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Single Star of the West. The Republic of Texas, 1836-1845. By Kenneth W. Howell & Charles Swanlund. University of North Texas Press, 2017. Illus. Maps. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Pages: 576. Hardcover price \$34.95.

For many Texans, the story of Texas independence and subsequent decade as an independent republic is a point of pride that centers of the contributions and experiences of Anglos. Stephen F. Austin, Sam Houston, Davy Crocket, and the other men of popular lore take center stage in the developments of the 1830s and 1840s. However, editors Kenneth W. Howell and Charles Swanlund put together an interesting collection of essays that challenge this "traditionalist" perspective. The book attempts to answer several questions: "*Who were the Texans of the Republic era? What were the experiences of Tejanos, African Americans, American Indians, foreign-born immigrants, and women living in the Republic? In what ways did various ethnic and racial groups influence the development of Texas during this era?*" (6) The editors readily admit that this collection does not definitively answer each of these questions, yet the insight provided will open the door for future research. Taken together, the sixteen essays in *Single Star of the West* demonstrate the cultural milieu that shaped the trajectory of the revolution, republic period, and annexation of Texas into the United States.

The collection is organized into four thematic sections, addressing issues surrounding the buildup to the Texians' struggle for independence, the revolution itself, political and economic issues during the republic period, and social and cultural developments during the republic era. The range of issues covered in the collection is impressive. From Richard Bruce Winders's essay that places the secession of Tejas from Mexico in the broader context of political debates and a civil war within Mexico between, to Gary D. Joiner's examination of the contribution of the Texas Navy during the revolution and republic period, to three essays each dealing with the presidents of Texas by James L. Haley, Kenneth W. Howell, and Charles Swanlund, and culminating in a John Storey's essay on religion in the republic, the coverage is thorough and will undoubtedly appeal to a broad range of interests.

Several essays bring enlightening new perspectives on the Republic of Texas. The biographies of the Texas presidents reveals political turmoil

and policy debates in the context of the personalities of each man. Particularly interesting is Charles Swanlund's examination of the role and contributions to the Republic of Texas of Anson Jones, a man he dubs the "forgotten president." (233) Part IV: *Social and Cultural Vistas* elaborates on the several important contributions of and limitations placed on women, American Indians, African Americans, and Tejanos in the republic era. Most impressive, however, is Walter L. Buenger's essay, "Across Many Borders: Persistence and Transformation in the Texas Economy and Culture, 1830-1850. Buenger situates the economy and culture of Texas in the context of the larger Atlantic world. Instead of seeing Texas's cultural and economic developments as monolithic or focused around Texas exceptionalism or rugged individualism, he argues that Texas's connection with the larger Atlantic world "created distinctive and evolving cultural pockets or island communities in the diverse regions of Texas. Instead of a 'regular Texas' at least six types existed." (306)

While essays, such as Buenger's, offer interesting new perspective, some of the arguments put forth in the essays will be familiar to historians of the era. Essays exploring conflicts between and the political struggles of Sam Houston and Mirabeau B. Lamar, the larger fight between Santa Anna's central government in Mexico City and the several states of Mexico (including Tejas), and the development of the legendary and infamous Texas Rangers are engaging, yet ultimately fairly well-known in academic circles. Despite the familiarity, these essays still provide much needed context and insight into the multiple forces at work during the era.

This minor critique does not, however, detract from the overall success of the collection. Taken as a whole, *Single Star of the West* offers perhaps the most wide-ranging coverage of the Texas Republic and elucidates the variegated forces that shaped much of the history of Tejas, the war against Mexico, the republic era, and finally the annexation of Texas as the twenty-eighth state in the Union. Historians of Texas will undoubtedly find much to celebrate in these essays, and for anyone generally interested in the history of the state, particularly the revolution and republic era, this collection is a must read.

Brandon Jett
Stetson University

Women in Civil War Texas: Diversity and Dissidence in the Trans-Mississippi. Deborah M. Liles and Angela Boswell, eds. University of North Texas Press, 2016. Photos. Maps. Notes. Index. Pages: 336. Hardcover price \$29.95.

