BOOK REVIEWS


From February 1540 to August 1542, Francisco Vazquez de Coronado led an expedition of reconnaissance and expansion across the Greater Southwest of North America. The armed force of some 2,000 members and their thousands of livestock trekked at great expense across the plains. Their intent was to take political control of the sophisticated populations rumored to be living in what the expeditions' members thought of as the periphery of India.

The papers collected in this book bring multidisciplinary expertise to the study of this expedition. The travels of Coronado have been studied for over 460 years, and they have left a rich documentary record that offers copious research opportunities from a variety of viewpoints:

Contributors for this book are from a range of disciplines, including history, archeology, Latin American studies, anthropology, astronomy, and geology. Each contributor addresses an aspect of the Coronado expedition from his or her field.

Topics covered examine the analyses of Spanish material culture in the New World, including historical documentation of finances, provisioning, and muster rolls; Spanish exploration in the Borderlands; Native American contact with Spanish explorers; and determining the routes of the expedition.

The efforts of this team of writers have produced an insightful view of the Coronado expedition. This book is a shining example of how scholars from different disciplines, working together, can add to the knowledge of such a long studied topic.

Jeffery T. Ray
Center, Texas


The story of Sacagawea and her service as guide and interpreter for Meriwether Lewis and William Clark is one of the first learned and most remembered historical stories of early American history. However, seldom is enough detail provided to give a clear description of the true events. Most people know
about Sacagawea, but only those people most familiar with the explorations con­duced by Lewis and Clark know the name of Toussaint Charbonneau. Charbonneau played an equally important part in the success of the Lewis and Clark trek across northwestern America, and Nelson offers a realistic evaluation of the contributions of Charbonneau and Sacagawea. Charbonneau was Sacagawea’s husband and the father of her child. He was an illiterate fur trader who, because he lived with the Indians of the territory, spoke the language of the Indians Lewis and Clark expected to encounter on their journey.

This book offers an informative and vivid description of the expedition and the conditions experienced by the Corps of Discovery. Drawn from the journals of Lewis and Clark and several other members of the expedition, along with many other sources, the book provides an excellent description of the day-to-day problems that had to be overcome. It also gives a fair view of the personalities of the principal people involved. The book puts the contributions of Sacagawea in proper perspective.

I recommend this book to anyone interested in the actual roles played by Sacagawea and Charbonneau in the expedition, and also to anyone interested in the conditions and problems the explorers faced during their trek to the Pacific Ocean. The book is obviously well researched, and offers a readable account of a significant historical event.

Jack Norman
Nacogdoches, Texas


The historiography of the “Buffalo Soldiers”—African American Regulars serving in the 9th and 10th U.S. Cavalry and 24th and 25th U.S. Infantry on the post-Civil War frontier—has grown considerably in the past decade. Authors such as William A. Dobak, Thomas Phillips, and Frank Schubert have broadened and deepened readers’ understanding of these troops and the conditions under which they served. The two works under review benefit from this recent scholarship as well as from their own original research.

In July 1877, a troop of Buffalo Soldiers, accompanied by twenty-two bison hunters, pursued raiding Comanches across the High Plains of West Texas on a routine scout that resulted in eighty-six hours without water, a breakdown of command, the deaths of four troopers, and the courts-martial of four more. Paul Carlson has examined this ill-fated march thoroughly in his...
aptly titled *The Buffalo Soldier Tragedy of 1877*. Drawing on a wide range of primary documents and the best recent scholarship to emphasize the experiences of the individual troopers, he painstakingly re-creates this "Lost Troop Expedition" from the perspectives of the soldiers, the hunters, and the Native Americans they pursued unsuccessfully.

Such a complex narrative approach almost inevitably leads to repetition of information, but the benefits far outweigh this minor flaw, which is most prominent in three "background" chapters setting the stage for the expedition. Once engaged in relating the events of the harrowing scout, Carlson tells a compelling, if not always heroic, story. Combining a deep understanding of the physical environment with survivors' nightmarish memories of their sufferings, the author virtually places readers alongside the troopers on those hot, dry plains. The overall result is the most complete and detailed account of the Lost Troop Expedition yet written, one that will not likely be surpassed for some time.

While Carlson has recreated one tragic event in the history of the Buffalo Soldiers, William and Shirley Leckie have updated the classic work that first brought widespread attention to the black cavalymen. The newly revised edition of *The Buffalo Soldiers: A Narrative of the Black Cavalry in the West* augments the original publication (1967), with recent scholarship and interpretations while maintaining the same basic structure, a chronological account of the 9th and 10th U.S. Cavalry regiments from their inception in 1866 through the Wounded Knee Campaign of 1890-1891. The authors have expanded some chapters to include topics such as troopers' family lives and the social impact of military service on African Americans, and have added an epilogue tracing race relations following the Indian Wars and outlining the historiography of the black regulars.

