

Come hell or high water.

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REVIEW

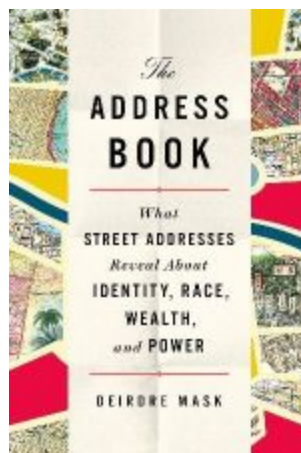
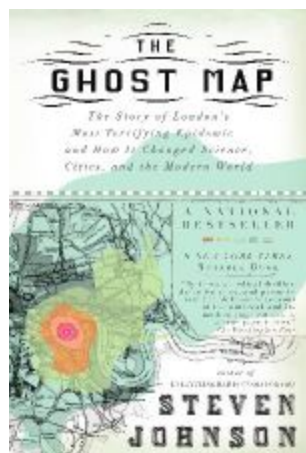
of

TEXAS BOOKS



Volume 35/Spring & Summer 2021/Issue 1

Editor's Note:



I have gotten into a bad habit, and I blame it all on Libby, the library app. Where once I read multiple reviews about a book before adding it to my list, lately, if a cover or blurb catches my eye, I place a hold without further research. On one

However, as I read Mask's chapter asking if street addresses could help stop an epidemic, the situation she began describing sounded familiar, so familiar, I called my husband into the room to tell him about the coincidence. As I went

come in at one time can attest to – but more often than not, this practice has resulted in delight, and even wonder.

A few months ago, I settled down with Steven Johnson's *The Ghost Map: The Story of London's Most Terrifying Epidemic and How It Changed Science, Cities, and the Modern World*. Published in 2006, the book was hardly trending, but I was looking for books related to epidemiology for reasons that shall remain nameless.

A fascinating look at the cholera epidemic in 1854 London, Johnson traces the early efforts of John Snow and others who refused to believe that the disease was caused by miasma. Three-quarters of the book was well-paced and interesting, though Johnson's attempt to apply the lessons more broadly at the end, less so.

Like many of you, my greatest fear is not having something to read once I have finished a good book, but thankfully, I had lined up Deirdre Mask's *The Address Book: What Street Addresses Reveal About Identity, Race, Wealth, and Power*.

This book was published in 2020, and, on its face, does not appear to have anything to do with epidemics (though, of course, in hindsight, a glance at the two covers reveals *some* similarities). Instead, *The Address Book* delves into the how and why of street addresses and the very real consequences of living without one.

Steven Johnson's *The Ghost Map* itself.

What kind of alchemy was this?! I knew nothing of either book prior to reading them and certainly had not discovered them together!

One week later, before a meeting to discuss awarding the Summerlee Book Prize for Lamar University's Center for History and Culture – more later in this issue – a colleague discussed researching a different cholera outbreak, and another colleague mentioned having just read Steven Johnson's *The Ghost Map*, a book published 15 years earlier.

Of course, having just lived through the past 16 months and a global pandemic, this is likely not all that unusual – we are readers, and while readers may read to escape, we (or at least I) also read to access information and make sense of our world, even when it is, as it has been, insensible.

Regardless, the serendipity of the three incidences in such a short period of time was astounding and only confirmed my belief that books are magic. This belated issue is full of books that will entertain, inform, and enchant, and I hope you find your next great read in the reviews below.

Jennifer Ravey
Managing Editor

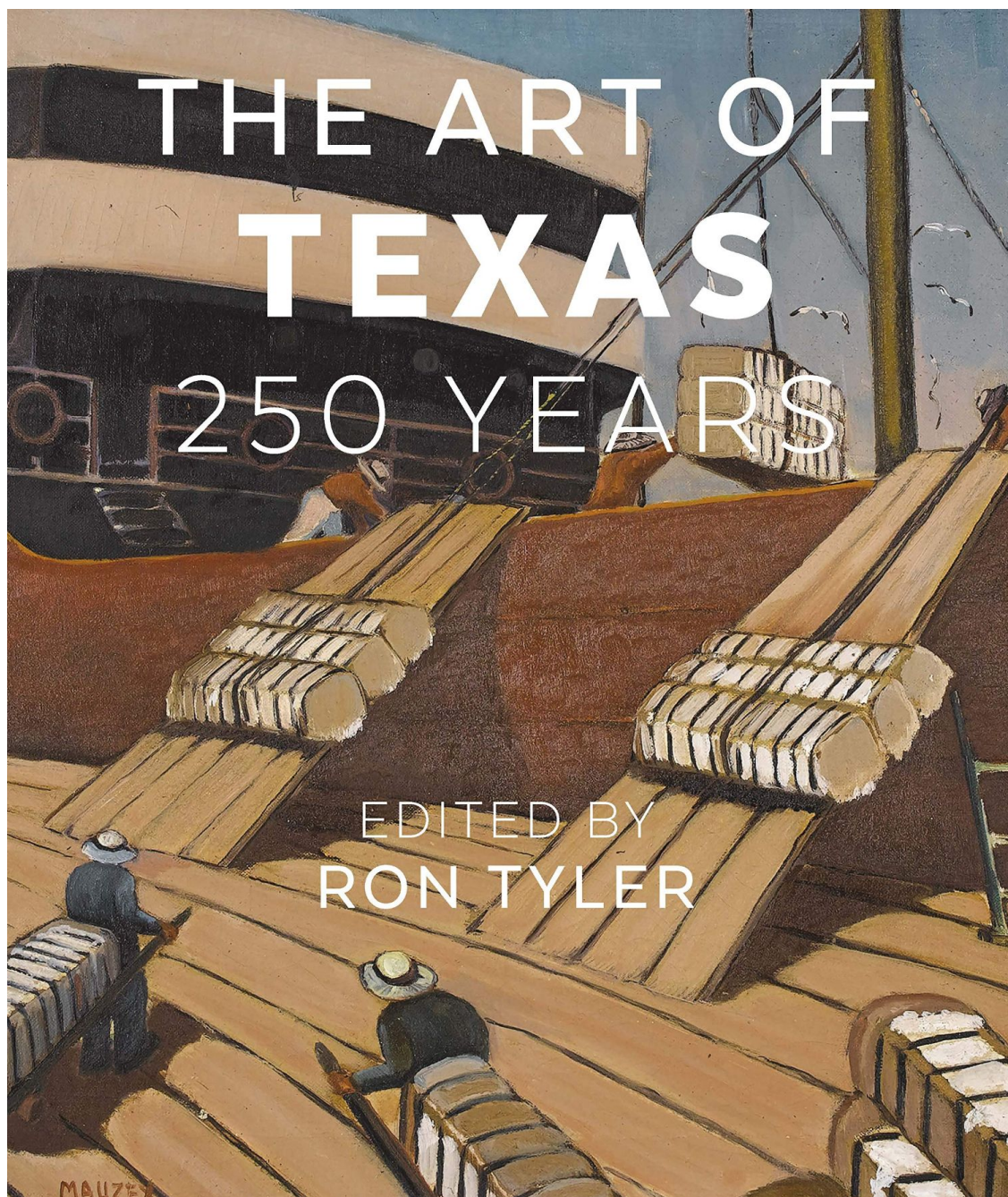
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*Click on any book cover throughout this issue for its corresponding Goodreads page.