Dr. Deborah Liles and Dr. Angela Boswell, provide a masterful counter-narrative to the monolithic view of women's experiences in Texas during Civil War. The anthology, awarded the Liz Carpenter Prize for the best book on the history of Texas women, incorporates a broad perspective of women's lives and their contributions to a complicated story. In this book, Liles and Boswell piece together essays written by notable historians who address critical questions about gender and class on the home front during the war. Additionally, the essays tackle the experiences of African American women, Mexican American women, and women who supported the Union after Texas seceded. The central argument of the book, as Boswell points out in the introduction, sets out to challenge the hegemonic narrative of southern women and shows "the hardships were numerous and their history is interesting and diverse." (1)

Like the title suggests, Liles and Boswell organize the book around diversity and dissidence and either highlight a particular woman or group of women to address questions of gender, class, and identity. In the first essay, Vicki Betts, combines notions of the traditional historical narrative that shows women engaged in support and recruitment of the war, and generally focused on the upper class. Yet, she points out how women challenged the social construction of their traditional roles by assuming responsibilities of the household as the men left for war. In Dorothy Ewing's essay on Caroline Seedberry embodies the traditional narrative as seen through her correspondence with her husband. As the time passed, however, women like Seedberry gained confidence in their abilities to manage the business at home and also discovered a conviction in their own voice. In the third chapter, Beverly Rowe also expertly uses archival letters between several family members to deconstruct the thoughts of both men and women and the role gender plays on the issues of slavery, the war, and loyalty. Brittany Bounds then writes on how the women's support for the war culminated into organizing aid societies, sewing groups, or church groups formed by both rich and poor to provide the necessary material needs to soldiers. Bounds also briefly addresses the issue of prostitution in during the Civil

War, but quickly shifts the view back to the appalled women writing to newspapers who found the “questionable women” an “annoyance.” (84) While the book begins with what readers may see as a typical story of upper-class white women’s experience during the war, the essays are used to demonstrate a self-reliance not typical to their stories.

In the second half of the book, the essays address the experiences of women who veered away from the southern cause and do not fit the common narrative of women in the Confederacy during the Civil War in Texas. Bruce Glasrud, for example, writes about African American Texas women and their experiences during the “Freedom War.” He argues “the lives of black women, whether free or enslaved, were controlled either by white owners or white law.” (100) This highlights their vulnerable position living in Confederate Texas, and Linda Hudson explores this vulnerability through court cases. Hudson also shows the agency enslaved women displayed through court appeals. Jerry Thompson and Elizabeth Mata focus on the lives of Mexican-American women in Civil War Texas. An often over-looked narrative, the authors write about the expanded roles women assumed in South Texas while their husbands left home to fight. They also explore the dynamic of mixed marriages and what that meant to Texas-Southern identity. In chapters eight and nine, Judith Dykes-Hoffman and Rebecca Sharpless explore the lives of Unionist women in Texas. While Dykes-Hoffman focuses on the German Women and Sharpless on the women of North Texas, both provide an under-explored story of women who opposed the Confederacy and its politics. Candice Shockley’s chapter does bring the narrative back to elite women, but demonstrates the hardships of women labeled “refugees” and fleeing other parts of the war-torn south. In the final chapter, Liles examines the lives of women in the frontier. “Not your typical Southern Belles,” as Liles writes, like the previous chapters, brilliantly demonstrates how women in Civil War Texas did not fit the mold of “traditional women” but acted on their own behalf and endured hardships not typically found in the historiography.

The book is accessible to all levels of readers and includes extensive archival information, in addition to maps and pictures. This well-researched narrative on Civil War Texas is valuable to any history class that explores questions on gender, war, and race.

Leah LaGrone Ochoa
Texas Christian University

Graham Barnett: A Dangerous Man. By James L. Coffey, Russell M. Brake, & John T. Barnett. University of North Texas Press, 2017. Illus., Notes, Bibliography, Index. Pages: 400. Hardcover price \$29.95

Society tends to make heroes of mortals with feet of clay. The media feasts on the public's love for heroes, be they a "Captain America" or a "Wonder Woman." At the time of the Twentieth Century's beginning a real-life hero was in the making, a common man to all appearances, but that man, Graham Barnett, would enter into the "Roaring Twenties" and become a mythical figure. The authors present the life story of this dangerous man, his background, why he became the man he did and how his life style resulted in his becoming a near legend in his lifetime.

