



REVIEW OF TEXAS BOOKS



PUBLISHED BY LAMAR UNIVERSITY - BEAUMONT

Volume X

SUMMER 1995

Number 3

***** FICTION *****

Alter, Judy. *JESSIE*. New York: Bantam Books, 1995. 437p. Paperback: \$9.95, ISBN 0-553-37465-6. 95-957.

Dr. Judy Alter is Director of the Texas Christian University Press and a fine novelist. Her previous novel, *Libbie*, based on the life of Elizabeth Bacon Custer, was published last spring and won praise from reviewers across the country. In this new paperback original, Alter novelizes the remarkable life of Jessie Benton Frémont, daughter of Missouri senator Thomas Hart Benton and wife of the nineteenth-century explorer John Charles Frémont.

Using Jessie Frémont's unpublished autobiography and several other published pieces, Alter brings understanding to the excitement and turmoil of westward expansion, the California gold rush, and the Civil War. Alter writes so ably and persuasively that the reader feels present at the events and suffers the disappointments and exults in the triumphs of the Frémonts.

Sally Dooley

Bunkley, Anita Richmond. *WILD EMBERS*. New York: Dutton, 1995. 386p. Hardcover: \$21.95, ISBN 0-525-93753-6. 94-36591.

In her finest novel yet, Houston author Anita Richmond Bunkley departs from the Texas setting of her two previous novels, *Emily* (Vol.IV, No.4) and *Black Gold* (Vol.IX, No.1), and takes the reader to Ohio and to rigidly segregated Tuskegee, Alabama, in the early 1940s. While World War II rages in Europe, African Americans fight on a different front at home: they battle for the rights to serve in the armed forces and to work in defense industries. Bunkley's use of historical detail recreates a believable time and place, which influences the actions of the characters. Janelle Roy is a young black nurse who is ready for a change and enlists as one of the first few black nurses in the American military. Her brother Perry, a zealous supporter of the NAACP trying to win employment opportunities for blacks, is drafted. Janelle goes from Ohio to Tuskegee where black female nurses and male aviators are trained. Just as she and a young pilot discover their love for one another, he is ordered to fight in North Africa. In addition to missing her lover, her brother, fearing for his life, goes AWOL in Mississippi after accidentally killing a German POW he has been guarding. The conflicts Bunkley develops are moving, especially those involving a young white NAACP lawyer who is romantically interested in Janelle and turns out to be a helpful friend.

There are elements of romance fiction here: Janelle is beautiful,

and she and the dashing pilot have a few torrid love scenes. But thanks to Bunkley's maturing skill as a writer, her characters are not stock. Much like people we know, they have individual virtues and faults, and they respond in authentic ways to the events of a segregated wartime world. Bunkley's absorbing, well written story renders a unique look at the suffering in wartime of African Americans who were engaged in battles both domestic and foreign.

Sally Dooley

Darby, Maribeth. *LAND OF MAGIC SAND*. Austin: Eakin Press, 1994. 138p. Illustrations. Hardcover: \$12.95, ISBN 0-89015-973-4. 94-37569.

This book seems hardly worth the salt it sets out to chronicle. Though the author seems to have done her homework on the salt deposits near Grand Saline in East Texas, her fictional stories, set in three time periods, about the salt deposits' site fail to hold the reader's interest. A glossary of salt-related terms is edifying for young readers, but Darby's uninspired black-and-white drawings do little to enliven the narrative.

Mary M. Fisher

Dunlap, Jim. *ONLY THE LAST DINOSAUR*. Plano: Republic of Texas Press, 1995. 145p. Illustrations. Paperback: \$8.95, ISBN 1-555622-382-X. (Juvenile)

Perhaps to a twelve-year-old reader, *Only the Last Dinosaur* would be a likeable juvenile novel. Perhaps a twelve-year-old could relate to this story of a sixty-five million year-old dinosaur that comes to life and is befriended by two boys. The writing of this story, particularly the beginning, is somewhat disjointed. Because of the author's descriptions, neither the characters nor even the dog is appealing. In fact, there is very little that is attractive about any of them, including the drooling dinosaur baby. The best thing to be said about *Only the Last Dinosaur* is that it is a fast read with short chapters and a quickly moving story. Perhaps a reader of the age for which the book is intended (about twelve) would recommend it to a friend. As an adult reviewing it for a young audience, I would give it a thumbs down.

Andrea R. Karlin

Gilb, Dagoberto. *THE LAST KNOWN RESIDENCE OF MICKEY ACUÑA*. New York: Grove Press, 1994. 218p. Hardcover: \$21.00, ISBN 0-8021-1554-3. 94-5090.

Mickey Acuña lives at the El Paso YMCA (only temporarily) and waits for mail, the big check that never comes. To pass the time, he works out and swims; to make enough money to subsist until the score, he takes and leaves an odd job (the boss is

predictably bigoted, so Mickey says to hell with that) and then gets meager part-time pay for working the desk at the Y. It isn't much, but it's only temporary. Nothing significant happens to Mickey—a lot happens around him and to others. He gets fired eventually, but he says to hell with that, too, as we by this time expect.

If you're looking for a story with a whammo plot, keep looking. What is novel about this novel is the protagonist's self-awareness, his willingness to look directly at himself even when doing so makes him wince. Mickey's predicament is not exclusively that of the young, the Chicano, or even the male, though Mickey is overtly all of these. One cannot say that Mickey's malaise is a product of the age in which he lives, for it is much the same as the dropsy that afflicts Hamlet, though since Mickey never views himself as a tragic figure, neither do we. Perhaps we are to view him as a victim of hope, but surely this is not new—we have already been urged to "let be be finale of seem." In the end we see Mickey as an uncomfortably well-drawn paradigm; his vague dissatisfaction is our own. Ultimately the allure of the book is Gilb himself and what of him we see beneath the thin veneer of fiction. Like his protagonists, he is what he is and makes no apologies for it. If you liked *The Magic of Blood*, you will like this book, too. And if you didn't like *Magic*, I imagine I know what Mickey Acuña would have to say.

Andrew B. Preslar

Goertz, Sharon. **REVEILLE: THE STORY OF THE TEXAS AGGIE MASCOT.** Austin: Eakin Press, 1994. 24p. Illustrations. Paperback: \$9.95, ISBN 0-89015-984-X. 94-36923. (Juvenile)

Sharon Goertz gives a brief history about Reveille, the collie dog and famed mascot of Texas A&M University in College Station. Beautiful color illustrations by Debbie Goertz enhance the workmanlike text. The book tells a simple and straightforward story beginning with the first Reveille mascot in 1931 and moving through to the present-day Reveille VI. Surely, this will be popular reading for that institution's enthusiastic alumni and their offspring.

Sally Dooley

Gonzalez, Catherine. **CHERUB IN STONE.** Fort Worth: Texas Christian University Press, 1995. 115p. Paperback: \$12.95, ISBN 0-87565-139-9. 94-30506.