ART



Edited by Ron Tyler, a former professor of history at the University of Texas and the retired director of the Amon Carter Museum of American Art, *The Art of Texas: 250 Years* is the catalog that accompanied the exhibition of the same name held at the Witte Museum in San Antonio in 2019. *The Art of Texas* is the first to comprehensively and exclusively examine the art of Texas over the last 250 years. Before this time, there has never been an in-depth exploration of the topic of Texas art. But with the ever-increasing interest in the art of Texas, not only among scholars but also within the general public, the time was right for *The Art of Texas* to be exhibited and published.

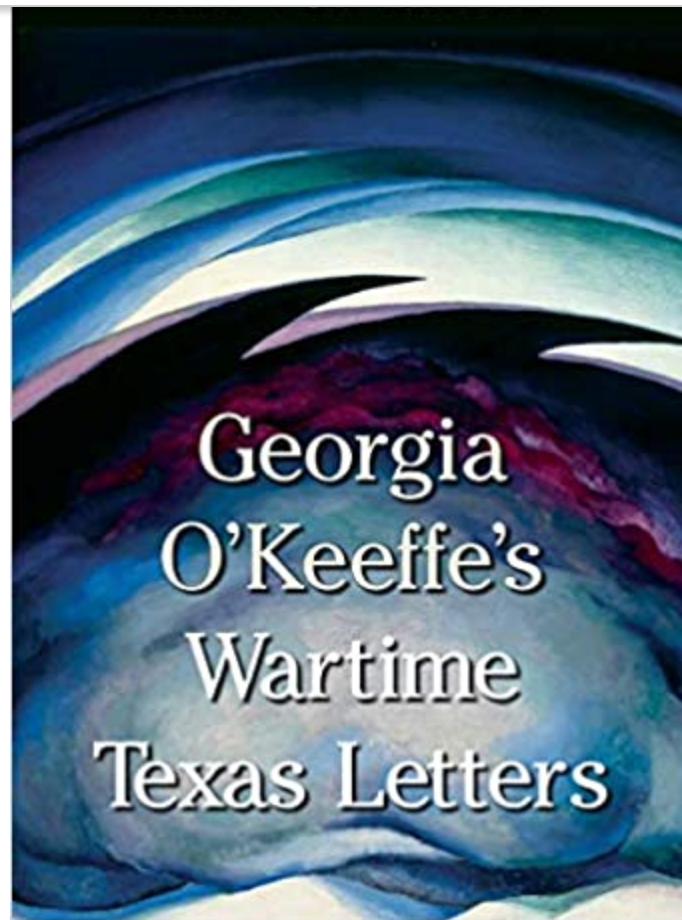
The Art of Texas is a massive exhibition catalog at 446 pages long and weighing almost seven pounds. It is a high-quality book with thick pages and color photographs that is worthy of gracing every Texas lover's coffee table. The book is comprised of fourteen chapters that are arranged thematically. In preparation for the exhibition and catalog, Ron Tyler had discussions with other experts in the field of Texas art, and as they began compiling works to be included, they found that these artworks fit into several distinct themes. Therefore, instead of chronological organization, *The Art of Texas* uses a thematic approach. In addition, during initial planning for the exhibition and catalog, it was decided that only non-living artists would be included. As a result, most of the artwork included and discussed dates from around 1700 to 1950, though there are some examples from later in the twentieth century.

Each of the fourteen chapters is written by an expert in the field of Texas art and focuses on a specific theme. Ron Tyler writes the first chapter, which covers the art of early Texas. Following Tyler's contribution, *The Art of Texas* includes chapters on Hispanic origins, European influences, landscapes, sculpture, history paintings, the branding of Texas, impressionism, important art competitions, horses and cattle, self-taught artists, African American artists, and modernism. While there is a focus on paintings, a variety of different media are represented within the book, including sculptures, drawings, etchings, lithographs, and photographs. In these chapters, the contributors are consciously inclusive of geography, gender, race, and culture. In the end, these fourteen chapters are meant to convey Texas art as American art, and ultimately, the book fills a gap in the research of the history of American art.

This book will appeal to Texas history buffs and art lovers, along with scholars and curators who specialize in the art of this state. As a high-quality book that is the first to comprehensively examine the history of Texas art from the colonial period through the twentieth century, it is sure to appeal to both scholars and laypeople alike. On point with art historical research trends of the twenty-first century, *The Art of Texas* strives to be inclusive and diverse in order to present a well-rounded picture of the state's artistic output. In addition, there is not a lack of female artists, with each chapter including examples and relevant discussions.

The only weakness for this impressive book is that it does not include living artists. However, Ron Tyler states at the outset that the exhibition and catalog are limited to non-living artists, so that it is merely my own personal desire to see the story of Texas art continued into the twenty-first century. I would love to see another exhibition at the Witte Museum in San Antonio that focuses on living Texas-based artists. Beaumont has been home to some of these successful and influential artists, including John Alexander, David Cargill, and Julie Bell and Boris Villejo. Alas, this will have to be saved for a companion project, perhaps entitled, *The Art of Texas: The Twenty-first Century*.

Tyler, Ron, ed. The Art of Texas: 250 Years. Fort Worth: TCU Press, 2019. 456 pp. Cloth.