Joseph Graham Barnett was his birth name, born on August 28, 1890 and almost as a precursor to his lifestyle an acquaintance stated that he "came from an eye-for-an-eye kind of people." (13) Indeed, ranching along the Rio Grande almost guaranteed the problems of survival, as besides the lack of rain, the fluctuations of livestock markets, animal diseases and four-legged predators there was the revolution taking place just across the river. That close to the river also attracted two-legged predators, and Graham Barnett learned quickly that if he showed meekness and lack of fight he would not survive.

This notion resulted in Barnett becoming an expert with weapons, whether it be a six-shooter or a rifle. One incident involved recovering his own horses from bandits from south of the river. He and an uncle trailed the stolen mounts, found where they had been hidden and at daybreak stole them back, along with the horses of the thieves. This required not only the tracking skills to locate them but also the nerve to handle the recovery. The incident was told and retold, probably growing more exciting with each telling. Another story involved Barnett sitting on the bluffs on the Texas side and shooting at any Mexican who showed himself on the other side. It was supposed that he may have actually *shot* Mexicans rather than just shooting at him. The actual events and the retelling gradually led many citizens to fear Graham Barnett. This was considered an advantage for him, as many who otherwise might want to cross him now avoided him.

Perhaps the major incident which led to the growing amount of fear of Barnett was the last act of his feud with the Babb family which grew

out of a land dispute. An argument in Dodd's general merchandise store in Langtry between Will Babb and Barnett escalated to the street where Graham had to defend himself with a .32 Savage pistol. Babb was killed instantly, but the feud only continued.

Graham Barnett now was forced to always be on the lookout for those wanting to avenge Will Babb's death. Whether it was self-defense or cold blooded murder mattered little. Rumors circulated that the Babb family had placed a \$10,000 bounty on Barnett's head, payable on proof of death. At a time when some laborers earned less than one dollar a day this could be an attractive chance to take.

That may have been only a rumor, but Graham Barnett believed it was true and became even more watchful. It changed him, and he became more of a gunman than a rancher. This did not deter him from joining the Texas Rangers in 1916 in Company B captained by J. Monroe Fox. This was during a low period in ranger history as rumors of wholesale killing of Mexicans were rampant. Thus Barnett lived with the reputation as a gunman but at the same time was a bona fide officer of the law, sworn to uphold the laws of the state of Texas.

This story of a dangerous man has been told only in brief episodes but never has received a full length treatment by competent historians. While his legend grew, Barnett served in many capacities: cowboy, deputy sheriff, oil field security man, Texas Ranger, city marshal of Presidio, private investigator in San Angelo, as well as ranchman, husband and father. Authors Coffey, Drake, and Barnett have wisely consolidated their research with primary and secondary source materials as well as numerous interviews Drake had conducted with witnesses to Barnett's life and times. This biography is a valuable research tool for those wanting to know the real conditions of the early 20th century life and times in South Texas.

Chuck Parsons
Luling, Texas

Whiskey River Ranger. The Old West Life of Baz Outlaw. By Bob Alexander. University North Texas Press, 2016. Photos. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Pps. 448. Hardcover price \$34.95

The garrulous and always entertaining Bob Alexander has spun yet another Texas Ranger yarn for his devoted readership, this time regaling us with the story of Bazzell Lamar Outlaw, a fearless enforcer of the law gripped by the scourge of alcoholism throughout his life which would ultimately lead to his undoing on an El Paso street. The irony of his last name pitched inexorably against his illustrious if untamed Ranger career would ultimately define him in the annals of frontier justice.

Born in 1854 near Seguin, Texas, Baz Outlaw's brief thirty-nine years of life were nonetheless packed with several lifetimes of adventure and misadventure as he made his way across Texas from saloon to gunfight to saloon and so on. Serving more than two decades as both a Texas Ranger and then Deputy U. S. Marshal, Outlaw worked at the task of keeping law and order in the 19th Century American West with a fervent eagerness, while at the same time mired in an unforgiving cycle of drinking and manic behavior. His bravery in the face of "six shooter finality," as author Alexander puts it, was as admired and respected by his peers and superiors as his confounding unprofessional alt-behavior was perplexing. The unpredictable Ranger could hunt down and retrieve a dangerous fugitive in one moment, then turn on his own fellow lawmen in the next. In fact, the cold-blooded murder of a fellow Ranger sparked the last moments of his life as he himself was brought to justice by the business end of El Paso Constable John Selman's gun, the "bullet smashing into Outlaw's upper left chest causing him to copiously leak blood and whiskey onto South Utah Street." (280) Bob Alexander's unexamined yet somehow charming biology notwithstanding, the callous and imbibed character whose tale is told here has met with the perfect writer of the kind of unbridled prose that befits Outlaw's enigmatic career of law and lawlessness wrapped around a bottomless bottle of whiskey.