The recent revisions have enhanced a fine work, correcting dated interpretations and terminology—the edition in 1967 was subtitled "A Narrative of the Negro Cavalry in the West"—while maintaining its strengths. Perhaps the greatest strength of the original, thankfully retained in the latest edition, was its straightforward narrative. New interpretations that could be introduced without interrupting the narrative style have been integrated within the chapters, while historiography and more scholarly discussions have been assigned to appropriate footnotes (a much more convenient format for readers than the usual endnotes) and the epilogue.

Each of these excellent works incorporates the best recent scholarship on the Buffalo Soldiers, Carlson in the context of a single event and the Leckies in a broad narrative of two regiments over a span of nearly twenty-five years. Readers new to the study of the black regulars would do well to start with the revised edition of *The Buffalo Soldiers* and its wider perspective; those who already know the basic story may appreciate *The Buffalo Soldier Tragedy of 1877* more. In either case, readers will be rewarded with fine examples of historical research and storytelling.

Roger Tuller
Texas A&M University—Kingsville

Barbara J. Rozek’s Come to Texas: Enticing Immigrants, 1865-1915, describes in striking detail the motivations behind the campaigns encouraging immigration to Texas. She also describes the different methods used to attract newcomers. Rozek includes illustrations of advertising material used to bring “immigrants” to Texas. These illustrations enhance a remarkably well-written and well-researched book.

Inspiration for Come to Texas came from a bumper sticker that reads, “I wasn’t born in Texas, but I got here as fast as I could” (p. ix). To Rozek, this bumper sticker is a continuation of the 1865-1915 marketing campaign aimed at bringing people to Texas after the Civil War. White Texans, uncomfortable using the labor of the freed blacks, felt that using immigrant labor was an alternative to black labor. In 1871, the legislature of Texas approved the formation of the Bureau of Immigration to help facilitate migration into the state. When the Texas Constitution of 1876 forbade the legislature from appropriating “any public money … for any purpose of bringing immigrants to the State” (p. 42), citizens of Texas found other ways to continue the campaign.

The majority of Rozek’s book covers the manner in which Texans resolved to continue this immigration endeavor. Texans thought that written words were the key to bringing people to Texas. The book chronicles the use of letters, pamphlets, brochures, newspapers, almanacs, and other business publications employed in the effort. Rozek also relates the role of railroads and how Galveston played a part in the process.

Rozek shows enthusiasm and commitment to her research with the extensive use of primary sources. Her endnotes are not only academic but also enjoyable to read. The bibliography and index are further aids to any serious researcher.

Deborah Cole
Nacogdoches, Texas


Sam Houston is My Hero, Judy Alter (TCU Press, P.O. Box 298300, Fort Worth, TX 76129) 2003. Illus. Children’s Fiction. P. 131. $15.95. Paperback. “A Chaparral Book for Young Readers.”

These three books contain interesting personal encounters with Texas designed to appeal to young readers.

*Lorenzo's Revolutionary Quest* traces the adventures of Lorenzo, a spy for the patriots during the Revolutionary War. The author takes the reader through a series of chapters involving different characters before linking them together. As Lorenzo followed orders to bring Texas beef to the Continentals, he ran into a myriad of obstacles, including buffalo stampedes, Indian spies, and a British soldier anxious to kill him.

*Sam Houston is My Hero* follows a young girl on her journey to round up Texans to join Sam Houston in the fight against Santa Anna. After Cat Jennings’ father died at the Alamo, she desperately wanted to contribute to the Texian cause. Her efforts included riding from cabin to cabin recruiting whoever she could find who was willing to go. Along her journey, Cat ran into such obstacles as harassment by two men who planned to take advantage of her, the Mexican Army, and telling a lady whose house she visited that her son had died at the Alamo. During her ride to recruit soldiers, Cat ran into the Texian army and followed it to the Battle of San Jacinto, where she witnessed the final Mexican defeat.

*Remember the Alamo!* The Runaway Scrape Diary of Belle Wood follows a young girl’s life as recorded through her diary. The author added a touch of accuracy by including trivial entries about the girl’s sister or her day, items a girl her age would compile. Belle describes her adventures with ghosts, meeting a boy, and running from the Mexican Army.

All three selections captured the mood of the times and maintain the reader’s attention with interesting side stories along with true historical information. The target audience is young adult readers who enjoy a swift jolt back into the ways of Texas from the American Revolutionary War to the Texas Revolution.

Lindsey Gibbins
Nacogdoches, Texas


John Taliaferro presents a biographical account of Charles Marion Russell (1864-1926), a cowboy in Montana who came to be known as America’s cowboy artist. Taliaferro also provides a biographical sketch of Russell’s wife, Nancy Cooper Russell (1878-1940), who was the driving force behind the financial success of Russell’s artistic works.

The American West of the post-Civil War era was the destination of
many an adventurous youth—Charlie Russell was a part of that element. Born during the war to affluent parents in St. Louis, Missouri, Russell spent much of his time reading about the West in dime novels that were popular at the time. He was not a good classroom student, and later in life it was learned that he suffered from dysgraphia—the inability to construct written material. However, he was talented with his hands. He could draw and sculpt extremely well. With these talents and the desire to become a cowboy, Russell struck out, at nearly sixteen years old, for the frontier of Montana.