Georgia O'Keeffe's First Taste of the Southwest
by Caitlin Chávez

Both one of the most popular female artists and one of the most successful American painters, Georgia O'Keeffe is an enduring figure in the modern art history canon. Her legacy is most often associated with Southwestern landscapes and floral abstractions, a style she developed in the 1920–30s and continued to work with until the end of her life. About a decade prior to this period, however, O'Keeffe was a working artist and educator who first encountered the landscape of the Southwest in the Texas Panhandle. Art historian Amy Von Lintel's *Georgia O'Keeffe's Wartime Texas Letters* provides edited selections from O'Keeffe's correspondences to Alfred Stieglitz. Von Lintel's book advocates for a reconsideration of O'Keeffe as a writer in addition to her status as a celebrated artist because of how her writing bears testimony to life in Canyon, Texas from 1916–1918 while many of her students, neighbors, and even her brother were leaving home to serve on behalf of the war effort.

Von Lintel begins her book by discussing her transcription process of the letters and introducing readers to Georgia O'Keeffe's early career days in Texas. The text even includes a page of O'Keeffe's correspondence, penned in a hard-to-decipher handwriting (89). While there have been other published collections of O'Keeffe's letters to her husband Alfred Stieglitz, none have focused on her Texas years nor have considered O'Keeffe as an important witness of the World War I era in American history. The "Introduction" includes several bookplates reproducing O'Keeffe's watercolors and oil paintings in bright, vibrant colors completed both during her stints living in Texas and decades later remembering the Panhandle landscape.

One watercolor painted in the year O'Keeffe arrived to Canyon is *Sunrise and Little Clouds No. 1* (1916). This small watercolor captures a snapshot of the West Texas landscape at sunrise, a gradient of yellow, red and pink painted in loose brushstrokes illuminating a purple sky (20). The light cast upon the landscape reveals shadows of cacti and grazing cattle before a fog of purply-gray. Even though she was raised in a rural Midwestern farming community, O'Keeffe first encountered the cattle herding industry when she

an alternative to war, and that war was seen as a distraction from the ‘real work’ of raising animals that needed full time care” (20).

The chapters of the book concentrate on O’Keeffe’s reflections on her own position as both a woman and artist during the war. Throughout her letters, she asserts her desire to be independent and not bound to society’s expectations of her as a woman, stating “...I can’t help feeling independent...They have always objected to all the things I did— I wouldn’t ask the men of my family for anything to save their lives...” (60). Even though she was inspired by the changing seasons and the effects of light on the West Texas landscape, O’Keeffe was sometimes distracted from creating art because of the weight of war, asking “What’s the use of Art—if there is war...”(98). These thoughts of the atrocities of war would continue to be weaved throughout her letters, describing how some days it was hard to complete quotidian tasks like tying her shoes when there is war and suffering.

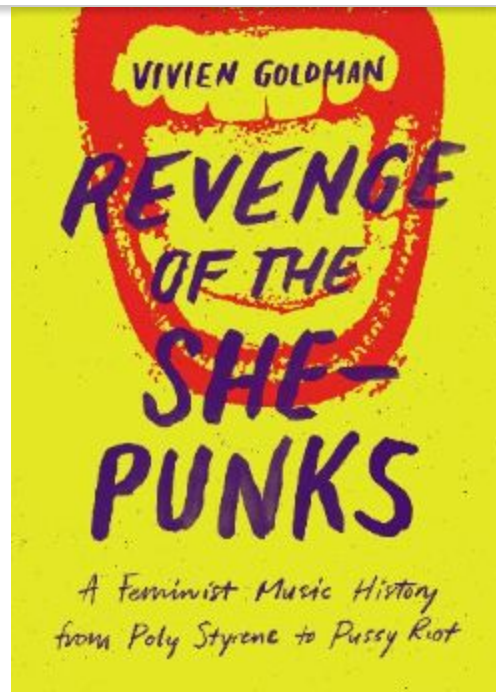
While O’Keeffe writes letters addressed to Stieglitz, they read more like diary entries, carefully accounting the details of her day including her encounters with the community, observations about the scenery, activities, and personal reflections. Living in Canyon, she interacted with townspeople and students, and there is even an account of a cowboy with whom she was romantically involved. Recounting conversations with people of varying backgrounds as well as private reflections, O’Keeffe shares in her letters the perception of women during this time in American history and opinions about women’s position and even helplessness in the war effort.

Georgia O’Keeffe’s Wartime Texas Letters is a celebration of the artist as a prolific but private writer, as well as a contribution to World War I history by bearing testimony to a young woman’s experiences in the Texas Panhandle. There is introspection into the historical moment as well as descriptions of the artist’s personal life and early teaching career. Von Lintel’s book is an important contribution to writing on O’Keeffe because most scholarship tends to focus on her work and life in New Mexico. By re-considering O’Keeffe’s Texas years, we can better understand the artist’s love for the colors, flora, and fauna of the Southwestern landscape she rendered over and over again in her paintings.

Von Lintel, Amy. Georgia O’Keeffe’s Wartime Texas Letters. Texas A&M Press, 2020. 248 pp. Hardcover. Essays, Photographs, Bibliographical References, and Index.

MUSIC





“And we still have reason to roar”

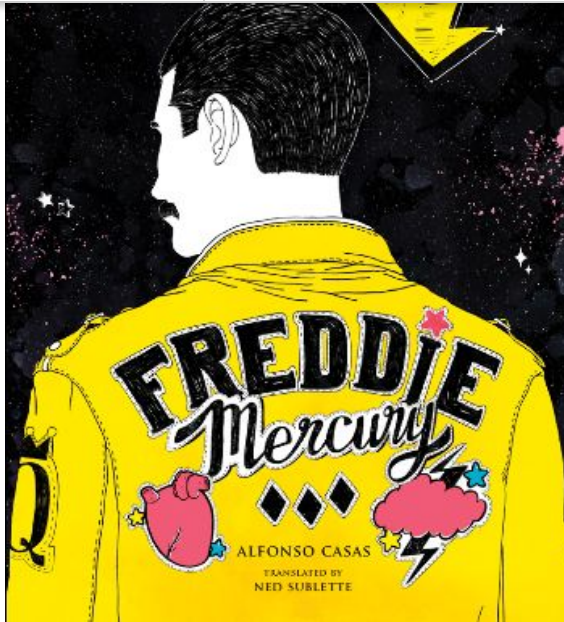
by Angela Morris

Women often have to forcefully carve out their own spaces in art movements, and the punk genre, despite its radical roots, did not offer a warm welcome to its female pioneers. In *Revenge of the She-Punks*, Vivien Goldman establishes a much-needed history of these female punk artists, spanning from the movement’s blossoming in the 1970s to female contributions in the genre today.