Baz Outlaw's occasionally illustrious years as a lawman carried him from train robberies to main street shoot-outs, and from chasing down vigilantes to becoming one himself on too many occasions. His captains never knew whether to pin an award on his chest or place him in handcuffs, but neither were any of them ever able to settle him down or get him sober. As

a wanton drunk of the first order, Ranger Outlaw was certainly not the only lawman haunted by alcohol. In fact, even Rangers as highly respected as Captain J. A. Brooks could never finally outwit the whiskey in their veins. But many, like Brooks, were at least able to contain the disease that would ultimately strike them down while they worked behind the badge. Not Baz Outlaw.

For those who enjoy the trail drive campfire chatter that Bob Alexander always brings faithfully to his prose, this next installment of the wild west of the Texas Rangers will be welcome.

Paul N. Spellman

Wharton County Junior College

Sutherland Springs, Texas: Saratoga on the Cibolo. By Richard B. McCaslin. University of North Texas Press. 2017 Contents. Illustrations. Introduction. Chapters 1-5. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Pages 320. Hardcover price \$24.95

Dr. McCaslin, known for his 19th century history of Texas, expanded his scope to detailed local history when researching Sutherland Springs, Texas, a small community in Wilson County. Some thirty years ago, he visited the community on a graduate school fieldtrip led by Terry G. Jordan and Robin Doughty. Along the way he became intrigued with Whitehall, headquarters of an early settler's agricultural enterprise. Later the home served as boarding house for the owner's widow. In his work McCaslin discovered a wide range of sources, insights into the lives of more than the founding elite, and the path a small town followed from its beginning to an apex of success before the ultimate decline.

Farmer and rancher Joseph H. Polley who lived at Whitehall and Doctor John Sutherland, Jr. settled on opposite sides a Cibolo Creek, south-east of San Antonio in the 1840s. Polley valued the constant water flow from several springs for use in his farming and ranching ventures while homeopathic trained doctor Sutherland saw medical value in the waters. By 1860 the community was a thriving farming center in the newly created county of Wilson. Sutherland Springs was the social center of the area with a church, private schoolhouse, hotel, and businesses. The usual vices of early day Texas were present with drinking, horseracing, and gambling. Dozens of slaves lived and worked on the farms and ranches.

The Civil War and Reconstruction brought the first setback. But in 1874 the weekly newspaper proclaimed the town was on "another start uphill." (87). In addition to being a farming center, the town relished the growth of its mineral spring resorts. Stagecoaches and later trains brought visitors from nearby San Antonio and other areas. Entertainment promised to lure more tourists. Residents voted for prohibition in 1876 with hopes of creating a family centered resort. Rumors of potential oil fields, such as those in East Texas, spurred on more speculators. Developers sold lots and later pre-fab home kits. But the downturn of agriculture in the 1920s and 1930s along with weather that dried up the springs caused Sutherland Springs to fall into a downward spiral. With no oil production or agricultural output the community lacked a base for prosperity. As medical

science increased mineral springs were used less and less for treatments. Loss of railroads, closure of churches and schools, and lack of mercantile businesses finally caused the community to acquire the moniker of ghost town.

Dr. McCaslin periodically added to his collection of notes. When he turned his attention again to Sutherland Springs and Whitehall he used family papers, newspapers, legal documents, census records, photographs, and other memorabilia of Sutherland Springs. His work presents an accurate picture of the community from 1840 through the present. While the author clearly represents those who built the town through their money and hard work, he also focuses on women, Hispanic laborers, and immigrants from East Europe. Former slaves built a Freedom Colony outside of the white community before abandoning it to move away searching for jobs. He clearly delineates the Progressive Era speculators and land developers as more interested in their potential wealth than in community support. Making the transition from agriculture to resort never quite happened although a semblance of the community still exists.