Russell did become a working cowboy, and through his experiences on the range developed his artistic abilities into one of the leading examples of the American West genre. Taliaferro says of the artist, “Charlie perceived his new duty to be the sentimental documentation of the Old West; he would bottle the past before it vaporized” (p. 69). For his contribution to the “documentation” of the American West, Charles Marion Russell truly can be called America’s cowboy artist.

John Taliaferro is a member of the Texas Institute of Letters and was formerly the senior editor of Texas Monthly and Newsweek. Much of Taliaferro’s research was gleaned from the estate papers of Nancy Cooper Russell, located at the Amon Carter Museum in Fort Worth, Texas, and from the J. Frank Dobie Collection at the University of Texas in Austin.

Stanley A. Jones
Jasper, Texas


Will Bagley’s Blood of the Prophets: Brigham Young and the Massacre at Mountain Meadows is a marvelous work and a wonder. For years the slaughter on September 11, 1857, of 120 men, women, and children of the Fancher wagon train at Mountain Meadows in southern Utah has been a point of contention for the Mormon Church (Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints). It remained the worst terrorist action of Americans on Americans until Timothy McVeigh blew up the Federal Building in Oklahoma City 138 years later.

Who should get the blame? The Mormon hierarchy blamed Mormon John D. Lee as the lone scapegoat villain, acting independently of the church. The first objective work was The Mountain Meadows Massacre (1950), by faithful LDS scholar Juanita Brooks, which touched off a firestorm because Brooks reasonably concluded that many LDS priesthood holders in Salt Lake City and southern Utah were directly involved in the massacre in 1857, but, she believed the “smoking gun” was not present to point directly to Brigham Young.

One critic correctly notes that “William Bagley’s Blood of the Prophets:
Brigham Young and the Massacre at Mountain Meadows is not for the faint-hearted, or those who want a popular ‘read’, of this sensational and lurid event of the American West. Rather, it calls mightily to the professional historian and the serious layperson. Its words strike to the heart, and appeal to the gut, of human experience. The author’s authentic voice as a great storyteller emerges swiftly in the prologue, ‘The Mountain Meadow,’ and continues to inform the book to its end.”

The reader can be confident how Bagley wields his craft. He wades through more than a century of information and misinformation (deliberate and inadvertent) with a journalist’s and historian’s painstaking professionalism. His writing style is fresh and his narrative structure never boring; he proves that good history is good literature.

There is one flaw that readers will discover in this wonderful history, which has been nominated for at least three national book awards. Bagley glosses over the real “Texas Connection” of perpetrators and victims at the Meadows and its place in the larger events of the Utah War of 1857. Almost 1,000 Texans wagon-trained to Utah Territory from 1848 to 1856 after conversion by LDS missionaries. Former Texan Seth Blair—good friend and confidant of both Brigham Young and Sam Houston—acted the role of “honest broker” in resolving the Utah War, which had created the social environment leading to the tragedy. The Hawley brothers of Pine Valley, Utah, formerly millers and ranchers in the Texas Hill Country, demonstrate the conflict within Mormon society itself: one participated in the killing; one attempted to stop it and then criticized the criminals after the fact at true peril to his life; and a third had to be bound to a wagon wheel to prevent him from committing suicide for what he had done to women and children. There is much more to tell about this connection.

A disclaimer before I conclude: I have known Will Bagley for more than forty years; we grew up together in San Diego County, California. I read one of the later editions of his draft work and pointed out an important contemporary source of the massacre that I found in my own research. Bagley believes that his documented research would have had Brigham Young indicted, prosecuted, convicted, and executed for his role in the massacre. I certainly believe that a trial would have been the result of Bagley’s work if it had been presented to the courts. I believe that Bagley’s research and his conclusions are fair and balanced.

Bagley has set the bar for works involving Americans and terrorism, frontier-style, and its influence on the modern equivalent. His mastery in probing why good men do evil works based on faith makes the reader take ethical inventory of the interaction of intent, motivation, and action. If you truly desire to know about the massacre of Americans by fellow Americans at the meadows, read this book.

Melvin C. Johnson
Angelina College

The tale of prohibition in Texas history can be traced through Alwyn Barr’s Reconstruction to Reform, Lewis Gould’s Progressives and Prohibitionists, and Norman Brown’s Hood, Bonnet and Little Brown Jug. Now, James D. Ivy adds an important new chapter to the efforts of the Texas “drys” with his study on the failed attempt to introduce anti-saloon legislation in the late-nineteenth century.

Woman’s Christian Temperance Union president Francis Willard hoped to start chapters throughout the South. Ivy begins his book with the little-known story of her organizational efforts in the state in early 1882. Her month-long tour of Texas proved more successful than she hoped. The sixteen local unions she organized soon became sixty, then 100. Yet with all her success, a statewide referendum on prohibition failed in 1887.