Goldman’s comprehensive book features her own experiences as a musician and writer, interviews with artists, and the history of punk’s international spread from its European roots. Goldman includes a variety of artists from the legendary Patti Smith to the short-lived runs of bands such as Pragaash, a Kashmiri female trio whose career was cut short by threats of violence in their Islamic home country. Organized into four themes of identity, money, love, and protest, *Revenge of the She-Punks* offers an authoritative tour of the energy and innovation that punk women brought to the stage. The four themes explore the social issues and personal obstacles faced by female punk artists as they forged their own paths in the genre. For example, an interview in “Money” with the sororal bandmates of Emerald, Sapphire, and Gold reveals the financial hardship they faced while navigating an exploitative music industry. “Love/Unlove” ranges from the rampant sexual violence faced by she-punks, such as the murder of the Gits’ songwriter Mia Zapata, to the Mo-Dettes’ embrace of femininity in creating their brand of pretty pastels—defying the staunch notion that women should strive for androgyny or masculinity to earn respect from punk audiences.

With the inclusion of author-curated playlists for each theme, Goldman provides a backstage pass to readers that will immerse them in the smoke, dust, and frenzy of she-punks as they stake their claim on the liberation found in punk music. *Revenge of the She-Punks* serves as a well-developed and intimate portrait of the heartache and resilience of women in punk-- both the generations that first breached the scene and the generations who continue punk’s tradition of disregarding boundaries.

Goldman, Vivien. Revenge of the She-Punks: A Feminist Music History from Poly Styrene to Pussy Riot. University of Texas Press, 2019. 216 pp. Paperback.



“Behind the leader of one of the world’s all-time most successful rock bands was a timid person, with an inner life that he struggled both to reveal and to hide” (8).

A Colorful Exhibition of Life and Love

by Marianne LaChance

At some point in their listening histories, most music lovers will stumble upon Queen. Whether that first encounter with the legendary band sparks mere appreciation, a lifelong obsession, or anything in between, Alfonso Casas’ book *Freddie Mercury* has something to offer for any lover of Queen or the lead singer.

By Casas’ own admission, the book is not an in-depth biography of Mercury’s life, nor is it a deep dive into the history of Queen. Rather, the book takes the reader through the three “births” of Freddie Mercury. First, readers see the birth of Farrokh Bulsara, then the singer’s adoption of the Freddie Mercury moniker, and finally the death of the singer and the birth of the legend.

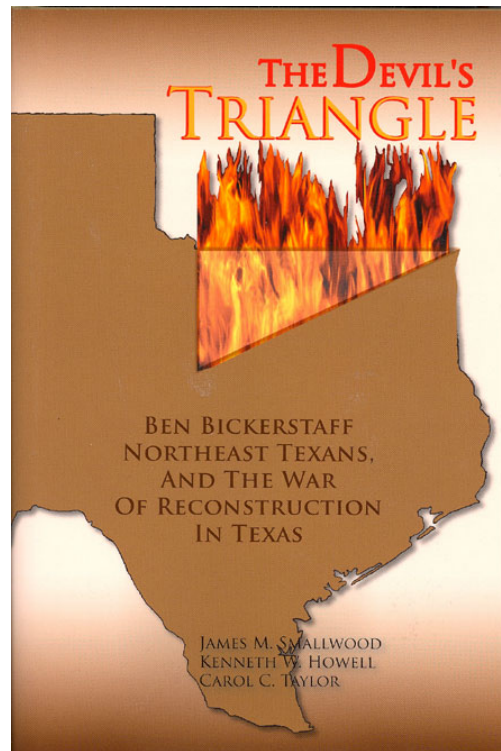
Freddie Mercury, originally published in Spanish and translated into English by Ned Sublette, offers a brilliant and charming look into Mercury’s life. Accompanied by stunning illustrations that mirror the sentiment of the text by highlighting key points in Mercury’s life, Casas tells the highs and lows of Freddie’s life using color in his illustrations to denote the mood. The vibrant colors representing the highs of Freddie’s life are a stark contrast to the muted colors representing the melancholy moments.

While the book does a fantastic job of depicting Freddie Mercury’s romantic relationships, it contributes to the erasure of Freddie’s bisexuality. The book conveys the importance of Mary Austin and Freddie Mercury’s relationship, yet uses the terms bisexual and homosexual interchangeably at times, leaving the reader to question if Austin and Mercury’s relationship was ever romantic in Freddie’s eyes. However, as the illustrated book is just a glimpse into the singer’s life, the ambiguity surrounding Mercury’s sexuality does not impact the reader’s enjoyment of the book.

Whether readers appreciate *Freddie Mercury* as a leisurely read from cover to cover or flip through to admire the vivid illustrations, Alfonso Casas has done an incredible job of providing a glimpse into the life of Freddie Mercury and his involvement in Queen. *Freddie Mercury* is a book “for those of us who were not born Queen fans, but will die Queen Fans” (9).

Casas, Alfonso. Translated by Ned Sublette. Freddie Mercury: An Illustrated Life. University of Texas Press, 2020. 136 pp. Illustrations.

NONFICTION

**The Devil Invades Texas**

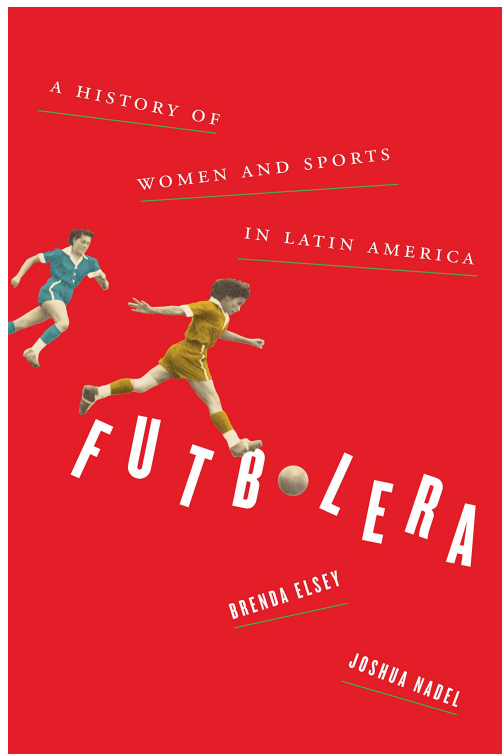
Review by Cassandre Durso

In *The Devil's Triangle*, James M. Smallwood, Kenneth W. Howell, and Carol C. Taylor take readers through the tumultuous world of Reconstruction Texas. At the close of the Civil War, many who remained loyal to the Confederate cause went on a violent and murderous rampage in the state, determined to kill anyone who threatened to destroy the institution of slavery or white supremacy in the state.