In this fine Chaparral Book for Young Readers, first-time novelist Catherine Gonzalez portrays ignorance and prejudice in Texas in the 1920s. Sari Mednick, a fifteen-year-old Czech American, moves with her family from a close-knit Czech community in Central Texas to North Texas where Czechs and Catholics are unknown and therefore feared and ostracized. Her father, a stonemason, is to carve a tombstone for a prominent North Texas family. Sari cannot understand why she is not accepted by her new classmates because she always had many friends in her Czech community. As time passes, the Mednick family realizes that they are the object of attacks by the KKK because of their heritage and religion. The emotional and physical wounds of prejudice and hate are painfully depicted here with a believable group of characters in a historical setting. The author, with sensitivity, shows that despite suffering and hardship, people can be courageous and forgive. In an otherwise

excellent novel for young adults, Gonzalez occasionally slips into contemporary slang when a person is described as "bad news" and teenage boys "hang out" rather than gather together. Gonzalez, a resident of Rhome, Texas, is a former school teacher who also has authored several young adult biographies of famous Texas historical figures.

Sally Dooley



EDITOR'S CHOICE

Juárez, Tina. **CALL NO MAN MASTER.** Houston: Arte Público Press, 1995. 395p. Hardcover: \$22.95, ISBN 1-55885-124-0. 94-24407.

This absorbing novel vividly recreates a turbulent time in the history of Mexico and Texas, covering Mexico's fight for independence from Spain through the battle at the Alamo for Texas' independence from Mexico. Carmen Rangel, the lead character and narrator, is a strong-willed young woman of mixed Indian and Spanish blood who has been raised within the aristocracy in New Spain. Outspoken and interested in politics and warfare, she is at first adamantly opposed to the republican forces that want to rid Mexico of Spanish rulers. A trio of *norteamericanos* visit her home and offer long-rifles and men to fight Spain in exchange for free land and the right to use the cheap labor of slaves. Carmen is quite taken with Coulter Owens, one of the men, and amazed to meet the first black man she has ever seen. Soon Carmen, Coulter, and the slave are converted to the republican cause, and they take up arms with Father Miguel Hidalgo. The fast-paced plot and intriguing characters make this saga an enormous pleasure to read, and Carmen is a memorable heroine.

Juárez capably reveals the motivations behind the historical forces so that Texas' and Mexico's history become more understandable. The introduction of slavery into Texas was an important ingredient in the Texas revolutionary period as was the political turmoil in Mexico. When coupled with the free land offered to colonists in Texas and the presence of long-rifles, these circumstances make a potent period in which to set a novel. The appearances of historical figures such as Stephen F. Austin, Lorenzo de Zavala, Santa Anna, Sam Houston, and the Alamo heroes add to the realism. This book should have great appeal to readers of historical fiction.

Juárez grew up in Texas, earned a Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction, and is principal of Walter Prescott Webb Middle School in Austin. She is a talented new Texas writer to watch.

Sally Dooley



Luttrell, Ida. **THE STAR COUNTERS.** New York: Tambourine Books, 1994. 31p. Illustrations. Hardcover: \$14.95, ISBN 0-688-12149-7. (Juvenile)

The Star Counters, Ida Luttrell's most recent book, tells the story of a very foolish, greedy, and selfish king who thinks he owns, among other things, nine billion and nine gold stars in the night sky. To ensure no one steals any of them, he decides to find someone to count them each night. What ensues will delight readers young and old by fulfilling their sense of justice prevailing in the end.

Enchanting (and somewhat Chagall-like) illustrations by Russian artist Korinna Petro work in perfect harmony with the text. How lucky American readers are to have this artist illustrating books in the United States. Hopefully, this book is the first of many that will follow.

Andrea R. Karlin

Malone, Paul Scott. *IN AN ARID LAND: THIRTEEN STORIES OF TEXAS*. Fort Worth: Texas Christian University Press, 1995. 232p. Hardcover: \$21.50, ISBN 0-87565-140-2. 94-16972.

In this collection of stories, Paul Scott Malone creates characters whose lives are disrupted by changes in relationships. Whether these changes are caused by the Great Depression, divorce, retirement or the death of a parent, spouse, or son gone to war, Malone's characters are caught between reflection and reassessment as they witness the dissolution of their preconceived future paths. His protagonists are earthy, Texan, and familiar. A furniture salesman, a young man fresh out of the service, a deacon in the church, a boy on a fishing trip, a young widow left with two small sons: these people experience loss and pain as they struggle to integrate and understand what has happened to them so they can go on with their lives. But their lives have altered in irreversible ways, placing them at pivotal points, which Malone captures so well.

In an Arid Land: Thirteen Stories of Texas is an enjoyable collection of stories set in Texas towns where very believable Texans confront major junctures in their lives. Paul Scott Malone's gift for storytelling makes reading easy, like listening to a longtime friend.

Gayla Chaney

Piazza, Linda. *CALL OF THE DEEP*. New York: Avon Flare Books, 1994. 153p. Paperback: \$3.50, ISBN 0-380-77330-9. 93-91637.

Wholesome horror? Linda Piazza has achieved it in her contemporary ghost story which is scary enough to hold any teenager's attention without sinking to gory violence. Sixteen-year-old Delia Burnham escapes from an eerie romance and from the dangerously seductive call of the ocean while at the same time repairing her fractured relationship with her father. As a bonus, the novel incorporates Texas history and makes information about the 1900 Galveston hurricane an integral part of the plot. A sure pleaser for young adults.

Jo Harper

Piazza, Linda. *EVIL IN THE ATTIC*. New York: Avon Flare Books, 1995. 156p. Paperback: \$3.99, ISBN 0-380-77576-X. 94-96563.

Linda Piazza's second horror release also manages to chill the spine without resorting to violence and gore. Set in East Texas, it features Jackie Sheen, a lively teen protagonist with a take-charge attitude. She appoints herself "cook, maid, and bill-payer" for her bizarre household which includes a younger brother with a genius-level IQ and a mother with psychic leanings. As suspense builds about the secret in the attic, Jackie also struggles to define a new relationship with her mother, and in so doing, solves an old mystery and saves a young life. Good reading for adolescents.

Jo Harper

Swanson, Doug J. *DREAMBOAT*. New York: HarperCollins Publishers, Inc., 1995. 259p. Hardcover: \$20.00. ISBN 0-06-017748-9. 94-41558.

Described in its dust jacket as "utterly delectable chicken-fried noir," *Dreamboat* is overcooked. As "noir" fiction, it adheres to a tawdry recipe of violence and lust in the shadowy settings of Dallas and Baggett, Texas. However, it is difficult to know if Swanson, a reporter for the *Dallas Morning News*, has concocted a wicked piece of menacing humor or if he has unknowingly delivered up a batch of sordid characters with whom there is nothing to identify.

Jack Flippo, a down-on-his-luck investigator, is retained by Continental Centurion to verify the accidental drowning of Mingo Gideon. Centurion is about to hand over \$500,000 to Rex Echols, Gideon's business partner. Unfortunately, there is no mystery in this mystery novel. Within fifty pages, we know Gideon and Echols have murdered Bobby Slater, Echols' wife's lover, and have created for Gideon a new identity. Echols thinks he has the sheriff in his hip pocket, but Loyce Slapp seizes the chance to blackmail him. Slapp wants to abandon his wife to her Pop-Tarts and the 700 Club and take a local prostitute to live with him in Barbados. Echols wants the "inshurnce" money to resurrect his country music career and to build a shower stall in his nightclub so that April (yes, the joke is low-rent) "Showers" can bathe in the nude for his customers. Surely these are not the "darkly hilarious and absorbing" scenarios that the Associated Press would have us believe them to be.