Ivy examines the campaign prohibitionists launched in the 1880s. During the campaign, Waco emerged as the “center of the contest” (p. 41), and his focus is largely on the role the area’s Baptists and Methodists played. His detailed survey of local newspapers and denominational literature demonstrates that the activities of Protestant ministers, women activists, and northern reformers not only threatened Democratic hegemony over the state, but also challenged the honor of Southern male chivalry. Thus, in 1887, most Texans voted against prohibition at the polls.

Why, then, did Texas provide the leadership for the national prohibition movement just twenty-five years later? By 1919, the efforts of the Ku Klux Klan, Fundamentalism, and President Woodrow Wilson’s Democratic Progressivism lent honor and masculinity to the anti-liquor movement by portraying it as a protector of women’s virtue. Ivy explains, “...evangelical churches had progressed from a minority of cultural dissenters into the mainstream of southern culture” (p. 107).

Gene Preuss
Houston, Texas


E.R. Milner, in his first published literary work, The Lives and Times of Bonnie & Clyde, provides a riveting account of Bonnie Parker’s and Clyde Barrow’s criminal activities from 1932-1934. Milner skillfully weaves together eyewitness accounts, police and court records, and correspondence between members of the Barrow gang and their families to construct a unique
chronicle of the exploits of the famous Texas outlaws.

Though the book reads like a novel, the story is more fascinating because it is based on reality. A brief summary of Bonnie's and Clyde's backgrounds sets the stage, after which Milner launches into their criminal activities, interspersing the action with background on members of the Barrow gang.

Milner also describes many victims of the Barrow gang as well as numerous officials in law enforcement who attempted to end the gang's crime spree. Included are Ruth Warren, the original owner of the "death car," and Frank Hamer who led the posse that chased Bonnie and Clyde through Texas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Kansas, and Missouri, culminating in an ambush. The story concludes with a graphic description of the ambush and its aftermath.

Milner, an adjunct professor of history at the University of North Texas has written a comprehensive and compelling story of two of the most notorious and exciting criminals in recent Texas history.

Jennifer S. Bennett
Nacogdoches, Texas


This is a substantial book. Margaret Huffaker McAllen began it as a history of the McAllens and their properties on both sides of what is now the Lower Valley of the Rio Grande, and at her death it was taken over by her son and granddaughter. Along the way the project grew into a life-and-times book. As befits an ambitious project, the text is leavened with numerous photographs, drawings, and maps, excerpts from the family business ledgers, and a glossary of Spanish terms.

The story begins in 1801, when José Manuel Gómez received title to the Santa Anita land grant located approximately fifty miles north of Reynosa in what is now northern Hidalgo County. A part of the grant was inherited by María Salomé Ballí de la Garza, who was born in Matamoros in 1828, and who married two immigrants, John Young and, after Young's death in 1859, his employee John McAlllen.

After a narrative of the early days of Spanish exploration—the authors intended this to be a general history of the lower Rio Grande Valley to the 1930s—the central part of the story takes place at Matamoros and Brownsville. This area was transformed into a prodigious economic engine by the Mexican-American War. The Young-McAlllen family members moved back and forth across the border, according to the dictates of trade, and pros-
perced amid a bewildering series of international and regional wars, raids by Indians and rustlers, and the local political wars of the 1880s-1890s.

After the Mexican-American War, John McAllen shifted his activities upriver to Hidalgo, and the land boom and railroads seemed to promise a new era of prosperity at the turn of the century, but a wave of Mexican revoltsions beginning in 1910 brought more violence, and an attack on the McAllen’s San Juanito Ranch.

The coverage of Mexican developments has a couple of flaws, but this should not detract from a measured judgement that the book is a major event in the historiography of South Texas. With its breadth and its readability—picturesque detail abounds—this work will take its place as an essential text for the Lower Rio Grande Valley.

Stanley C. Green
Texas A&M International University


The near annihilation of American airpower in the Philippines by the Japanese in the first hours of the Pacific War ranks among the greatest debacles in U.S. military history. Deprived of that air force, the American and Filipino troops under Douglas MacArthur were doomed. In December 8, 1941: MacArthur’s Pearl Harbor, William H. Bartsch provides a comprehensive and compelling examination of the attack and the relevant events and policies in the two years that preceded it. Indeed, the book’s rather limiting title fails to do justice to its broad scope.

Good history begins with thorough research, and serious readers will appreciate that done by Bartsch, who, in addition to utilizing the expected government documents and secondary sources, relies heavily on the accounts of hundreds of participants, many of whom he interviewed personally. Such comprehensive research allows the author to blend discussions of high-level strategy-making with the everyday experiences of individual pilots and ground crewmen. He also earns high marks for incorporating the Japanese perspective almost to the extent he does the American, thus making for a more complete account than most military histories. Finally, Bartsch does not flinch from assigning blame for the disaster, a good portion of which he maintains rests squarely with MacArthur.