The book centers around Ben Bickerstaff, a defender of the “Lost Cause,” who created a roving band of vigilantes who would use violence, intimidation and murder to prevent the success of Reconstruction policies in Texas. Smallwood, Howell and Taylor provide an excellent review of Bickerstaff’s life and his entrance into the world of extralegal activities, which began in his years as a Confederate soldier. The work is thorough and based on extensive research at both the primary and secondary level. In addition, the authors maintain a fairly objective tone, which is no small feat when talking about such a difficult and divisive topic.

Throughout the book, the theme of vengeance is ever-present in the actions of Bickerstaff and his associates, and the writing paints a vivid picture of the dangerous world these men created. Change in society is a strong historical theme found in the work as well, as Bickerstaff and his comrades refused to conform to the societal changes that came from the end of slavery and the start of Reconstruction. Some of the violence present may not be suited to younger readers, but amateur historians and fans of the past would benefit from reading this book since it covers an underrepresented part of the state’s varied history.

Texans, and the War of Reconstruction in Texas. University of North Texas Press, 2019. 240 pp. Black & white illustrations. Maps. Notes.



Futbol and Beyond: Women and Sports in Latin America

Review by Katt Blackwell-Starnes

Elsey and Nadel promise in their introduction to discuss more than just futbol, or soccer, in their work, and they deliver to that promise. *Futbolera* casts a wide net to discuss not only the titular sport but boxing, track and field, basketball and tennis, and their coverage of countries is just as wide, including Brazil, Mexico, Costa Rica, Uruguay, Chile, and Argentina over the last 120 years. Their research is astounding and interesting and should be applauded for the depth provided on a topic significantly lacking in archival research.

The history of women's sports in Latin America is inherently linked to ideas of eugenics in several countries. Elsey and Nadel explore this connection throughout their study. The driving force behind allowing women to participate in sports, or at least in physical education courses in school in the late 19th century, was deeply rooted in the idea that some physical activity would keep women healthier and lead to better

marketing women's sport matches in ways that played up the femininity of the sport. In many attempts this meant sports journals fixated more on the feminine qualities of the athletes to the detriment of their playing abilities, but the authors also trace some of the more unique ways in which women playing male sports were considered acceptable, such as through charity matches for women's organizations.

A significant portion of the book focuses on the growth of women's sports in Brazil and Mexico in part because more research is available about the growth in these countries, but also because these countries have quite unique histories of women's sports. Fans of women's futbol often associate Mexico immediately with the history of the sport, though Elsey and Nadel are quick to show that Mexico's history is much more recent than the fans might expect. While Mexico is currently enjoying an explosion of women's futbol, their early history with the sport, in the 1960s and 1970s, was short lived, and only in the last 20 years did women's futbol in Mexico reach the historical fervor associated with it today. Brazil, on the other hand, has a more complex history of a variety of women's sports that includes decades of laws banning women from certain sports, including futbol and boxing, and as many decades of women defying these bans to continue participating in the sports they loved.

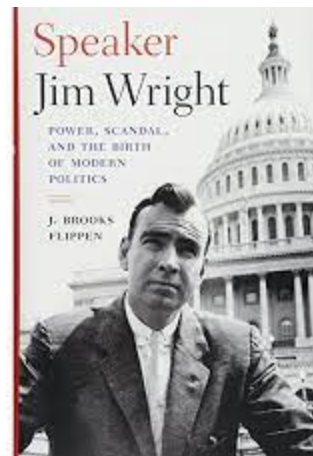
Countries that do not receive as much attention in the book are not neglected in their presentation, but rather receive less attention because their histories do not have as much documentation. Argentina, Chile, Uruguay, Costa Rica and El Salvador are all discussed in some detail in the book and as countries with their own history, though that history is much more recent and much less documented than Mexico and Brazil. Still, Elsey and Nadel do not overlook these smaller

influence than other countries, though often this influence came from assumptions made in science and medicine. Elsey and Nadel provide excellent details of the extensive role of eugenic thinking where research is available in the country's history, and they tease out the influence as best they can in countries where the research does not exist. In these latter cases, Elsey and Nadel are clear in how they reach the conclusions they do about the role of science and eugenics in the countries.

As interesting as the eugenic history of women's sports is the connection Elsey and Nadel make between sexualizing female athletes in Latin America. One of the primary objections to women participating in traditionally male sports was the idea that this participation would make the athletes more masculine, and Elsey and Nadel trace the attempts at

Futbolera takes great strides to provide as much history as possible to the growth and development of women's sports in South America. As the title indicates, much of the book explores the history of futbol in Latin America because this sport grew faster, further, and continues more prevalently than other sports. However, Elsey and Nadel do not diminish the roles of other sports in which Latin American women participate through these decades. *Futbolera* provides a rich history of the female athlete and her struggles to play the sport she loved, whether that was futbol, basketball, track and field, or tennis.

Elsey, Brenda, and Joshua Nadel. Futbolera: A History of Women and Sports in Latin America. University of Texas Press, 2019. 368 pp. Black & white photographs.



A Texas Mover & Shaker by Dale Farris

Southeastern Oklahoma State Univ. history professor Flippen (Ph.D., '94, Univ. of Maryland), author of 2011 "Jimmy Carter, the Politics of Family, and the Rise of the Religious Right," 2006 "Conservative Conservationist: Russell E. Train and the Emergence of American Environmentalism," and 2000 "Nixon and the Environment," presents a richly detailed, heavily researched portrait of the life of Jim Wright (b1922 – d2015). James Claude Wright, Jr. was elected after the end of WWII to the Texas House of Representatives, and then in 1955 to the US House of Representatives. Throughout his long congressional career, Wright represented the 12th congressional district, which included the city of Fort Worth, and he served as the 48th Speaker of the US House (after Tip O'Neill's retirement) from 1987 to 1989. His short-lived speakership was cut short in '89 by the scandal involving his alleged violations of House ethics rules and his interventions in the savings & loan (S&L) crisis of the late '80s and early '90s to help S&L businesses in his home district.

of the old west into the new south. Wright's upbringing heavily influenced the development of his political influence that remains memorable throughout north-central Texas. Also detailed is Wright's early youth growing up during the depression era, and Flippen smartly connects how this experience helped shape Wright's character. Flippen expands with personal stories of Wright's success as a high school debater and links this early ability with his ultimate oratory skills and his enjoyment of the limelight. Wright's first political campaign involvement is described, helping his father's friend Ernest O. Thompson's democratic candidacy for Texas governor, a campaign that helped even further to solidify Wright's political acumen.