Overpriced and overwritten, *Dreamboat* is a watered-down descendant of such genre classics as *The Big Sleep* and *Murder My Sweet*. It labors to stay afloat.

Joe Nordgren

POETRY

Hill, Billy Bob, ed. *TEXAS IN POETRY: A 150-YEAR ANTHOLOGY*. Denton: Center for Texas Studies and Texas Studies Association, 1994. 354p. Hardcover: \$29.95, ISBN 1-885196-01-6.

This handsome anthology is both a browser's delight and a student's despair. Work by such established poets as Robert A. Fink, Betty Adcock, Albert Huffstickler, and Mary Vanek stands next to doggerel that may possess quaint historical interest but holds little literary merit. For example, Robert Bonazzi's

knowledgeable meditation on the career of Ma Ferguson, the state's first woman governor, is followed by Philip Bateman's 1936 relic "Our Centennial!": "Our Centennial is a gala-day! / Our Texas is a hundred years old! / Let's celebrate! Let's commemorate! / Let's enjoy a thousand-fold!" The editor's choice of eleven thematic sections would be easier to applaud if there were any clear rationale for the arrangement of poems in each section; further, the lack of indexes is a deterrent to finding work by particular poets. I was intrigued by one of the excellent biographical notes but had to spend fifteen minutes thumbing through the table of contents before I could locate a sample of the poet's work. Still, the sheer number of good poets and poems included makes this a necessary addition to any serious collection of Texas literature.

R.S. Gwynn

★ ★ ★ NONFICTION ★ ★ ★

BIOGRAPHY

Drago, Gail and Ann Ruff. **OUTLAWS IN PETTICOATS AND OTHER NOTORIOUS TEXAS WOMEN.** Plano: Republic of Texas Press, 1995. 172p. Illustrations. Bibliography. Index. Paperback: \$12.95, ISBN 1-55622-315-3. 94-45381.

For this first of the Women of the West series of Republic of Texas Press, Gail Drago and the late Ann Ruff have chosen a baker's dozen of Texas women already known to historians, storytellers, and folklorists. As the writers say in their introduction, these "women ride again out of a diverse past." The tales, though told and retold before, are presented here in a sprightly, informal style that makes the old material read like new. The book is a page-turner, carefully researched with an excellent bibliography appended.

These storied women abandoned conformity and left in their wake tales of bravery and treachery, love and betrayal, gambling and killing, and finance and politics as they rode the waves of their restless homeland. Running a time line from pioneer days to the thirties, the sketches show women fearlessly pursuing their destinies: Harriet Potter Ames, earth mother of Caddo Lake; Lottie Deno, gambler in the Flat below Fort Griffin; Sarah Bowman, camp follower of Zachary Taylor's army, a Florence Nightingale and a prostitute; and Sophia Porter, wife of Holland Coffee, Texas' own Scarlett O'Hara. "Whether history chooses to remember them as shady characters who could challenge the devil himself or as women who gave something worth keeping to their era remains to be seen," the authors write. No matter. This book is informative and entertaining.

Ernestine Sewell Linck

Liles, Maurine Walpole. **SAM AND THE SPEAKER'S CHAIR.** Austin: Eakin Press, 1994. 143p. Illustrations. Bibliography. Index. Hardcover: \$14.95, ISBN 0-89015-946-7; Paperback: \$5.95, ISBN 0-89015-978-5. 93-42374.

Sam Rayburn was a low-key person who might be surprised to find himself the subject of a young reader's biography. But the life of a rural Texan who rose to national prominence is deserv-

ing of such notice, and the author is to be commended for her choice of subjects. The chronological biography begins with Rayburn's hardwork as a boy on the family's Fannin County cotton farm and covers his ascent to the Texas legislature and, in 1912, to the United States House of Representatives. There he served as speaker longer than any man and helped pass such important bills as the Securities Exchange Act, the Federal Communications Bill, the Public Utility Holding Company Act, and the Rural Electrification Bill. Liles' readable, fact-packed narrative, illustrated with more than twenty-five black-and-white photographs, will hopefully inspire a new generation of leaders just as a speech by his congressman first propelled a young Sam Rayburn on his path to Washington. The book is suitable for late elementary and middle school readers.

Mary M. Fisher

Morgan, Elizabeth Dearing. **PRESIDENT MIRABEAU B. LAMAR: FATHER OF TEXAS EDUCATION.** Austin: Eakin Press, 1994. 94p. Illustrations. Index. Hardcover: \$12.95, ISBN 0-89015-963-7. 94-2641.

The sisters Elizabeth Dearing Morgan, author, and Nancy Dearing Johnson, illustrator, traveled together through Texas, Alabama, and Georgia to research Mirabeau B. Lamar (1798-1859). This biography intended for younger readers shares abundant information about Lamar's exciting life and is enriched by numerous photographs of people, places, and relics from a colorful period in Texas history. The book has a weak narrative line, so the incidents, while interesting in themselves, seem somewhat random. A clear premise would have made the information more meaningful and would have given the book a stronger sense of direction. The author tells us what Lamar did but leaves us to ponder what he was.

Jo Harper

Nash, Robert and Peggy Nichols Nash. **"MR. MCCAMEY": CLAUDE W. BROWN, THE LIFE OF A TEXAS OILMAN.** Austin: Eakin Press, 1994. 98p. Illustrations. Bibliography. Index. Hardcover: \$15.95, ISBN 0-89015-976-9. 94-37570.

The Texas oil industry spawned a number of bigger-than-life individuals, and this book pays tribute to one of the Nashes' favorites, Claude W. Brown. This is in no way a critical examination of his life or a serious study; the Nashes' work is more like a eulogy of Brown who died in 1993. Brown, like so many Texans in 1904, lived on a farm and had little or no money. In his first job in the Mexia oil field as a roustabout in 1922, he succumbed to the mystique of the oil business. He married in the 1920s and drilled wells in the boom of that decade; however, he lost everything in the Great Depression. He moved to McCamey, Texas, which was the source of the recovery and expansion of his fortune. He began to drill for himself, to trade in oil field equipment, and to expand into other businesses. The Nashes emphasize his community service; he received the first "Mr. McCamey" award and served as mayor, was active in the Methodist Church, including missionary work in South America, and was involved in the Democratic Party on local, state, and national levels.

The book is disjointed and includes chapters about extraneous subjects such as the Great McCamey Rattlesnake Derby. One gets the feeling that the authors threw in every interesting thing

they found. However, Mr. Brown does emerge from these pages as a hard-working man of his word who went from poverty to considerable wealth.

JoAnn Stiles

Ryan, Ruth. **COVERING HOME: MY LIFE WITH NOLAN RYAN.** Dallas: Word Publishing, 1995. 266p. Illustrations. Hardcover: \$19.99, ISBN 0-8499-1098-6. 94-44258.