Carol Taylor
Greenville, Texas

Building an Ark for Texas, The Evolution of a Natural History Museum.
By Walt Davis. Texas A&M University Press, 2016. Photographs. Notes.
Bibliography. Index. Pgs. 218. Hardcover price \$29.95.

As an insider of 33 years, author Walt Davis narrates the arc of change that began with the preservationist vision of Judge T. Edward Sewell and transformed over the next nine decades into a science center that attracted over a million visitors in its first year by walking the tightrope of education and entertainment. Told through the lens of his own experiences and combined with stories of major participants constructed from interviews and exhaustive research, *Building an Ark for Texas* reads like a travelogue. More than an institutional history, it is an environmental history of the state, a primer on educational theory, and a compendium of biographies of scientists, educators, civic leaders, artists, supporters and students that had an impact on the evolution of the Texas Museum of Natural History, later the Dallas Museum of Natural History (DMNH), into the Perot Museum of Nature and Science.

In three sections, Davis chronicles the need to preserve Texas' environmental landscape, the response embodied in the mission of the DMNH, and the changes that led to the privatization of the museum and the birth of the Perot. He begins the journey where all museums begin – with major change. In *The Manual of Museum Planning*, Gail and Barry Lord reduce our fears and passions to the simple equation: "Change is the catalyst and preservation is the reaction."¹ Early advocates of wildlife conservation in Texas observed massive change to native populations. In the late 1800s, the 'war of extermination' described by a writer of *Science* magazine devastated more than American bison populations. Deer, turkey, quail, songbirds and waterfowl all suffered terrible losses. As a witness to the ongoing slaughter at the end of the nineteenth century, Ed Sewell feared the worst and matched his fears with a correspondingly outsized dream of an, "ark for Texas." The maiden launch of this ark was the Texas Museum of Natural History. Sewell and early collaborator, Willie Mayer, had three guiding principles: "The museum would focus on Texas. It would deal with all the state's plants, animals and mineral resources. And it would be an educational institution." (p.25)

1 Gail Dexter Lord and Barry Lord, *The Manual of Museum Planning*, 2nd ed. (Walnut Creek, California: Altamira Press, 1999), 2-6.

A recurring topic of discussion on this road trip is the challenges museums face in providing learning experiences that inform behavior; transformative experiences. At the beginning of the twentieth century, the American Museum of Natural History introduced the concept of habitat groups displayed in simulated environments. The diorama was the cutting edge tool for educators looking to inspire audiences with an appreciation of nature and a corresponding desire to preserve the environment. This new tool traveled to the DMNH with its first director, F.W. Miller, and stayed for more than forty years. In the same timespan, museum staff launched educational programs centered on fieldwork and hands-on learning that served the core mission of conservation education.

The narrative takes the reader on a number of side trips. Tracing the herculean effort involved in building the 1936 museum at Fair Park, Dallas' success in acquiring the 1989 *Ramses the Great* exhibit and the 1984 formation of the Dallas Paleontological Society by DMNH volunteers recruited to clean and repair a Trinity River mammoth skeleton, these excursions, and others, help the reader make sense of the journey. For example, *Ramses the Great* was a phenomenal success financially and attracted record numbers of visitors but ultimately did not raise the museum's profile.

At the end of the road, Davis takes the reader back to the beginning. In 1922, Judge Sewell asked, how do we inspire and motivate the public? Eighty years later, educators and wildlife conservationists were asking the same question and they were coming up with different answers. Walt Davis walks the reader through the educational and economic shifts affecting not only the DMNH but also the museum community at large at the turn of the twenty-first century, and leaves the reader with a challenge that could have been framed by Judge Sewell himself, "who and what will be on board [this small blue planet] when its next centennial census is taken?" (p.192)

Carolyn Spears

Stephen F. Austin State University

Stone Fort Museum

Cowboy Christians. By Marie W. Dallam. New York: Oxford University Press, 2018. Xi-234, including notes, bibliography, and index.