Flippen's meticulous research covers the next major influence on Wright's life - his WWII military experience. Flippen continues Wright's always interesting life story after the war, including the importance of the births of Wright's children, while emphasizing the beginnings of Wright's political career. Then came the '80s era of Reaganism and the "new conservatives" who managed to persuade even some of Wright's formerly friendly conservative democrats over to Reagan's economic programs. However, the Democrats were still able to expand their majority base, and this formed the foundation of Wright's support for his election in 1987 at the beginning of the 100th Congress as Speaker of the House. Flippen rightly devotes much material to the scandal that ultimately led to Wright's resignation as Speaker of the House. After his resignation, Wright spent his retirement years traveling, investing and consulting, writing, and teaching a "Congress and the Presidents" course at Texas Christian University (TCU).

Flippen's solid, meticulous, and heavily researched prose is built on laborious review of information from official governmental files, the congressional record, numerous first-hand stories, and the goldmine of archives in presidential libraries and personal files. His lively writing is filled with personal anecdotes and remembrances from many of Wright's family and friends, journalists, state and national officials, and political advocates. The author was also blessed with Wright's honest, frank comments and stories revealed in dozens of hours of taped interviews and Wright's sharing of his personal diaries. Flippen's interviews also included many hours with Wright's longtime personal secretary, Norma Ritchson.

Flippen's major work reveals insights into Jim Wright's life and career that reflect on the important role of the US Congress in domestic and international policy development and diplomacy, beginning in the post-WWII era, and ending in the Reagan era. His long career in politics was profound in his local community, throughout Texas, and the nation. Wright played a major role in international foreign policy, and his accomplishments were many. Wright's personal story can also be considered representative of part of the overall story of the US Congress, and many chapters in his life and facets of his character will ring familiar with devotees of the equally stellar story of Lyndon Johnson's mastery of the Congress and the presidency.

This fascinating, always interesting book provides a wonderful introduction to Texas politics for anyone who has not yet dipped into Robert Caro's multi-volume magnum opus on the life of LBJ. Flippen's magnificent work is a valued, necessary addition to all university and public library collections, and is absolutely essential for all libraries in the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex area. All historians and students of history should speed run their way to this important political biography that is worth every meaningful moment of their time and that belongs on all political history reading lists.

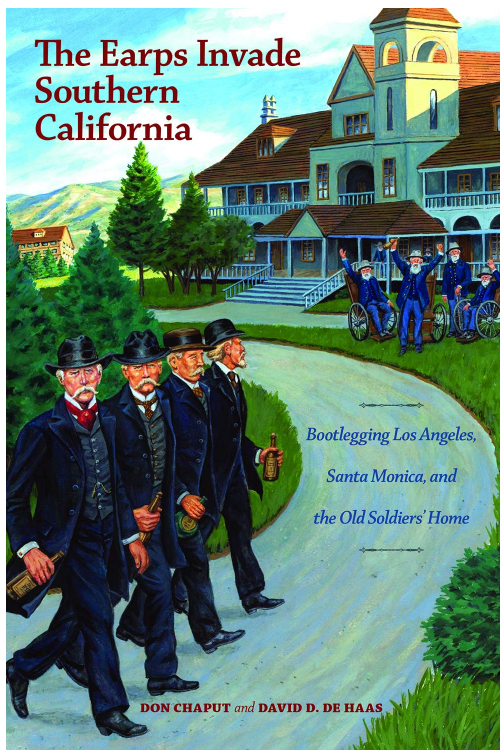
Flippen, John Brooks. Speaker Jim Wright: Power, Scandal, and the Birth of Modern Politics. University of Texas Press, 2018. 552 pages. Photos. Ch. Notes. Index.

Herping Texas: The Quest for Reptiles and Amphibians is a perfect book for anyone interested in combining their love of nature with the thrill of “discovering” new species for themselves out in the field. What is herping? As Michael Smith says in the Introduction, “...if you go out looking for herps—reptiles and amphibians—you are ‘herping’” (7). Smith, and his co-author Clint King, have put together a book that is at once part field guide to herps, part tips for finding herps, and part personal herping stories. Whether you are interested in just identifying and photographing these species in your backyard or want to travel Texas “collecting” herps, this book covers it all. The personal stories add a nice touch—



both showing us how to herp in practice and adding a humorous touch to what could have been a dry field guide. Don't be fooled though, these humorous anecdotes are sprinkled among valuable information about the amphibians and reptiles found across the major ecosystems of Texas—from the eastern Piney Woods to the mountains of the Trans-Pecos in the west. In twelve chapters with over 150 full color photographs, Smith and King take us through a “herpetological tour of Texas” (13). This book is not just for trained biologists. It is a very accessible guide for a general audience. Just like birdwatching or stargazing, herping is an activity accessible to anyone who finds joy in exploring and discovering nature. This is a perfect book to get one started on their herping adventures.

Smith, Michael, and Clint King. Herping Texas: The Quest for Reptiles and Amphibians. Texas A&M University Press, 2018. 336 pp. Color photographs. Map.



Blind Pigs, Old Soldiers, and the Earps
Review by Lloyd Daignepon

Los Angeles. As an added dimension in evading legal strictures, “blind pigs” (businesses where customers were “given” alcohol after supposedly paying for membership or entertainment) sprang up “in, on, and around Fourth Street, the closest point of entry for the Soldiers’ Home veterans” (33).

To such an opportunity the Earps were drawn as father Nicholas and older brother Newton were among the most prominent residents of the Old Soldiers’ Home. Brothers Wyatt, Virgil, and James would as well test the market with James perhaps making the most viable and sustained effort with his own Fourth Street establishment. It was, as authors Don Chaput and David de Haas contend, the final concerted effort on the part of the Earp family to reap a bonanza out of the frontier experience. Eventually, however, Wyatt would lose interest, Virgil

relatively unknown detail and insight concerning the Earp family but as well a rather provocative and entertaining account of the ironic effects of prohibition in years long before the Volstead Act. During the last two decades of the nineteenth century, the Old Soldiers' Home near the California coast became known for its size and elegance, its hundreds of acres of beautifully cultivated gardens and orchards, and its nearness to Los Angeles, Santa Monica, and the region's resplendent beaches. With the number of veterans registered and otherwise associated with the home as well as its hundreds of employees, the Soldiers' Home "meant a lot of money in circulation in and around the new community of Sawtelle" (23), a community founded on adjacent land for the specific purpose of providing cottages for wives, families, and even "vacationing" veterans.