Much has been written about the professional baseball pitcher Nolan Ryan who recently ended a successful twenty-seven year career. This book by his wife provides a look at the marriage and family of a famous athlete and how the wife covered the family home base. A strong family is difficult to have when the breadwinner is a professional athlete, especially given spring training in Florida, out-of-town games, and the possibility of being traded to other teams in other cities. How Ruth grew in understanding of her role as wife and mother and developed skills to cope with the needs of her husband and children and almost belatedly her own personal needs is told in this simply written book, remarkable for its frankness and freshness. Besides her family, Ruth developed interests in fitness and aerobic exercise (she is a certified instructor) and in helping children with learning disabilities (she is a board member of the Waco-based Behavioral Health Institute). She and Nolan worked together to maintain their values in spite of fame and wealth. Today they are still married, and their children are well adjusted. No one can ask for more these days. Their lives serve as models of true success and as such can inspire not only sports fans but also general readers.

Sally Dooley

Sobol, Richard. **GOVERNOR: IN THE COMPANY OF ANN RICHARDS, GOVERNOR OF TEXAS.** New York: Cobblehill Books, 1994. 30p. Illustrations. Hardcover: \$14.99, ISBN 0-525-65194-2. 93-40426. (Juvenile)

The purpose of Sobol's attractive book seems twofold: to give a picture of Ann Richards as governor and to humanize the governorship itself. He has succeeded admirably in these goals. He writes well, and he understands that his function is introductory. Therefore, he does not crowd too much information into the slender text. A young person will finish this book with an increased sense of what a governor's life is like.

Sobol, whose photographs appear in *Newsweek*, *Time*, and *New York Magazine*, has included twenty-nine color shots and a motivating foreword by Ann Richards herself. The book is a pleasant reading experience although it does seem a bit expensive for what is approximately sixteen pages of actual text.

Jo Harper

CHRISTIAN LIFE AND HUMOR

Brown, Harley Mitchell, comp. **PULPIT HUMOR.** Greenville: HBA Printing Systems, 1995. 168p. Paperback: \$8.00.

In this inexpensively printed and bound paperback, Harley Brown publishes a lifetime collection of humorous stories and quips about churches and religions. Representative is this quota-

tion: "A young lady was praying, 'Oh Lord, I ask nothing for myself, but will you please send my mother a son-in-law.'" This is delightful and downright funny reading, something of which the world needs more. Brown previously wrote and self-published *Hard Times in Hardin County* (Vol. VIII, No. 1).

Sally Dooley

McIver, Bruce. **JUST AS LONG AS I'M RIDING UP FRONT.** Dallas: Word Publishing, 1995. 158p. Paperback: \$10.99, ISBN 0-8499-3597-0. 94-44566.

As a sequel to his previously published *Stories I Couldn't Tell While I Was a Pastor*, this new collection of personal essays brings to light the odd, humorous, touching, and unusual occurrences in Bruce McIver's time as a pastor. For thirty years McIver served as pastor of Wilshire Baptist Church in Dallas, Texas, and in that capacity he met a vast assortment of people and participated in a variety of experiences. These stories about his ministry, plus reminiscences of friends and family, give insight into the life of a caring pastor, father, husband, and friend. He is a good story teller, and the essays are loosely grouped together in chapters with themes such as "And the Two Shall be One . . .," "Growing Children," and "Old Folks at Home." The stories make for pleasant reading whether one has time for just an essay or two or time for several chapters.

Sally Dooley

CORRESPONDENCE

Collins, Lawrence D. **THE 56TH EVAC HOSPITAL: LETTERS OF A WWII ARMY DOCTOR.** Denton: University of North Texas Press, 1995. 284p. Illustrations. Index. Hardcover: \$29.95, ISBN 0-929398-83-1. 94-45516.

These World War II letters were written by Dr. Lawrence D. Collins, an Alvin native assigned to the 56th Evacuation Hospital, which was a medical unit activated in March 1942 and staffed by men and women trained at the Baylor Medical School in Dallas. After a year's training in Texas, the unit, a mobile tent hospital similar to the M*A*S*H outfits later used in the Korean conflict, was sent to North Africa where it provided medical support for Allied forces fighting in Morocco and Tunisia. In the fall of 1943, the so-called "Baylor Unit" was transferred to Italy where it treated thousands of casualties in the bitter fighting that took place there. In letters written to his wife and mother, Dr. Collins describes his varied experiences with the 56th Evacuation team. The letters provide a thoughtful insight into wartime suffering. In addition to describing the medical work provided by the team, Collins speaks much about physical conditions and hardships. Like most soldiers he is concerned with food, clothing, and shelter. He thinks often of home and looks forward to mail received from loved ones. While he sometimes criticizes the conduct of the war, his spirit is generally optimistic and his outlook positive. An introduction by Colonel Carlo D'Este, himself a veteran and military historian of note, accompanies the text.

Ralph A. Wooster

ESSAYS

Flemmons, Jerry. **JERRY FLEMMONS' TEXAS SIFTINGS: A BOLD AND UNCOMMON CELEBRATION OF THE LONE STAR STATE.** Fort Worth: Texas Christian University Press, 1995. 187p. Illustrations. Paperback: \$12.95, ISBN 0-87565-138-0. 94-30505.

Texas journalist and author Jerry Flemmons has spent years sifting through countless books and other publications noting anything of interest about Texas and its people. These bits of Texas history and trivia have been published in columns of the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram* and are now collected in this book. Flemmons' book is not to be confused with the original *Texas Siftings*, a humor magazine begun in 1881 by Alexander Edwin Sweet who wrote short pieces on whatever interested him about the Lone Star State. Later, he selected several sketches from his magazine and published them in a book, *Sketches From "Texas Siftings."*

Flemmons' collection of his "siftings" includes everything imaginable: recipes for cantaloupe pie and raccoon with bread dressing, cowboy stories about cattle drives, observations on scalping and encounters with Indians, lines of Texas poetry, "Texanese" words and phrase definitions, anecdotes about Sam Houston, even a poignant letter from a member of the failed Mier Expedition to his mother before he was executed in the infamous black bean drawing in Mexico City in 1843. Each sketch gives the source from which it has been lifted.

Native Texans and Texas history buffs will enjoy this collection; new Texans need to read these sketches to get a sampling of the state's rich cultural heritage and history. Because of the lack of an index in the book, it is suggested that the reader mark or record favorite passages for future reference.

Jon P. Tritsch

Linck, Ernestine Sewell. **HOW THE CIMARRON RIVER GOT ITS NAME AND OTHER STORIES ABOUT COFFEE.** Plano: Republic of Texas Press, 1995. 162p. Illustrations. Bibliography. Index. Paperback: \$12.95, ISBN 1-55622-384-6. 94-49515.

Three of Texas' outstanding storytellers tackle the subject of coffee in this entertaining tribute to what novelist Clay Reynolds aptly terms "My best friend, my early morning companion, my late night sentry." Accompanying Reynolds' chatty essay is one entitled "Good Coffee is a State of Mind" by J. Frank Dobie, published in its entirety for the first time. Author Linck, a former president of the Texas Folklore Society and member of the Western Writers of America, adds her two bits to those of the aforementioned raconteurs, offering a trove of coffee facts, recipes, lore, and trivia recounted in a lighthearted vein. Whether you imbibe or not, this entertaining and edifying collection of coffee stories is sure to tickle your fancy.