If you ever have the chance to drive across the Lone Star state, you might catch a glimpse of a sign with a cowboy kneeling in prayer, with his hat off, horse by his side, and in front of a cross. That's them—the Cowboy Christians. According the CowboyChurch.Net, which provides a directory of Cowboy Christian ministries, approximately 1,042 Cowboy Churches dot the U.S., not to mention Canada, Australia, Russia, and Kenya, but Texas leads with 438 of those (42%), while Oklahoma is a distant second with 75 (about 7%). As for East Texas, with only 8% of the state's total population (2,086,808), it has 85 Cowboy Christian ministries—or 19.3% of the state's total—while West Texas, the region most robustly associated with the iconic Texas cowboy, has 84 (19.1%). While no doubt of growing popularity in East Texas, Marie W. Dallam's *Cowboy Christians* is about the broader history and development of the Cowboy Church.

While not formally divided into parts, it nevertheless might help readers to mentally organize the book into four logical parts. The first part, chapter one, is the introduction whereby Dallam defines Cowboy Christians: "These are people whose religious identity is Christian, and who closely identify with a North American subculture [Western Heritage Culture] revolving around a matrix of cowboys, ranch workers, rodeos, rural life, and nostalgia for aspects of the 'Old West'" (3). Dallam first contextualizes Cowboy Christian churches as part of a new religious movement, but firmly within the custom of American Protestant evangelism, then identifies the unique niche market and imagery they cling to and spread in the iconic cowboy of the mythic West. The second part, chapters two and three, concentrate on the deep roots of this movement, going back to the historic cowboy himself, the role of religion (or lack thereof) in his life, the changing but romanticized image of the cowboy (whereby he is thoroughly Christianized), and the history of cowboys in song, film, and on the radio through the early-to-mid-twentieth century. Dallam next traces early cowboy preachers and rodeo ministries as antecedents to the modern movement. While perhaps most intriguing here is her forays into the various ministries and leaders, Jeff Copenhaver and the origin story of the truly first Cowboy Church at Billy Bob's Honky Tonk in Fort Worth steals the show (yes, you read that correctly!).

The third part, chapters four and five, is where Dallam is at her best. She makes extensive use of oral histories and her own experiences participating in the church. She makes the reader empathize. The words and perspectives of Cowboys Christians shine through. Dallam does this to focus on the modern church, exploring its key characteristics, especially through its missionary zeal to attract new comers via a "low barriers model" meant to attract congregants, especially men who self-identify or otherwise find meaning in Western Heritage Culture. The contention is that so-called traditional churches' expectations of "church dress" and religious emotionalism produce a religion that lacks true heart-felt commitment to Christ. Therefore, by not obsessing about dress and seminary jargon, by embracing Western aesthetics (including barn-like church buildings and adjoining rodeo arenas!), country-style worship music, and clothing, Cowboy Christians maintain they can better reach the so-called unchurched. Dallam then pauses to consider gender in depth, explaining not only that the church is designed to appeal to men, but is intimately connected to a longer history of "muscular Christianity" dating to the latter nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. At her richest, Dallam then surveyed and interviewed Cowboy Christian women about their own perceptions of their roles in an otherwise man's church (the results were beautifully mixed). The fourth and final part, chapter six, serves as a conclusion. Dallam rightfully situates the Cowboy Church within both the larger world (i.e., on cable TV and online) and development of evangelical Protestantism, showing readers how they (mostly Texan by the way) "are forging new ways of being a Christian community" (185) in the twenty-first century.

Dallam's *Cowboy Christians* is truly a first. As such, it suffers a few problems, but problems she is aware of, principally race and class. Dallam is forthright in her lack of racial and class analysis. But rather than to ding her for this, she deserves high kudos for what she did do, acknowledging that the next wave of scholarship to come, which Dallam will no doubt inspire, can address such areas moving forward.

Paul J.P. Sandul

Stephen F. Austin State University

Presidents who Shaped the American West. By Glenda Riley & Richard W. Etulain. University of Oklahoma Press, 2018. Contents: Illustrations, notes, suggestions for further reading, index. Pp. 264. Paper. \$24.95.

The authors of this lively volume have separately written many books related to the American West. Both are retired university professors who remain prolific writers and recognizable principals in western writing and national historical associations.

Their book on U. S. Presidents and the American West is a compelling study, clearly written and absorbing. While perhaps not altogether new in its general approach, the book nonetheless reviews with methodical attention ten Presidents (plus far too briefly four recent ones) whose policies impacted the West in substantial ways. It offers perceptive analyses into Presidential thinking and action and examines sometimes unforeseen circumstances that resulted in inconsistencies in political attitudes and shifting positions on major events occurring during each executive's time in office.