What was not anticipated was that Sawtelle—unincorporated during most of these years—became the beneficiary of the growing tendency throughout the nation to pass statutes of prohibition and other anti-vice legislation. Veterans were eager to spend their pension money on alcohol and gambling and even prostitution—as were numerous citizens of towns like Santa Monica and

James Nimself became a resident of the Home, and the hope for bonanza passed into its opposite, borrasca.

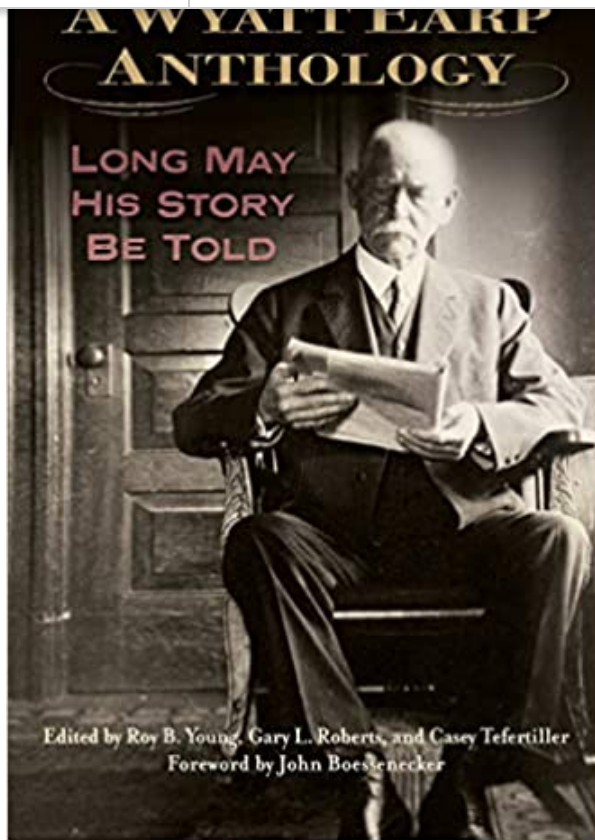
In a way, this story of the Earps' disappointments in Southern California epitomizes the fading of the Wild West. In illustration of this implied thesis, the authors include narratives of many individuals involved in the founding and growth of Sawtelle, an Appendix on the most well-known of the old soldiers (like famed scout and mountain man Jeremiah Johnson), and another Appendix on figures whose careers in Kansas, Arizona, Colorado, and California parallel those of the Earps (like John Clum, editor of the *Tombstone Epitaph*, who supported the Earps in the aftermath of the infamous Gunfight at the O.K. Corral and continued his friendship with Wyatt in California and whose career as an Indian agent was the subject of *Walk the Proud Land*, starring Audie Murphy). *The Earps Invade Southern California* contains numerous illustrations, photographs, and maps as well as extensive notes and bibliography, all of which contribute to our understanding and appreciation of its purpose.

Chaput, Don, and David D. DeHaas. The Earps Invade Southern California: Bootlegging Los Angeles, Santa Monica, and the Old Soldiers' Home. University of North Texas Press, 2020. 304 pp. Black & white illustrations. Maps. Notes.

Earpiana

By Lloyd Daigrepont

The subtitle of this collection, taken from the theme song of the 1950s television series *The Life and Legend of Wyatt Earp*, reflects one nearly inconceivable emphasis, given the volume's 861 pages—that "Earpiana" (or scholarship on Wyatt Earp, his life, numerous occupations, his family, wives and consorts, friends, associates, and enemies) has by no means been exhausted by the books, articles, films, and internet contributions made thus far. The editors, all established experts and authors on the Wild West as well as on Earpiana, present this anthology, not as conclusive but rather as an exhortation for new and expansive scholarly exploration of both the man and the era that he has come to represent.



hunted and skinned buffalo, was accused of horse theft at one point, was a gambler and saloon consort of prostitutes. He began to work as a police officer in wild towns like Wichita and Dodge City, gained the friendship of Bat Masterson and a homicidal tubercular ex-dentist from Georgia who saved Wyatt's life on one occasion and later followed him and his brothers to Tombstone—Doc Holliday. Of the four women who called him husband, he was legally wed only to the first, Urilla Sutherland, who died in childbirth of Typhoid Fever in the first year of marriage; the others, including Sarah Josephine Marcus—also called “Sadie” and “Josie”—were common law wives and like most of Wyatt's brothers' wives succumbed at times to frontier exigencies as prostitutes.

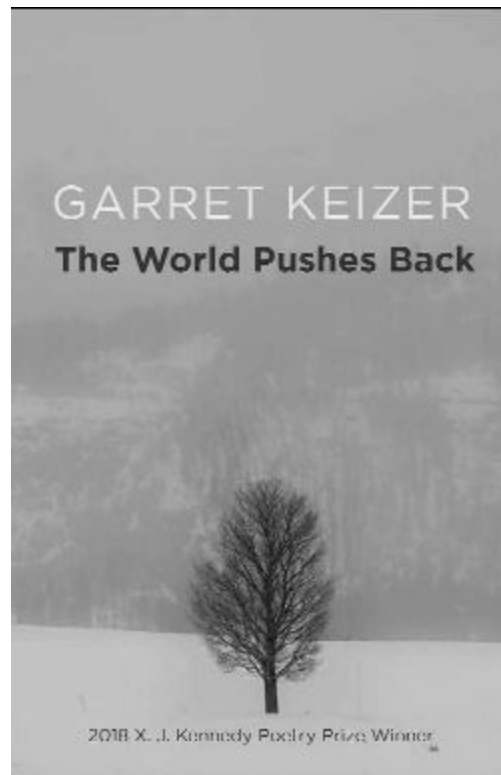
The infamous gunfight, which actually took place in an empty lot on Fremont street in Tombstone about a block away from the O. K. Coral, was in and of itself more a moment of confusion than heroism, the Clantons and McLaurys perhaps on their way out of town after making drunken threats, the Earps believing their movement threatening. Wyatt's older brother Virgil was in charge as frontier marshal, Wyatt only deputized. Wyatt may have killed two of the ranchers, and he was the only combatant not touched by gunfire (Ike Clanton ran past Wyatt and hid in a photographer's studio when the shooting started). In the months following, Virgil was ambushed by hired gunmen and severely wounded and Morgan Earp assassinated while playing billiards. Then Wyatt launched his infamous Vendetta Ride—at first funded by Wells Fargo—in which he quite simply found those gunmen he suspected and dispatched them by ambush or by gunfight if necessary—no attempts at arrest. The violence was praised at first but eventually considered illegal, Wells Fargo dropped its support, and Wyatt Earp became a notorious outlaw. In the years following he briefly returned to Dodge as an officer of the law and then with Sadie at his side engaged in a career as a gambler, saloon keeper, horse racer, boxing referee (involved in the infamous Sharkey-Fitzsimmons decision), and, finally, a Hollywood gadabout, friend of William H. Hart and Tom Mix, meeting both John Ford and a very young Marion Morrison (John Wayne).