Mary M. Fisher

Marcus, Stanley. **THE VIEWPOINTS OF STANLEY MARCUS: A TEN-YEAR PERSPECTIVE.** Denton: University of North Texas Press, 1995. 261p. Hardcover: \$24.95, ISBN 0-929398-86-6. 95-1451.

This past April, Stanley Marcus, Chairman Emeritus of the fabled Neiman Marcus stores, turned ninety-years-old. For the past ten years he has authored brief columns for the *Dallas Morning News* about a variety of subjects, and he continues to do so. In order to give those who do not read the *News* an opportunity to enjoy his wit and intelligence, numerous columns have been selected and collected in this engaging book. Marcus muses about merchandising, marriage, manners, quality goods, aging, and personal experiences. Some charm, some amuse, some provoke thoughts on our changing world, and they all provide insight into a remarkable, world-famed Texan. Two offerings demonstrate his knowledge of not only business relationships but also of human relationships. "*Consumer* is a name originated by a marketing genius to describe a statistical abstraction. *Customer* is a living human being," and "... only two rules for a happy marriage that I have learned from personal experience: first never go to sleep on an unsolved disagreement with a spouse; and second, develop a short memory." These short essays will interest and amuse general readers and those in service businesses, of which Neiman Marcus is one.

Sally Dooley

Winik, Marion. **TELLING: CONFESSIONS, CONCESSIONS, AND OTHER FLASHES OF LIGHT.** New York: Vintage Books, 1995. 213p. Paperback: \$10.00, ISBN 0-679-75522-5. 93-6322.

Remarkably witty, intelligent, humorous, and poignant is this collection of essays by Austin resident Marion Winik, a New York transplant. Her essays first appeared in Austin and Houston newspapers and magazines such as *Texas Monthly*, and National Public Radio showcased her work on "All Things Considered." This collection was first published in hardcover in 1994 by Villard Books and is now released in paper. The twenty-nine essay titles suggest her varied subjects: "Sixteen Pictures of My Father," "Women Who Love Men Who Don't Pay Their Parking Tickets," "What Are Friends For?" and "A Night in New Orleans." Winik came of age in the 1970s and grabbed with gusto at all life offered: drugs, promiscuous sex, gay bars, and an array of friends as well as family and finally children. While her stories will entertain many, the lifestyle she candidly recalls will shock some readers. Whatever a reader's reaction, one must admire her honest rendering using choice detail and elegant descriptions of her life and relationships. Winik has become a wise woman whose reflections reveal the roads she has traveled to maturity. She can look back and laugh and make the reader aware of the common ground we all share as inhabitants of this planet. She is a superb storyteller and commentator on life.

Sally Dooley

HISTORY

Abernethy, Francis Edward. **THE TEXAS FOLKLORE SOCIETY, VOLUME II, 1943-1971.** Denton: University of North Texas Press, 1994. 320p. Illustrations. Bibliography. Index. Hardcover: \$29.95, ISBN 0-929398-78-5. 92-12273.

Volume II of the projected three-volume history of the Texas Folklore Society continues the earlier format of *Volume I* by interweaving TFS activities with historical, cultural, and social happenings, a fortuitous strategy emphasizing the significance of the lore of a people to the total picture. Contributing to the

volume's success is Abernethy's narrative. He chronicles Mody Boatright's Secretary-Editorship, from 1943 to 1950, when our country was beset with internal and external threats and when the TFS suffered from academic indifference. Boatright's right-hand man was Wilson Hudson who became Secretary-Editor in 1968. He encouraged a professional approach to folklore, upgrading an amateurish gathering of lore to a scholarly pursuit.

In 1971 the operation moved from the University of Texas at Austin, where it had been since 1909, to Stephen F. Austin University at Nacogdoches, where it has received full support. The society has grown in numbers and stature, reaching the expectations J. Frank Dobie had envisioned. Letters, photographs, copies of unique documents, and illustrations make the volume a valuable resource for librarians and archivists. Very readable, it is recommended for anyone interested in the humanities. Furthermore, it gives reliable information about individuals who have preserved Texas folklore, that area of life that has made Texas unique.

Ernestine Sewell Linck

Booker, Hamilton and Ann Gaddis. *GUN CRAZY: A TRUE TALE OF MURDER AND JUSTICE IN TEXAS*. Austin: Eakin Press, 1995. 266p. Paperback: \$16.95, ISBN 1-57168-024-1.

This sensational book begins with the brutal murder of Edmund James, a member of a prominent San Antonio family, at his family's Hill Country ranch. It then details at length the legal aftermath, focusing on the plight of the young man who drove the car for the two teenaged triggermen and culminating in his acquittal. Though the subject is gripping, the author's overwritten prose falls short (example: "Their crime had more to do with Dostoyevsky's dark vision of our times, a century of increasingly nihilistic society"), and the text is marred with typographical errors and hype. Despite these shortcomings and its exploitative nature, the book chillingly brings home the reality of random murder in today's society. Of course, one could ascertain that same reality by picking up the newspapers and, depending on the paper, get a lot better read.

Mary M. Fisher

Boyd, Eva Jolene. *NOBLE BRUTES: CAMELS ON THE AMERICAN FRONTIER*. Plano: Republic of Texas Press, 1994. 255p. Illustrations. Bibliography. Index. Paperback: \$12.95, ISBN 1-55622-379-X. 94-12228.

Eva Jolene Boyd has produced a fascinating historical narrative which should please general readers, animal lovers, and historians. *Noble Brutes* details the Great Camel Experiment that brought camels into the Southwest under the auspices of the U.S. Army a few years prior to the Civil War and used them in exploration and surveying expeditions. The experiment was finally written off as a failure in the eyes of the military and most people in the United States. In fact, the camels performed well as beasts of burden in an arid region.

The book is more than a relation of the expeditions of 1861 and others, which covered an area that stretches from Texas to California. It also traces the world history of the camel from its birthplace in North America approximately forty million years ago, across Asia to the Middle East, and eventually back to

North America. The author's entertaining narrative is enhanced by extensive use of journals kept by men who took part in the expeditions. Texans will especially appreciate descriptions and stories of camel expeditions within the state. Maps, photographs, drawings, an appendix, and a substantial bibliography add to the merits of this relatively short but thoughtfully researched historical venture.

Marion Holt

Fields, Helen Mangum. *WALKING BACKWARD IN THE WIND*. Fort Worth: Texas Christian University Press, 1995. 225p. Paperback: \$16.95, ISBN 0-87565-137-2. 94-30503.