Of the ten chief executives who get multi-layered consideration there are few surprises. The ten include Thomas Jefferson, Andrew Jackson, James k. Polk, Abraham Lincoln, Theodore and Franklin Roosevelt, Dwight D. Eisenhower, Lyndon Johnson, Jimmy Carter, and Ronald Reagan, with conceivably only Johnson and Carter questionable selections. The four recent Presidents, who each get about 2½ pages, are the George H. W. and George H. Bush, William "Bill" Clinton, and Barack Obama. It is a powerful, but 20th century-dominated lineup presented in chronological order. The roster with its emphasis on recent chief executives perhaps represents the growing role of the West in American politics. It might also reflect the increasing trend toward an imperial presidency.

In organizing and writing the impressive work, two purposes governed much of the authors' intent: as the title of the book suggests, to "show how presidential decisions shaped the West" and to "understand the presidents through their interactions with" the region (p. 3). A thoughtful secondary theme relates to how the authors see the presidency changing with ever-shifting western issues. Nonetheless, presidential personalities guide the work.

For Jefferson, Jackson, and Polk there are few new revelations—the Louisiana Purchase, Indian removal, and Texas annexation and war with Mexico, respectively, get much of the attention. The chapter on Lincoln

shows how the President's policies, although overwhelmingly influenced by the Civil War, changed the West. They reoriented the country on an East-West axis, the authors argue, promoted something of a state liberalism in politics, and laid the basis for our National Park System. The chapter contains thought-provoking conclusions. Appropriately, the two Roosevelt chapters emphasize the men's important and numerous environmental contributions, which, of course, produced critical changes in the region—although the authors do not overlook Franklin Roosevelt and World War II in the West.

Eisenhower was not an active politician or president. The authors suggest that his negative Indian policy—termination—and his immigrant deportation matters are offset by some positive actions of crucial value: Alaska and Hawaii statehood, parks and wilderness areas in Alaska, interstate highway system, and *Brown v. Board of Education*, for example.

As for Johnson, well the Vietnam War crushed Johnson's domestic policies and what achievements that occurred were as much national as regional: civil rights acts, voting rights act, and War on Poverty among them. The Carter chapter emphasizes the President's inability to connect with the American West.

Ronald Reagan identified with the West, and his leading advisors were from that section. His defense policies and military spending greatly enriched the region and he supported amnesty to millions of undocumented immigrants in the West. Such efforts, the authors write, were positive, but his cuts in domestic spending negatively impacted Native Americans, most of whom lived in the West. Still, they judge him as "near-great" in his impact.

Finally, the authors organized the ten key chapters in parallel fashion. That is, in each there was a brief introduction to the President, a bit on his presidency, a section on his western issues and policies, and a summary/conclusion related to his western legacy. Altogether, it is a fine book, analytical in its presentation, rich in its interpretations, and absolutely enjoyable to read.

Paul H. Carlson
Texas Tech University, emeritus

Thirty-Three Years, Thirty-Three Works: Celebrating the Contributions of F.E. Abernethy, Texas Folklore Society Secretary, 1971-2004. Edited by Kenneth L. Untiedt and Kira E. Mort. University of North Texas Press, Denton, 2016. Illus. Notes. Index. PagesL 384. Hardcover price \$45.00.

As I began to read the latest issue from the Texas Folklore Society (TFS), it seemed as if I was not reading but instead sitting and having a conversation with Dr. Abernethy. "Ab" always wrote with a unique style, one that made the reader feel that he was just telling you, and you alone, a personal story. The selections in *Thirty-Three Years, Thirty-Three Works* certainly conveyed that style. It was a joy to read. Folklore is a companion study to history, a genre that gives the past "life," and in many ways picks up where the actual chronicles end. Abernethy's writing made legends and myths appear real. As the old saying goes, "you should ever allow the truth to get in the way of a good story."

Abernethy came up in a hard-scrabble manner. He was born, as he often said, just in time to endure the Great Depression. He grew up in the Texas Panhandle as his family tried to eke out a meager existence on a small cattle ranch. His mother abandoned the family when he was quite young, leaving young Abernethy and his father on the ranch until they were, as he put it, "dusted out" during the depths of the catastrophic "Dust Bowl." Abernethy's life during that era had a great influence on him, one that was often reflected in his work.