December 8, 1941 is not without flaws or arguable conclusions. For a work of military history, its maps are few and unsatisfactory. Furthermore, the author’s bold claim that the disaster at Clark Field exceeded that of Pearl Harbor in strategic terms will be questioned by many historians who are convinced that MacArthur was doomed with or without his air force. Those crit-
Bartsch has made an outstanding contribution to the literature of the Pacific War.

Stewart C. Edwards
Lee College


The purpose of Denhardt’s book is to educate the reader about the history of the Quarter Running Horse in the United States. Denhardt does this well. The book is organized into four parts: The Colonial Period, 1607-1780; Forks in the Road, 1780-1830; Westering, 1830-1880; and the Early Modern Period, 1880-1930.

The book follows the history of racing and breeding Quarter Horses. The first part of the book gives the origins of the first Quarter Horses, how they were bred, and their bloodlines. It also supplies the history behind the racing of the Quarter Horse. A list of the most famous horses and breeders of the period are given.

The second part of the book deals mostly with the horses and breeders of the period. The third part focuses on the western breeders and horses. Famous western horses are discussed and the famous western breeders are listed by state. The fourth part then talks about the evolution of Quarter Horse racing. It then lists and describes outstanding sires and outstanding breeders, listed by state.

Joseph Pellerin
Nacogdoches, Texas


Behind the legends told at the theater, in the classroom, and over the campfire about the men and women who shaped our Texas heritage, there are true stories, be they of the untamed hardiness of the native, the bravery of the frontiersman, or of the undying passion of all who made this land what it is today. John Ferguson introduces the reader to those stories behind the legends.

Ferguson’s Texas Myths and Legends is a series of stories about the people who molded the Texas mythos through their everyday lives. Ferguson devotes several pages to each of twelve legendary figures from frontier Texas—the Comanche, the Buffalo Soldier, the Buffalo Hunter, the Saloon Gal, the Rancher,
the Cowboy, the Outlaw, the Texas Ranger, the Sodbuster, the Frontier Woman, the Railroader, and the Wildcatter—providing commentary on such great examples of each as Comanche chief Quanah Parker and Texas Ranger Major John P. Jones. This book also includes original sculptures for each of these figures from the Center for Contemporary Arts from Abilene, photographed by Steve Butman and a short bibliographical list at the end of each chapter.

Ferguson provides an introduction to the legendary men and women who shaped Texas in a way that is accessible to the lay and professional historian alike.

Matthew B. Skipper
Nacogdoches, Texas


Rick Phalen has transcribed an engaging compilation of forty-five concise interviews that explore the recent history of the United States. This work includes the recollections of historians, celebrities, journalists, and also of ordinary citizens. The contributors of various reminiscences share their observations of recent American society and discuss the various political, social, cultural, and technological changes that the United States has experienced over the last five decades. Some of the major historical events discussed include McCarthyism, the Civil Rights movement, the Vietnam War, and the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. Many interviews focus upon issues such as the breakdown of the American family, educational problems, corporate corruption, drugs, and violent crime. They attempt to explain the origins of these problems and sometimes speculate where the country is headed as a society.

The author includes a brief biography of each person interviewed at the beginning of each section. Some of the passages by the different contributors skip between different topics and follow no logical pattern; others are well organized. In general, they are all lively and informative. The author frequently adds bracketed words to the text in order to clarify passages. Phalen’s work is a valuable resource to scholars searching for firsthand accounts of contemporary American history or for those interested in sitting down and reading an engaging book.

Jake P. Bickham
Nacogdoches, Texas
Swags of delicate, verdigris moss bedeck the ancient Bald Cypress overhanging my Caddo Lake fish camp. I will never view them again without thinking of Geraldine Watson and her domino theory in which life on earth succumbs to humankind’s pollution, one “insignificant thing” at a time. She sees Spanish moss as “one of a line of upright dominoes representing all life forms on earth” (p. 323).

Watson explains that most of the Spanish moss has disappeared from the lower Neches due to air pollution carried on the prevailing south winds from the petrochemical complexes of the Texas Gulf Coast. An epiphyte, Spanish moss gains its nourishment from the air, and its poisons too, such as hydrogen sulfide and other toxic emissions. As large Caddo Lake bass should not be eaten due to mercury accumulation, now I know we may also lose our lovely mosses. Ah, well! We must have our electricity, not to mention gas and oil for our Johnboat outboard and plastic for our ice chests and lures.

_Reflections_ is not a book to skim. It should be absorbed, ideally from a canoe drifting down current in the Snow River. This book is a captivating blend of art and history and biological facts from a writer whose heart and soul has been bound up in the Big Thicket for a long, adventuresome, and sometimes combative lifetime. It is fair to compare it with Aldo Leopold’s classic _A Sand County Almanac_, only this, of course, is “A Big Thicket Almanac.”

As art, _Reflections_ paints the evanescent landscape of the river and the Big Thicket, art in which the river “wields the brush.” As Leopold noted, this art exists only in the observer’s mind and is erased as it is created. But anyone who has been upon the Neches, or in the baygalls and swamps of the Big Thicket, possesses this art in mind’s eye, never to be forgotten. This is art, as the title suggests, that owes its stunning beauty in large measure to reflections, much like Impressionistic painting.