This depiction of pre-Depression era West Texas offers a prelude to the dustbowl's savage windstorms and hardscrabble life. Drawing on childhood memories, the author evokes a long-lost lifestyle of neighborly cooperation and simple pleasures, ranging from hog butchering to homemade valentines. Fields, who grew up on a farm near Post, Texas, in Garza County has organized her memories of the 1920s by season, beginning with spring. Using her keen memory for detail, she draws readers into a world of telephone party lines, box suppers, freckle cream, mustard plasters, wash days, and tent meetings. She remembers candling eggs, canning, daily household dusting and, of course, facing into the wind, a West Texas constant, except in late July and August when it "seemed to be hiding in some secret place." Fields' descriptions of the relentless winds that helped create a dustbowl before the decade was out are some of her best, and they pervade the entire narrative, just as the winds pervade the lives of plains dwellers.

Mary M. Fisher

Frazier, Donald S. *BLOOD & TREASURE: CONFEDERATE EMPIRE IN THE SOUTHWEST*. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1995. 361p. Illustrations. Bibliography. Index. Hardcover: \$29.95, ISBN 0-89096-639-7. 94-39221.

This spirited account of Confederate ambitions and personalities in the Southwest will take its place, along with the late Martin H. Hall's *Sibley's New Mexico Campaign* (University of Texas Press, 1960), as the standard source for those interested in understanding Southern attempts during the American Civil War to control not only New Mexico, but also the greater Southwest, including California. It will also establish the author, an assistant professor of history at McMurry University, as one of the rising stars among Civil War historians.

The initial Confederate incursion into New Mexico was by troops commanded by the fiery, colorful Texan John R. Baylor. With two hundred men Baylor occupied the Mesilla Valley in the summer of 1861 and established the Confederate territory of Arizona with himself as governor. Baylor's move was followed by a larger and more ambitious thrust in early 1862 when over two thousand Confederate Texans commanded by Brigadier General Henry H. Sibley advanced up the Rio Grande and captured Albuquerque and Santa Fe. Sibley's army defeated Union troops at Val Verde and Glorieta Pass, but the loss of their supply train forced the Confederates to withdraw from New Mexico.

Frazier has recounted with feeling the ill-fated Confederate

saga. Although not all will accept his thesis that the New Mexico campaign was the key to Confederate imperialism and that "Sibley's failed adventure might have provided one of the few prospects for Southern independence," readers will find this a fascinating story. Outstanding maps, prepared by the author who is also a skilled cartographer, enhance the text.

Ralph A. Wooster

Guthrie, Keith. *TEXAS FORGOTTEN PORTS, VOL. III*. Austin: Eakin Press, 1995. 300p. Illustrations. Bibliography. Index. Hardcover: \$22.95, ISBN 0-89015-898-3. 88-16504.

Although it contains a brief discussion of activities on the Guadalupe, Colorado, and San Antonio rivers, Keith Guthrie's third volume on the ports, landings, ferries, and river-bank settlements of Texas in the mid-nineteenth century focuses on Southeast Texas. Reflecting diligent research, Guthrie presents accounts concerning the founding and development of more than fifty settlements on the Trinity, Neches, Angelina, and Sabine rivers. Only a reader thoroughly versed in the history of East Texas will have any prior knowledge of most of these settlements. Few of these places survived the nineteenth century; even fewer still exist today; and in most instances, even their names have faded from memory. Yet, Guthrie's account presents a compelling story of the hopes and dreams of an adventurous age when daring and determined men and women challenged a variety of hazards presented by natural conditions that were always unpredictable and sometimes dangerous. The study concludes with descriptions of the early days of the enduring settlements: Beaumont, Orange, Port Arthur, Port Neches, and Sabine Pass.

Guthrie's study will be valued by those interested in the stories of forgotten towns and settlements and by those researchers interested in people of the period, for he has preserved the names of literally hundreds of people who played roles in these settlements. However, in the midst of what is an almost overwhelming amount of detail, there are some conclusions of a more general nature to be found. It is apparent that the economy of East Texas developed rapidly in the mid-nineteenth century, and while cotton was the mainstay, other products were important. Also, the study reminds us that river traffic lasted for approximately four decades, from the 1830s to the 1870s, and, despite the dangers and frustrations of snags, low water, high water, and other hazards, the rivers supported the economy of a large section of Texas.

Adrian N. Anderson

Kendall, George Wilkins. *THE WAR BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND MEXICO, ILLUSTRATED*. Philadelphia: D. Appleton & Co., 1851. Reprint. Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1994. 62p. Illustrations. Index. Hardcover: \$75.00, ISBN 0-87611-138-X. 94-11461.

A superb lengthy introduction by Ron Tyler not only gives the history of this book, the author, and the illustrator, but it also places the War with Mexico (1846-1848) in historical perspective. George Wilkins Kendall, the author, founded the New Orleans *Picayune* and became one of the first American war correspondents. His sketches and reports of the war were widely disseminated through his paper and by other publications which picked up his work. His reports were noted for their drama,

information, and timeliness. The illustrator Carl Nebel, a German artist, was one of a new breed of artists-reporters who depicted the war accurately while other artists of the period idealized or allegorized its battles. From his paintings, the most talented lithographers, colorists, and printers made the twelve lithographs that accompany Kendall's text. While only one lithograph depicts a battle fought on Texas soil, the Battle of Palo Alto, others depict decisive battles in Mexico. One of the most famous pictures being General Winfield Scott's entrance into the Zocalo in Mexico City. The book was a sensation when published and sold well despite the cost of about \$670 in 1992 dollars.

Tyler's introduction, replete with illustrations and footnotes, explains the importance of this war for the future of Texas and of the United States as it expanded westward. This facsimile reprint, which Tyler terms a classic of history and art, is beautiful to look at, but due to its folio size (17 1/2 by 24 inches), one needs a library table to read and study it. Students and scholars will not view this as an obstacle because the book is so beautiful and so rewarding as a resource.

Sally Dooley

Robinson, Charles M., III. *THE COURT MARSHALL OF LIEUTENANT HENRY FLIPPER*. El Paso: Texas Western Press, 1994. 130p. Illustrations. Bibliography. Paperback: \$12.50, ISBN 0-87404-196-1.

Charles Robinson concludes surprisingly that the 1881 court martial of Lt. Henry Flipper, the first black graduate of West Point, was neither racially motivated nor conducted. To the contrary, any spite the principals in the affair may have borne toward the popular young officer arose mostly out of the idiosyncrasies of their own flawed characters. Flipper was ably defended by Captain Merritt Barber against a weaker prosecution, and the board of inquiry seemed to have been determined to get at the truth.

The truth, as Robinson's very engaging description of the trial shows, being that Flipper was in over his head when assigned to manage large sums of Army funds. Too, the relaxed situation of military protocol in West Texas where he served revealed his lack of acumen, and an ill-advised liaison with an unscrupulous post laundress did him in. If there was little compassion in the verdict that expelled Flipper from the Army, there was no taint of racial injustice either. So this interesting little book, directed at a very small niche, records (and illustrates with good period and recent photographs) a singular event of U.S. Army life at Fort Davis.

Randall S. Holdridge

Sumrall, Alan K. *BATTLE FLAGS OF TEXANS IN THE CONFEDERACY*. Austin: Eakin Press, 1995. 114p. Illustrations. Bibliography. Index. Hardcover: \$29.95, ISBN 0-89015-983-1. 94-40888.

