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## Book Notes

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## Book Notes

BY ARCHIE P. McDONALD

With the tolerance and encouragement of Executive Director Scott Sosebee, this column on books continues. Full reviews of recently published books on Texas history and culture, particularly those on Eastern Texas, appear elsewhere in the Journal. Comments on publications in this section are highly personal and do not necessarily reflect the views of Director Sosebee or any other member of the Association. That said...

One might have to be my age to appreciate Heather Green Wooten's *The Polio Years In Texas: Battling A Terrifying Unknown* (Texas A&M University Press, 4354 TAMU, College Station, TX 77843-4354, \$45, 2009), because I can still hear the sound of the bellows produced by a functioning iron lung. Polio was the dreaded disease, the HIV/AIDS of my younger years, and I may even have experienced a touch of it—one of the lucky ones who endured a few rough days before recovery while less fortunate victims sustained paralysis and life-long disability, or worse, confinement in the aforementioned “iron lung.” (At least a country doctor in Missouri thought so; I don't really know.) But I do remember the fear each summer and the daring required to partake of the Salk and Sabine vaccines. Heather Wooten brings back all those terrible memories for old folks such as me and considerable enlightenment for later generations for whom poliomyelitis, sometimes called “infantile paralysis” because it affected so many youngsters, is but a historical oddity. Wooten does a magnificent job of telling readers what polio was (is), how it passed from one victim to another, how it was treated, and how it can be prevented. The information is universal, but Wooten's focus is on Texas. My long-time friend Bobby Johnson's story of dealing with polio is partially told, along with others. I strongly recommend this book, even to those fortunate enough to have never seen or heard an iron lung.

*Cowboy Conservatism: Texas And The Rise Of The Modern*

*Right* by Sean P. Cunningham (University Press of Kentucky, 663 South Limestone Street, Lexington, KY 40508-4008, \$40, 2010), tackles a difficult job: explaining how and why Texas, once firmly in the grip of the Democratic Party, became an even more firmly gripped Republican state. “Even more” seems reasonable when one remembers the old conservative versus liberal Democratic primary fights, such as Allan Shivers against Ralph Yarborough. In that sense, Texas really was a two-party state because the animosity between those groups flared as intensely as between Donkeys and Elephants in other states. For Cunningham, the long answer explaining Texas’ political migration involved, among other things, Texans’ persistent cleavage to independence and self reliance instead of government, the loss of government as a factor in racial control, and the migration to “extreme” liberalism by the Democratic Party; short answer: Ronald Reagan walked on water and Jimmy Carter wore cement shoes. Cunningham devotes chapters on state-wide and national election outcomes in Texas that trace the shift from Democratic to Republican control, mostly illustrating that liberal Democrats and conservative Republicans sought the same thing: getting rid of conservative Democrats. And both got what they wanted. My only difficulty is with Cunningham’s use of the term “populist conservative,” which I thought to be an oxymoron. Turns out the Oxford Dictionary sanctions such usage no matter what I think. Liberals will argue with every page while “populist conservatives” will clap their hands and shout “YeeeeHaw.”

*How Did Davy Die? And Why Do We Care So Much?* by Dan Kilgore and James C. Crisp (Texas A&M University Press, 4354 TAMU, College Station, TX 77843-4354, \$18.95, 2010), is a commemorative edition of Kilgore’s original inquiry in print, also published by Texas A&M University Press. Kilgore first posed the question in his presidential address to the Texas State Historical Association in 1977, and I was privileged to be present. As a member of the Association’s executive council, I had worked with Dan for the past half decade. He was among

the Association's leading "lay" historians in the alternation of officers and council members with "school teachers" such as me. An accountant by trade, Dan was a historian by choice with a natural gift. (Among my finest moments, I once took off a necktie he admired and gave it to him.) And I recall most vividly the storm he raised at the Association's meeting and following the publication of an expanded version of his remarks by A&M Press. I am also flattered that Jim Crisp began his portion of this retrospective with a quotation from the *East Texas Historical Journal*: "Looking at Dan Kilgore's slender volume,' mused Archie McDonald from his editor's desk in Nacogdoches,' '...you wonder How Did Dan Stir Up Such A Mess?'" After reading this new publication, I am not certain that my question, or Crisp's (*And Why Do We Care So Much?*) are answered yet. But Dan's original thesis and Jim's analysis of the reaction and confirmation of Dan's ideas about Crockett's demise still make for interesting reading. Some stories never grow stale. Strongly recommended.

*Sunrise! Governor Bill Daniel and The Second Liberation of Guam* by David Gracy II (Hill College Press, 112 Lamar Dr., Hillsboro, TX, \$30, 2010), examines the life of Governor Bill Daniel, Professor of Archival Enterprise at the University of Texas, and is the author's latest biographical work following his successful and excellent biography of Moses Austin, the almost forgotten empresario of earliest Anglo Texas. President John F. Kennedy appointed Governor Price Daniel's bother Bill as governor of Guam, an outpost of America's "empire" located in the far Pacific and one of our nation's most important naval stations in the world. The Navy controlled Guam, but its civilian population also deserved and required civic government. Daniel was Guam's fifth governor and likely its most involved "nation builder," even if it was the American nation. Daniel's familiar white suits and grey hair were a pervasive sight on the island during his memorable sixteen months as governor. Gracy's treatment of Daniel's life as governor of Guam is superb.