As history, Watson has drawn upon her exhaustive memory and research gathered for her newspaper column “Big Thicket Past and Present.” Many of her stories are tragic, often sadly dealing with violence against women.

As a conservationist, I was intrigued by Watson’s documentation of the human dimension in the formation of the Big Thicket Preserve, especially the contributions made by local residents. She downplays the terrific contributions she herself made to the preserve created by the U.S. Congress.

As to biological fact, Watson was a plant ecologist and park ranger for the National Park Service. Given this background, you will be riveted by her tales of the fabled Ivory-billed woodpecker. Readers will be lured into mini-essays documenting much of the biological riches of the Big Thicket, no mean feat when you know that this area often is referred to as the “Biological
Crossroads of America.”

One might complain that Watson tells you more than you really want to know about the ecology of the Big Thicket, so if you already know the subject matter just go on to the next section. However, while I call myself an amateur naturalist, I know I can never know all, so I invested time in each biological insight.

Beyond art, history and biology, Reflections is an inspirational work. Early on, writing of a setback in preserving a section of the Thicket, Watson states that the experience “broke her spirit.” One has only to read this work to know her spirit is unbroken and that she will continue to be a force in conservation. Reflections, like A Sand County Almanac, will assure Watson’s influence upon uncounted future generations.

Richard and Joanne Bartlett
Carrollton, Texas


Awakened by a police dispatcher after midnight on June 29, 1984, Detective Sergeant Bill Parker was summoned to Ianni’s Restaurant and Club, a posh Dallas nightclub. Entering the building, he was confronted by a grisly scene. Six people had died from gunshot wounds; another victim was wounded.

Within hours, police captured Moroccan national Abdelkrim Belachheb after he and a friend crashed a white station wagon in Northwest Dallas. Belachheb still had blood and specks of bone from the nightclub massacre on his pants leg.

Even though the Dallas slayings occurred in a state that prides itself on being tough on crime, the death penalty could not be considered by the jury that heard testimony against Belachheb.

The suspect had killed six people and his guilt was never in question, although he pleaded temporary insanity, but his crimes were not capital crimes under Texas’ statutes in 1984. A year later, as a result of the Dallas murders, the Texas legislature passed House Bill 8—the so-called “multiple murders” statute—to make serial killings and mass murders a capital offense.

Author Gary M. Lavergne, director of admissions research at the University of Texas in Austin and the author of A Sniper in the Tower, does an excellent job of exploring the unique aspects of these murders, including capital punishment, the insanity defense, and Belachheb’s easy entry into the United States despite his well-documented history of violence in Europe.

Belachheb was imprisoned for life and is under maximum security at the Clements Prison Unit in Amarillo. He will face a parole hearing in 2004, the
twentieth anniversary of his crime.

Worse Than Death, Belachheb’s own description of his sentence, reads like a good mystery novel but constitutes an important contribution to the debate over crime and immigration in the United States. Lavergne once again proves he is an excellent writer and superb story-teller.

Bob Bowman
Lufkin, Texas


This account by Mary Cimarolli is told from the viewpoint of a young woman during the Great Depression and Second World War, as she and her family lived and struggled to survive in rural East Texas. This poignant history, skillfully written in the first person, allows the reader to understand the daily life of those who lived in rural Texas in the middle of the twentieth century. Cimarolli’s depiction is a colorful and well-researched snapshot of a time when great political and economical change occurred in the world and the United States. These accounts allow readers to glimpse the lost art of Southern language, domestic practices, race relations, farming, educational customs, and the anxieties of families hoeing out a meager existence in the sparsely populated rural areas of Texas.

Cimarolli delves into the nuances of political, economic, ethnic, social, and gender relationships in the traditional community settings of Arbala and Seymour, Texas. She weaves the rural language used in her youth into a beautiful tapestry of historical interpretations, which are understood easily. Her narrative history draws from the personal accounts and oral stories passed down from family and friends of her rural East Texas community. Some historians may find her personal accounts too sentimental or lacking historical significance; they may also discredit her narrative style, which lends itself more to storytelling.

This reviewer found the author’s interpretations of her family’s history in East Texas significant and enlightening. Cimarolli has a refreshing style that celebrates simplistic, straightforward accounts into important interpretive frameworks for novice or trained historians to appreciate while reviewing the importance of rural life in East Texas during the twentieth century.

Jeff R. Tucker
Texas Christian University

In *Breaking Free*, Aldredge-Clanton writes of her struggle to break the “Old Boy’s Club” of the Texas Southern Baptist Convention. Inspired by the open-mindedness of her minister father, Aldredge-Clanton left a successful teaching career at Dallas Baptist College to pursue her calling in life: joining the Baptist ministry.