This handsome volume containing eighty pages of full color illustrations will be of special interest to students of the American Civil War. The author, a Victoria attorney, has spent years researching and collecting information about battle flags of Texas Civil War regiments. In this work Sumrall provides not only beautiful illustrations of regimental battle flags but also

brief descriptions of each unit and the historical circumstances surrounding its flag.

Many of the Texas units marched under flags carrying some variation of the "Southern Cross" (a cross of blue with white stars on a red field), the battle flag adopted early in the war by Confederate units in Virginia. Others, such as the 8th Texas Cavalry (Terry's Texas Rangers), carried variants of the "Bonnie Blue Flag" with its single star. Some of the flags, such as the attractive banner of the Tyler Guards of the 3rd Texas Cavalry, were impractical for extended use in the field. Others, such as the consolidated 17th-18th Texas Cavalry, carried the names of battles of campaigns in which the units had been engaged. In addition to the flags themselves, Sumrall creates a useful synoptic table of Civil War events divided into four geographic regions. This work should be of interest to readers of all age levels. It belongs in every public library.

Ralph A. Wooster

Taylor, W. Thomas. **TEXFAKE: AN ACCOUNT OF THE THEFT AND FORGERY OF EARLY TEXAS PRINTED DOCUMENTS.** Austin: W. Thomas Taylor, 1991. (Distributed by Texas State Historical Assoc.) Illustrations. Bibliography. Index. Hardcover: \$39.95, ISBN 0-935072-20-9.

In 1991, W. Thomas Taylor first published this book about the looting of Texas libraries of Texana documents in the 1960s. Now the book is priced five dollars lower than in 1991 with all proceeds from its sale benefiting the Texas State Historical Association's educational program. The volume is a must for Texana buffs and collections because it traces the stories of how original documents pilfered from county courthouses, the Texas State Library, and the Barker Texas History Center at the University of Texas found their way into the hands of heretofore respected dealers of Texana. The second part of the handsomely printed book contains photographs and detailed descriptions of the documents known to have been forged. Taylor, a publisher, author, and rare book dealer, provides a lucid study which is amplified by the introduction by fellow bookman and author, Larry McMurtry. For a full review see Vol. VI, No. 3.

Sally Dooley

Wiggins, Melanie. **TORPEDOES IN THE GULF: GALVESTON AND THE U-BOATS, 1942-1943.** College Station: Texas A&M University, 1995. 265p. Illustrations. Bibliography. Index. Hardcover: \$29.50, ISBN 0-89096-627-3; Paperback: \$14.95, ISBN 0-89096-648-6. 94-31861.

Individuals who lived along the Gulf Coast during the Second World War remember stories of German submarine activity off the Texas coast as well as the efforts of local citizens, government officials, and military personnel to defeat the U-boats. The first U-boat entered the Gulf in April 1942. For the next several months they were highly successful, sinking twenty-five ships in May alone. Fifty-six merchant vessels were sunk and fourteen damaged before defense measures eliminated the submarine menace.

Melanie Wiggins, freelance writer from Galveston and author of the critically acclaimed earlier history of the Bolivar Peninsula, has provided a lively account of the submarines, merchant ships, naval vessels, and men and women who played a part in

this significant and dangerous contest. In recounting the story the author has utilized local sources, the National Archives, the German Cuxhaven U-Boat Archive, and interviews with merchant seamen, military personnel, and submarine commanders. Her efforts will be of considerable interest to both serious scholars and general readers. The book clearly demonstrates how close the war came to the shores of the Gulf Coast. Although the bulk of the sinkings occurred off the Louisiana and Florida coasts, the presence of submarines in the Gulf had a considerable impact upon the lives of Galvestonians.

Ralph A. Wooster

Winegarten, Ruthe. **BLACK TEXAS WOMEN: 150 YEARS OF TRIAL AND TRIUMPH.** Austin: University of Texas Press, 1995. 427p. Illustrations. Bibliography. Index. Hardcover: \$60.00, ISBN 0-292-79087-2; Paperback: \$24.95, ISBN 0-292-79089-9. 94-7418.

Occasionally a book comes along that is monumental in scope, overwhelming in amount of research, and so powerful in its impact as to be categorized at once as a lasting contribution to our knowledge of humankind. *Black Texas Women* is one of those rare books. In the preface, Ruthe Winegarten writes, "Black women . . . confronted one of the harshest systems the world has ever known and survived with their spirits intact. They serve as role models for all of us." Without bias, she has compiled, together with 250 photographs, legal records, letters, oral histories, and bits and pieces found here and there covering "The Antebellum Period," "Reconstruction and Redemption," "Education and Culture," "The New Century," and "The Modern Period."

Only a small number of black women enjoyed freedom under Mexican law, but their status changed after the battle of San Jacinto. Thereafter, the history becomes a painful recounting of abuse, even through reconstruction, because emancipation did not occur overnight. The black culture allowed women freedom to seek new ways to reorganize their lives. They left the fields, unless they were sharecropping; they worked as midwives, seamstresses, and domestics. Recognizing the importance of education, many became teachers. They had one rule: for survival, one works hard.

There are an appendix, with more than fifty pages of notes and almost twenty pages of bibliography, an index, and lists of distinguished educators and office holders. The opportunities for further research suggested here should prove stimulating to scholars. To others it will be a meticulously edited reference book; to the casual reader, it is a mind-stretcher. Highly recommended.

Ernestine Sewell Linck

HORTICULTURE

Manaster, Jane. **THE PECAN TREE.** Austin: University of Texas Press, 1994. 109p. Illustrations. Hardcover: \$17.95, ISBN 0-292-75153-2. 93-49563.

This delightful, eye-catching book describes everything about the pecan: its botany and natural history, cultivation, disease and predator control, and aspects of the history of improvement of stock and culture. The author shows the pecan's vast extension

from its original range in East and Central Texas and the South Central United States to Florida and the Southeast and westward to California. Jane Manaster appeals to gourmets and cooks by including over twenty recipes, both modern and traditional, for such delights as pralines, candied pecans, pecan pie, and pecan logs. This work is beautifully illustrated with color prints of illustrations from historical brochures, USDA photo archives and yearbooks, as well as a series of color and black-and-white photographs, maps, and historical documents. With a naturally flowing style, wealth of information, and striking visual format, this book will appeal to a broad audience including pecan lovers, growers, and ethnobotanists.

Phillip Malnassy

PHOTOGRAPHY

Gibson, David H. **DEEP EAST TEXAS**. Atlanta: Longstreet Press, 1993. 96p. Illustrations. Index. Paperback: \$19.95, ISBN 1-56352-117-2.

This book of hauntingly beautiful black-and-white photographs captures the waters and woods of Deep East Texas, an area bounded by IH 30 on its north, Jasper to its south, east to its Louisiana border, and west to a north-south line through Tyler. Although this scenery is not as grandiose as the Rocky Mountains or the Grand Canyon, Gibson's lens focuses on what the casual observer would otherwise miss. His photographs reveal the contrast of shapes, lines, and light of the Piney Woods landscape. Careful development of negatives motivates him: "The purpose of the printing process is to communicate with the best tools available the expression of that initial experience."