Also in that part of the world, William H. Bartsch's *Every*

*Day A Nightmare: American Pursuit Pilots in the Defense of Java, 1941-1942* (Texas A&M University Press, 4354 TAMU, College Station, TX, \$40, 2010), examines the story of American pilots, originally meant to bolster General Douglas MacArthur's forces in the Philippines, diverted to Java to participate in the defense of the Dutch Indies from the Japanese. Many pilots, recent graduates of Air Corps flight training school with little experience in the P-40 aircraft they flew, perished. Bartsch previously published two other books on the World War II Pacific Theatre, both published by Texas A&M University Press. As we draw nearer the end of life's limits for America's Greatest Generation, we learn more and more about their service and hardships.

Joanne S. Liu's *Barbed Wire: The Fence That Changed The West* (Mountain Press Publishing Co., Box 2399, Missoula, Montana 59806, \$14, 2009), examines more than just barbed wire. Included are the roles of fences to enclose and exclude as well as the use of available materials for fence construction. And, of course, no materials were available on the Great Plains, the Great Middle of North America, before Joseph Glidden and others invented, manufactured, and provided barbed wire. I can't tell you at what age I learned to say and to spell barbed wire because my seniors all pronounced the stuff as "bob wire" or perhaps "bobbed war." East Texans talk like that sometime. Anyway, the wire came in hundreds of variations and could be as temporary or as permanent as its tenders intended. Good illustrations accompany Liu's words and textbook-like format.

*Call Her A Citizen: Progressive-Era Activist and Educator Anna Pennybacker* by Kelley M. King (Texas A&M University Press, 4354 TAMU, College Station, TX, \$39.95, 2010), is a biography of the "little lady who wrote the big book," a variation of a description of Harriet Beecher Stowe by President Abraham Lincoln when referring to Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Here, the "little lady's" book was *A New History of Texas*, published in 1898 and used in Texas schools until the 1940s when Ralph W. Steen's text began to dominate the market. Pennybacker's

history of Texas became an unofficial “official” history of our state until late in the twentieth century; here is where most Texans learned what they learned about their past. King wants us to know that Pennybacker was much more than a teacher who happened to write a book—a progressive feminist at a time when progressivism and feminism were a trial and a test to Texas. Good book that provides good information and insight into both.

Contemporary disclosure rules require that I confess up front that I am a contributor to *Celebrating 100 Years of the Texas Folklore Society, 1909-2009*, edited by Kenneth E. Untiedt (University of North Texas Press, 1155 Union Circle #311336, Denton, TX 76203-1336, \$39.95, 2009), which is the LXVth publication of the Society itself and a celebration of its centennial. Untiedt includes many and better writers in this miscellany than I, including Clarence Jay Faulkner, Scott Hill Bumgardner, Vicky Rose, Lucy Fischer West, Tim Tingle, Jean Granberry Schnitz, James Ward Lee, Len Ainsworth, Al Lowman, Frances Brannen Vick, L. Patrick Hughes, Bruce A. Glasrud, Charles Chupp, Charles Clay Doyle, Jerry B. Lincecum, Elmer Kelton, Peggy A. Redshaw, Joyce Gibson Roach, Francis Edward Abernethy, Sue M. Friday, Meredith E. Abarca, Kenneth W. Davis, Lee Haile, Charlie Oden, Mary Margaret Dougherty Campbell, Sarah L. Greene, J. Rhett Rushing, Carol Hanson, and Robert J. (Jack) Duncan - a “who’s who” of the genre. Their work is divided into sections titled “What’s the Point: Why the Folk Came in the First Place;” “Books, Papers, and Presentations: Texas Folklore Scholarship;” “The Folk: Who We Are and What We’ve Done;” and “Meetings, Memories, and More.” A must for Folklore Society members, who received this volume as their annual publication, and highly desirable for all who care about Texas.

*Music In The Kitchen: Favorite Recipes from Austin City Limits Performers*. compiled by Glenda Pierce Facemier with Leigh Anne Jasheway-Bryant and principal photographer Scott Newton (University of Texas Press, P.O. Box 7819, Austin, TX 78713-7819, \$34.95, 2009), tells its contents in the title. Offerings include “Samplers—Appetizers and Groovin’ With

Soups, Stews, Salads, and Breads;” “Accompaniments—Sides, Sauces, Spreads, and Jams;” “Main Attractions—Poultry, Meats, Seafood, and Game;” “Keep the Beet—Vegetables and Legumes;” “Hit Singles;” “Sweet Sounds: Desserts;” and “Encore Buffet.” The photographs are spectacular and the recipes are as you find them.

I used the first edition of *Texas: A Historical Atlas* by A. Ray Stephens from when I began teaching Texas history in 1972 until my last offering of that class in 2008 because a sense of geography—plain, simple knowledge of where things are located in Texas—is one of the greatest needs of contemporary students. Now comes “a whole other country,” a new *Texas: A Historical Atlas*, still prepared by Stephens with cartographer Carol Zuber-Mallison (University of Oklahoma Press, 2800 Venture Dr, Norman, OK 73069, \$39.95, 2010), and this version is so much more: eighty-six essays and 175 full-color maps, more than twice the number of maps available in the original publication. No Texana library should be without this atlas.

Finally, *Lyndon B. Johnson And Modern America* by Kevin J. Fernlund (University of Oklahoma Press, 2800 Venture Dr, Norman, OK 73069, \$24.95, 2009), is an entry into the press’s Oklahoma Western Biography Series, edited by Richard W. Etulain. It is brief—164 pages of text—so mostly a biographical sketch of so large a topic. Johnson’s administration as president impacted Americans and the way they lived more than any other twentieth century presidents except Franklin Roosevelt, so any evaluation and appreciation of his role in American history is welcomed.