Aldredge-Clanton writes of her bitter struggle not only with the church itself but also with church members, colleagues at Southwestern Baptist Seminary in Fort Worth and Baylor Medical Center at Dallas, and even her understanding but skeptical husband. Ironically, Aldredge-Clanton achieved her goal in the Methodist church, not in her beloved Southern Baptist faith.

*Breaking Free* is a heartfelt, passionate account of the author’s struggles. She proves that the Texas Southern Baptist Church still harbors an “old boy’s club” mentality. Therefore, this is a valuable history of feminism in the Southern Baptist faith. The church has made progress in ministry roles such as chaplain and lay minister, but is still hesitant in having female pastors. The author proves that the church is not ready for a woman at the pulpit in its major churches.

Aldredge-Clanton uses valid sources for her work, from Biblical passages contradicting the common belief that women are subservient before God and man to works of feminist religious authors and historians of all faiths. She presents the feminism issue in the Southern Baptist church realistically. *Breaking Free* is an inspiration to feminist Christians because Aldredge-Clanton proves that breaking through the glass ceiling of the ministry is possible.

Carrie Pritchett
Northeast Texas Community College


Some people live long enough to know of their legendary status. This book is a “conversation” with Joe Jamail, the legendary Texas personal injury lawyer, advocate of the underdog, philanthropist, and *bon vivant*. That his career would be *sui generis* is reflected in his unorthodox entry into The University of Texas Law School and the legal profession: he entered Law School without the usual entrance exams and passed the Texas Bar Exam *before* graduating from law school. Ironically, he flunked the freshmen course in Tort law, the field of law in which he would excel.

Jamail highlights his career, beginning with his first case, won for a bar-
maid who cut her finger on a faulty beer bottle. He represented indigent and affluent claimants, including *Pennzoil v. Texaco*, winning the then largest damage award in American civil law ($11.5 billion). Jamail's advocacy resulted in recall of dangerous products in several areas. Two chapters and one appendix are devoted to the *Pennzoil* case.

Each chapter unfolds Jamail's personal and professional evolution: his character as a person and attorney; his passion for his work; his amazing rapport with juries; his uncanny grasp of human nature; his courage; his humor; his devotion and loyalty to family and friends; and his unyielding belief in the nobility of his profession.

Brief sketches by family and friends highlight Jamail's life and work. These diverse sketches include his three sons, fellow attorneys, former clients, Kirk Douglas, and Coach Darrell Royal, and reveal the strengths and weaknesses molding his phenomenal success. One friend observes that only the IRS knows the scope of Jamail's charitable contributions.

This is a readable and entertaining portrait of one of Texas' preeminent civil lawyers who could play several roles in John Grisham novels.

James G. Dickson

Nacogdoches, Texas

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*A Wings of Change* is good reading within a well-documented history lesson. It shows the accelerated cultural and economic changes brought about by just one facet of the military during World War II. The writer gives us snapshots of the politics and persuasions employed for economic enhancement for particular areas, as well as the competition involved.

Although not every airfield installation was chronicled, there was enough coverage of bases in all areas of Texas to calculate the economic and cultural changes in every base locale. Alexander not only shows the impact of the areas occupied by the bases, but also on the million or so men and women who trained on the bases and appreciated Texas hospitality. Quotes from those directly involved accentuates the human side of the events.

I kept wanting to see pictures of the former and present base sites presented inside the stories of particular bases instead of turning to the small collection at the end of the book. I am assuming a quantity of photos of the bases was not readily available.

The appendix gives a good record of the morphing of the bases from
"vanished" to present usage.

I recommend this book not only for the historian or aviation enthusiast but for anyone who enjoys good stories about real people and places.

Bob Dunn
Nacogdoches, Texas


_The New Texas Challenge_ addresses changes projected in Texas' population from 2000 to 2040 by Steve H. Murdock and associates. Murdock is a Regent's Professor and head of the Department of Rural Sociology at Texas A&M University, the official Texas demographer, and the director of the Center for Demographic and Socio-economic Research and Education in the Texas A&M University System.

_The New Texas Challenge_ is a second look at the implications of changing demographics in Texas, the first being _The Texas Challenge_, published in 1996 and 1997. The New Texas Challenge uses information from the Census of 2000 to re-examine previous projections to determine from where Texas has come and in which direction it is headed by looking at four prevalent trends: changes in rates and sources of population growth; the aging and age structure of the Texas population; growth in the non-Anglo population; and the changing composition of Texas households. The projections of the continuation of these trends and the possible impacts on governments are shown, promising both new opportunities as well as challenges. To qualify the projections in _The New Texas Challenge_, projections are presented in three different scenarios: the first scenario, (0.0), describes what the population would be like with net migration being zero—the increase a result of natural means only, are provided as a means of comparison; the second projection, (1.0), assumes that the rates of increase in the 1990s (considered high), both by natural means and by immigration, will continue throughout the projection period; and the third, (0.5), is a projection based on half the immigration rate of 1990-2000.