There is a lovely unspoken beckoning in "Road Harrison County," and photographs of thistles, ferns, and grasses play with the rhythm of patterns of plant shapes in light. "Narcissus and Home" illustrates the durability of nature as the flowers return annually while the dilapidated home deteriorates. Ghostly-looking cypress trunks, trees dripping with Spanish moss, and shadows slowly eclipsing light transport viewers to the forest floor. The photographs succeed in arresting the "initial experience" he has had and giving them to us through the medium of this book. Gibson, a graduate of Centenary College and Trinity University, is an active Dallas amateur photographer whose work has been exhibited at the Valley House Gallery in Dallas, the Tyler Museum of Art, and the Amarillo Art Center as well as out-of-state galleries.

Sally Dooley

SOCIAL LIFE AND CUSTOMS

Kelton, Elmer. **MY KIND OF HEROES: SELECTED SPEECHES BY ELMER KELTON**. Austin: State House Press, 1995. 93p. Illustrations. Hardcover: \$19.95, ISBN 1-880510-27-8. 94-38220.

Elmer Kelton of San Angelo has been writing books and stories about West Texas for forty years. Simultaneously, until recently, he also had a day job as a writer for *Livestock Weekly*. From these two perspectives Kelton gained particular insights into the historical and social aspects of Western life. In March 1994, at a meeting of the Texas State Historical Association, he delivered a speech "Politically Correct or Historically Correct." In it Kel-

ton made a strong argument for historians to be historically correct rather than influenced by revisionist historians who peddled guilt, blaming white European males for destroying an Eden-like America that existed in pre-Columbian times. Because many of his audience thought it was important for this point of view to be disseminated, it was decided to publish this and three other speeches.

The additional related essays are equally challenging and interesting, and they supplement the reader's understanding of one of Texas' greatest writers. In "Racial Relations in the Western" given in Germany in 1992, he traced, using books and films, relationships between Anglos, blacks, Indians, and Mexicans. "Myth vs. Reality" pointed out in 1994 the historical fact behind much of what is spoken of as myth, the realities of the West instead of the well known images. "My Kind of Heroes," the last essay, reveals the hardy individuals who survived as pioneers, cowboys, and ranchers despite severe hardships, both economic and environmental. These are the folks who inspired the creation of his fictional characters, one of whom is Charlie Flagg, the hero in *The Time It Never Rained*. Vintage family photographs and Kelton's drawings illustrate the text which is printed on beige textured paper to make an attractive book. This volume will be an excellent and necessary addition to public and university libraries.

Sally Dooley

SPORTS

Burton, Alan, ed. "...TIL THE FAT LADY SINGS": **CLASSIC TEXAS SPORTS QUOTES**. Lubbock: Texas Tech University Press, 1994. 243p. Illustrations. Index. Paperback: \$9.95, ISBN 0-89672-339-9. 94-15672.

This initial entry in the Classic Texas Quotes series features roughly 400 sports quotations from more than 100 different sources. Editor Burton has liberal ground rules for inclusion: quotes must be "meaningful and/or humorous," and the speaker must be a native Texan, have resided in Texas, have managed, coached, or played in Texas, or have spoken about Texas or a Texas team or event. The collection does not pretend to be all-inclusive, and it isn't. While the cross-section of contributors includes a large number of Texas athletic personalities, the bulk of the quotations emanate (quite rightly) from a glib core group of Abe Lemons, Bum Phillips, Darrell Royal, and Lee Treviño, each of whom is a newspaper reporter's dream. However, there are some riotously funny lines attributed to others outside of that witty foursome, including former Texas A&M basketball coach Shelby Metcalf who once told a player who received four F's and a D for his semester's courseload: "Son, looks to me like you're spending too much time on one subject." The book is organized somewhat haphazardly (a section breakdown by type of sport would have been far preferable), although an index helps to sort through the clutter. And enjoyable "clutter" it is, providing an entertaining casual read for both sports aficionados and fans of Texas regional humor. Public library reference collections will find this work useful.

David Carroll

Dalrymple, Byron. **AN OUTDOOR LIFETIME: SIX DECADES IN A WRITER'S LIFE**. Clinton, NJ: New Win Publishing, Inc., 1994. 284p. Hardcover: \$24.95, ISBN 0-8329-

0508-9. 94-18963.

This wonderful collection is a fitting valediction from Byron Dalrymple, the great outdoor writer who died shortly after its publication. For many years and for several generations of readers, Dalrymple was a trusted source of inside information on hunting and fishing in popular magazines like *Field and Stream*. It is intriguing to read, in his introduction, how he abandoned a successful career as a Hollywood musical arranger to trace the backwaters and mountain trails of America's vanishing wilderness.

The book's six "decades" are introduced by wry remarks; commenting on the decline of literacy and the political correctness of the current era, Dalrymple observes that "people became 'that,' [and] animals became 'who.'" Dalrymple lacked the lyricism of a Nick Lyons or Clive Gammon, but he was far from a pedestrian writer of "how-to" articles. He is at his best when he combines his sharp eye for detail and his genial sense of humor with offbeat subjects like teaching grandchildren to fish. This is a collection that should grace the nightstand of anyone who loves the outdoors. Recommended.

R.S. Gwynn

WETLAND ECOLOGY

Steiert, Jim and Wyman Meinzer. *PLAYAS: JEWELS OF THE PLAINS*. Lubbock: Texas Tech University Press, 1995. 134p. Illustrations. Bibliography. Hardcover: \$37.50, ISBN 0-89672-335-6. 94-12270.

Ephemeral yet everlasting, some 20,000 shallow drainage basins dot the Southern High Plains of Texas on the Llano Estacado. In this informative tribute to what Plains people call playa lakes, author Steiert, a Panhandle resident active in public relations and a professional hunting guide, examines the origins and ethnohistory of the playas; their role in agriculture, petroleum and the plains ecosystems; and the diverse viewpoints about their use and jurisdiction represented by farmers, ranchers, environmentalists, sportsmen, naturalists and federal and state regulators and wildlife agencies. Though overwritten in sections, the narrative holds interest with its first-hand observations of the playas that Steiert has plied since boyhood. His pro-playa stance, in the face of those who see them as expense and nuisance, is hard to dismiss in view of the well-documented arguments that the playas benefit both the bottom line of the area's economy as well as the ecosystem of the area. More convincing than the text in this pleasing large format book, however, are some seventy-five color photographs by award-winning outdoors photographer Wyman Meinzer. Ranging from aerial views of the mirror-like ponds stretching to the horizon after a rain to closeups of birdlife on wetlands, the photographs offer eloquent support for the continued existence of these jewels of the plains.

Mary M. Fisher

CONTRIBUTORS

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Mary M. Fisher, a longtime award-winning newspaper columnist and editor, is now a school administrator in San Antonio. She received a B.A. in English and a M.A. in history from the University of Texas at Austin.

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Phillip Malnassy, currently Associate Professor of Biology, has been a member of the Lamar University-Beaumont faculty since 1973. He holds an A.B. degree from Hunter College, New York, and a Ph.D. from Rutgers University.

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REVIEW OF TEXAS BOOKS

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