Abernethy's writing was meticulous and careful, and obviously labored over each line to make sure each detail was perfectly used to tell the proper story. In the chapter on "how to build a proper outhouse," he took care to explain precisely how the door should be placed, and in his story on the pecking order in a hunter's camp his particular language described the camp to the reader as if he/she shared the campfire with the hunters. It did not hurt that Ab loved the outdoors and felt a special connection with nature. He spent as much time enjoying the flora and fauna of the East Texas home that he came to love as he could.

Abernethy also loved music, and when he played it during TFS meetings one could tell that his passion for the expression radiated from his soul. That was one reason why he so treasured the "hootenanny" portion of TFS meetings. He reflected the same passion in his chapter on the "Yellow Rose of Texas," and his story about Emily West, the mulatto freedwomen behind

the iconic song. Abernethy believed that music was one of the centers of folklore, and one of the ultimate forms of communication.

Abernethy was also a traveler, and he made treks all across Texas. What he loved more than anything was to observe the land and converse with the people he met. His writing reflected that. When he wrote of a place, or the actions of its people, you knew that he had not just read about it but he had been there. He captured the “spirit” of Texas and its people like very few have before him or since. He had a knack for portraying his subjects with great depth and character, again like one was meeting and conversing with them instead of reading of their experiences.

One person who had the same “knack” for such descriptions was J. Frank Dobie, who was—naturally—Ab’s mentor and predecessor at TFS. Ab had a great love for Dobie, and he wrote about him with great conviction. And like Dobie, he could then use that same conviction when describing the habits and usefulness of snakes. In essence, the new volume from TFS editor Untiedt and Kira Mort perfectly captures “Ab” Abernethy’s soul, the way he thought, and the way he wrote. I highly recommend it.

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The Commanders: Civil War Generals Who Shaped the American West.
 By Robert M. Utley. University of Oklahoma Press, 2018. Maps. Notes.
 Bibliography. Index. Pages: 255.

United States army generals policing the American west in the late 1800s found themselves in a frustrating, contradictory, and ambiguous situation. They had gone from leading thousands of civilian soldiers against the Confederacy during the Civil War to commanding a few hundred professional troops in remote areas against American Indians skilled in insurgency tactics. While their colleagues back east were preparing the army for twentieth century warfare, these officers were participating in – some would say directing – the final act of a long-running drama that had been an important part in American history since the first European settlers set foot on the North American continent. This difficult and thankless role ended with the subjugation of American Indian tribes and the destruction of their traditional way of life.

Inspired by Thomas Ricks' groundbreaking prosopography of American generals during and after World War Two, noted western historian Robert Utley examines and evaluates seven of the military department leaders in the west after the Civil War in *The Commanders: Civil War Generals Who Shaped the American West*. Utley concludes that all seven officers – Generals Christopher Augur, George Crook, Oliver Otis Howard, Nelson Miles, Edward Ord, John Pope, and Alfred Terry – influenced and shaped the west to important and varying degrees, and rates them in their different capacities. The result is a solid, albeit conventional, collective biography of interest to both military and western historians.

Utley offers readers plenty of material to chew on in this well-researched and articulate account. He uses a narrative approach to scrutinize the parts that these generals played in the evolution of the west by examining their formative years, Civil War records, and performances in their various western posts. In the process he touches upon the logistical, tactical, strategic, command, and ethical difficulties there men faced in their dealings with American Indians, local civilians, and the federal government. Utley challenges and balances out the standard historiography by, for example, pointing out Crook's limitations, Pope's surprising thoughtfulness, and Miles's resourcefulness. He does so without falling prey to political correctness or romanticism. Instead, he judges these officers by their own

standards. Perhaps the best part of the book is the background chapter that summarizes the problems the post Civil War army faced in issues of rank, organization, promotion, logistics, and everyday life.

By limiting himself to the departmental level, Utley omits the important roles that higher-ranking generals such as William Sherman and Philip Sheridan played in the west. His decision to explain each officer in separate chapters also limits and narrows his efforts. Finally, his narrative sometimes bogs down in the minutiae of the military operations in which these generals participated. On the whole, however, *The Commanders* is traditional military history in the best sense of the word – clear, accessible, interesting, and practical.

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