_The New Texas Challenge_ contains information valuable not only to Texas government institutions, but also to businesses and business owners, teachers and parents, and Texas' population as a whole. As stated by William P. Hobby, Jr., in the foreword, "Texas needs more students and doctors, and fewer prisoners." How it is to achieve that goal remains unsaid, but current projections are indeed a "wake-up call," and will at least provide enlightened readers an opportunity to prepare to meet Texas' upcoming challenges and to
change her historical trends for the better. The title of this book suggests with veiled optimism the timbre of its contents, which leaves the reader somber, pensive, and motivated.

Matthew A. Page
Corrigan, Texas


In First Down, Houston: The Birth of an NFL Franchise, Ann Wilkes Tucker, Mickey Herskowitz, and Robert Clark bring to life the story of the inaugural season of the Houston Texans. Ann Tucker is the Gus and Lyndall Wortham Curator of Photography for the Houston Museum of Fine Arts. Robert Clark is a photographer who worked with Buzz Bissinger to create the book Friday Night Lights. This book is one of two projects that were undertaken to celebrate the opening season of the Houston Texans.

An essay entitled More Than A Game by Mickey Herskowitz introduces the Houston Texans to readers who may be unfamiliar with the team or the game of football. The 225 pictures take viewers through a typical week for the Texans. Beginning with team practice, Clark’s pictures capture the preparation that a NFL player goes through for the Sunday game. The fans are introduced next to the ritual of the tailgate party and then moving into the stadium. Readers are then redirected to the players and their pre-game warm-up. Shots of the locker room have players stretching, meditating, and reviewing last-minute details before they run out onto the field. The game begins with the players being introduced to their fans by running through an inflated football helmet. A typical game is shown through various photos taken from the entire season in 2002. Once the game is over, win or lose, the camera takes the reader back into the locker room where the post-game, cool-down takes place. The players remove their uniforms, bloody bandages, and other marks that indicated they have played a football game. The last photo shows a wastebasket full of used tape, bandages, and towels.

Ann Wilkes Tucker’s and Robert Clark’s story of the inaugural season of the Houston Texans illustrates and completes the NFL’s homecoming to Houston. The reader sees the life of the Houston Texans as illustrating “the beginning of a beautiful relationship” between the Texans and the people of Houston.

Allan Ebert II
Houston, Texas
Following Gerald D. Nash's retirement from the University of New Mexico in the mid-1990s, his colleagues decided to honor his contributions to the study of western American history by publishing a book of essays on the American West since 1945. Written by colleagues and former students, this collection of essays provides readers with an overview of the social, economic, and environmental issues that emerged in the American West during the late twentieth century.

The collection of essays contains two articles written by Nash's former students. Margaret Connell-Szasz offers readers a comparative study between the Native American and Celtic cultures as each group experienced a cultural renaissance during the late twentieth century. Another of Nash's students, Christopher J. Haggard, writes an essay in which he maintains that the environmental movement that arose during the 1970s caused western mining companies to reevaluate their traditional mining practices.

Nash's colleagues also contributed to the book of essays. In an article written by Ferenc Szasz, the author disputes the idea that a shared sense of religious community had disappeared from the American West during the post World War II decades. Roger W. Lotchin compares urban sprawl in the American West to other regions in the United States during the late twentieth century. Richard W. Etulain concludes the work with a discussion of how Nash's scholarship on the modern American West helped reshape the study of western history.

Each essay is well written and thoroughly researched. Additionally, this work provides readers with a valuable resource on the history of the American West in the twentieth century.

Nash made numerous contributions to the study of western history in the twentieth century throughout his career. These essays illustrate the impact that Nash has had upon this historical field.

Kevin M. Brady
Texas Christian University
After reading this book, it will be obvious to anyone that perseverance, desire, dedication, tenacity, and work ethic far outweigh engineering, architecture, resources, and labor in some historical preservation projects. This small volume illustrates what a teacher and a class can do when the window of opportunity opens to save a small, hand-hewn log cabin from ruin and to resurrect the structure in a prominent place of honor in their city.

Dr. Crimm and a handful of students taking a summer course had the vision which would become a reality only after stumbling blocks were overcome time and time again. She gathered momentum from the community and its leaders. Nicknamed the "Crimm Reaper," she sought people, money, and free advice using her "ant theory." To her credit, everyone got caught up in the project and worked long, hot hours, including prison inmates who volunteered after the classes ended. It is amazing that no one was injured and that the cabin is really standing today on the town square of Huntsville!

The students, working by day on the cabin, worked by night to write papers on many aspects of relevant local history. Since this cabin was moved three times prior to coming to town, these students researched and wrote of the families who lived in the cabin, the land, property and social history of the cabin, along with prominent locals, early social life, churches, and children's toys and games of the era. These assignments become Part II of the book.

The reader will see this book as an exciting, interesting, unbelievably entertaining saga of saving an historic landmark. Dr. Crimm's project was not only successful in educating students and the community about the importance of historic preservation, but awakening the public's interest in doing likewise. This would be an excellent book to teach people how not to move a log cabin!

Linda Cross
Tyler Junior College