 2010003210.

## *Sacred Memories: The Civil War Monument Movements in Texas*

Kelly McMichael

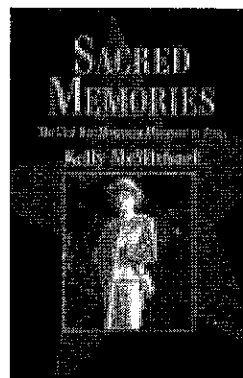
**A History and Listing of Civil War Monuments in Texas**  
Review by Jon P. Tritzsch

It probably would not be wrong to assume that one should be able to find a Civil War monument in many parks, cemeteries and on courthouse lawns throughout the South. Texas is certainly not an exception as was shown by writer Kelly McMichael in her book of *Sacred*

*Memories*. In her own words "This book tells the story of these monuments, of the Texans who erected them, and their reasons for raising large sums of money to purchase memorials to honor the Confederacy and the Union."

The first nineteen pages give an interesting narrative on the history of the Civil War monument movement and the various reasons behind it. Contrary to popular belief, many of these monuments were not erected until after 1900. In fact, the first monument, erected in 1866 in Comfort, was actually a pro-Union monument, *Treue Der Union*, commemorating the massacre of German American Texans attempting to flee to Mexico to avoid taking up arms against the Union. One other Union monument is located in Denison and a third monument, in New Braunfels, honors the soldiers on both sides who perished in the conflict. Besides honoring the dead, the erection of war monuments had other side benefits. It proved to be an economic boon for communities, the monument industry and for sculptors and stonecutters like Frank Teich and Pompeo Coppini. In the rest of the book, McMichael has ably identified and cataloged 68 public-initiated Texas Civil War monuments and briefly describes the location and history of each one.

This book, no. 19 in the Fred Rider Cotten popular history series and published by the Texas State Historical Association, should be an easy purchase for all libraries: It certainly is not expensive and the work is a good documentation of a facet of local Civil War history. Someone wishing to know the history behind a particular Civil War monument fifty years from now can consult this book. It should not be going out-of-date anytime soon.



McMICHAEL, KELLY. *SACRED MEMORIES: THE CIVIL WAR MONUMENT MOVEMENT IN TEXAS*. DENTON: TEXAS STATE HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION, 2009. 150 PP. APPENDIX, INDEX, MAPS, NOTES, PHOTOS. \$9.95 PAPER. ISBN 13: 978-0-87611-238-0. 20092453.

*Kelly McMichael grew up in Midlothian, Texas, and attended Texas A&M University, earning a B.A. in history and English. She then completed an M.A. at Baylor University in American Studies and a Ph.D. in history at the University of North Texas. She is also the author of Transforming the Humanities Classroom for the 21st Century and Waxahachie, Texas: Where Cotton Reigned King. She lives in Denton with her husband, two children, two dogs, and a cat.*

## Reviewers

**Jerry Bradley**, a member of the Texas Institute of Letters, is professor of English at Lamar University. He is the author of 5 books, most recently *The Importance of Elsewhere* (poetry).

**Emma B. Hawkins** is Assistant Professor of Medieval English language and literature at Lamar University.

**Sara Hillin** is Assistant Professor of Rhetoric and Composition at Lamar University. She teaches advanced composition, undergraduate level composition, and literature courses.

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

**Yves Laberge** is a Canadian scholar and sociologist, specializing in American studies; cultural studies; and museums; and the author of numerous articles and publications.

**JoAn W. Martin** is a retired teacher from Baytown schools and author of *Yankee Girl* and *Good Night, Mrs. Dinglewall. Sleep Tight!* She has published numerous articles and book reviews.

**Charles F. Popp**, BA History and MA English, has taught ESL, technical writing, composition, and literature courses for more than twenty years. He is also an avid film buff and a collector of music for more than thirty years.

**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.

**Jon P. Trites** works as a cataloger and helps develop collections for history and political science for the Mary and John Gray library at Lamar University. He holds an M.L.S. from Emporia State University and an M.A. from Sam Houston State University.

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