Readers of *A Wyatt Earp Anthology* will be apprised of all of these details and incidents and more—all of which beginning with the Vendetta Ride are the real reason that we remember Wyatt and the Gunfight at the O. K. Coral. They will also see how Earp's notoriety spawned interest that the reticent Earp and the ever-watchful Sadie failed to satisfy, causing early biographers like Stuart N. Lake (*Wyatt Earp: Frontier Marshal*, 1931) to provide glowing homage and even imagined episodes. Perhaps the worst among these was Glenn G. Boyer's *I Married Wyatt Earp* (1976), the supposed memoir of Sadie—a fraud perpetrated on the University of Arizona Press and finally excused by Boyer as

and sections of truly noteworthy books—Casey Tefertiller’s *Wyatt Earp: The Life Behind the Legend* (1997) among them. These valuable and interesting selections provide readers with excitement, valid conclusions, and honest interpretations. This volume is a boon to the historical scholar, the enthusiast, and to the casual reader who just finds Wyatt Earp and Western stories interesting.

Young, Roy B., Roberts, Gary L., and Casey Tefertiller, eds. A Wyatt Earp Anthology: Long May His Story Be Told. University of North Texas Press, 2019. 936 pp. Black & white illustrations. Maps.

POETRY



Unexpected Beauty in Small Things

Review by Gretchen Johnson

Winner of the 2018 X.J. Kennedy Poetry Prize, Garret Keizer’s *The World Pushes Back* perfectly captures what it means to be alive. Through vivid images and surprising comparisons, Keizer’s poems explore the beauty in small pleasures, the sadness of things lost, and the fact that we want to stay young forever.

One of the great pleasures of the book is seeing the familiar in new ways. One poem describes the feeling of having new shoelaces, but Keizer compares the two laces to two people in a marriage. He writes, “I thread the new one through / the lowest two, /

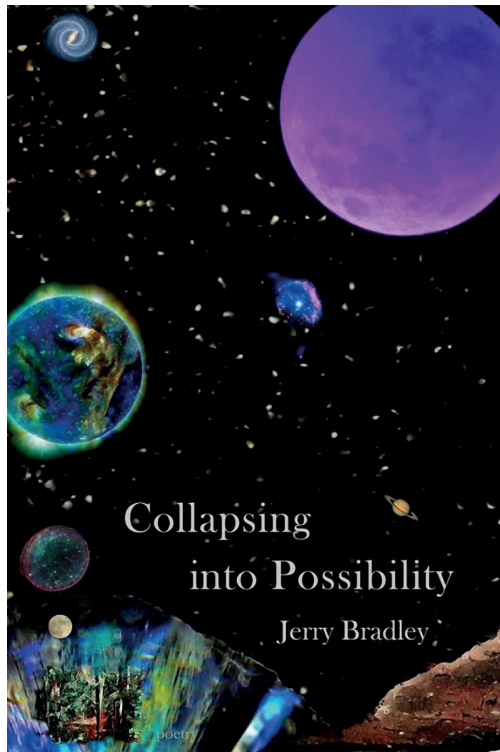
messes up the yard. In the end, the speaker decides that raking up the tree's debris is just as good as any other way to spend one's time.

Many of the poems deal with the sad reality that everything familiar to us will eventually fade away into the dusty artifacts of the past. Keizer mourns the death of the Oldsmobile, longs for days before electricity made the house so noisy, grieves for the day when he will no longer hear his daughter singing in the bathroom before school, and prefers to ignore modern technology as new inventions further separate him from his comfort zone.

Perhaps the most relatable poems in the book are those that deal with the desire to stave-off death. In "Wolf Hall," Keizer compares coming to the end of a book to coming to the end of life. He writes, "I can't even imagine / my last look at the sea" (54). In another poem, the speaker wonders what kind of legacy he will leave, how many poems will really stand the test of time.

Keizer's collection is a great choice for those who want to see everyday objects in a new light. His unpretentious poetic style allows for accessibility, so any reader can relate to the stories and ideas found in these poems.

Keizer, Garret. The World Pushes Back. Texas Review Press, 2019. 96 pp. Paperback.



What We Learn After We Already Know Everything Else

by Casey Ford

Jerry Bradley's most recent book of poems, *Collapsing into Possibility*, is a master work in lyrical irony. The Connecticut poet Carol Ann Davis recently said that one way we can describe an effect of lyricism is that it "narrates surprise"—I thought of her words again and again as I read Bradley's poems. Each one of them holds one or more awful, aching truths, and sometimes he delivers them with his signature bluntness and deadpan smirk, but at other times he is heartbreakingly vulnerable. And though "a lot of the truth isn't fit to repeat" (32), he repeats it unflinchingly—truth about getting older, the things that happen to us as we draw

nearer the ends of our lives, the nonsensical things we say and do and believe from day to day—but with a humor that can be both empathetic and eviscerating.

As a writer and fellow survivor of Harvey's "wet kisses" (59) and other Gulf Coast storms before and since, I find there is much about living in the aftermath that is difficult to articulate, yet Bradley finds his way in lines and images that fire up nerves of mine I thought had gone numb. The poems in the section titled "Alive in Captivity After the Flood" authentically capture the awe and irony of those days we lived in the trauma and wonder of sixty-something inches of rain. In them, he warns us that we are holding on to things we do not need. He shows me that I am

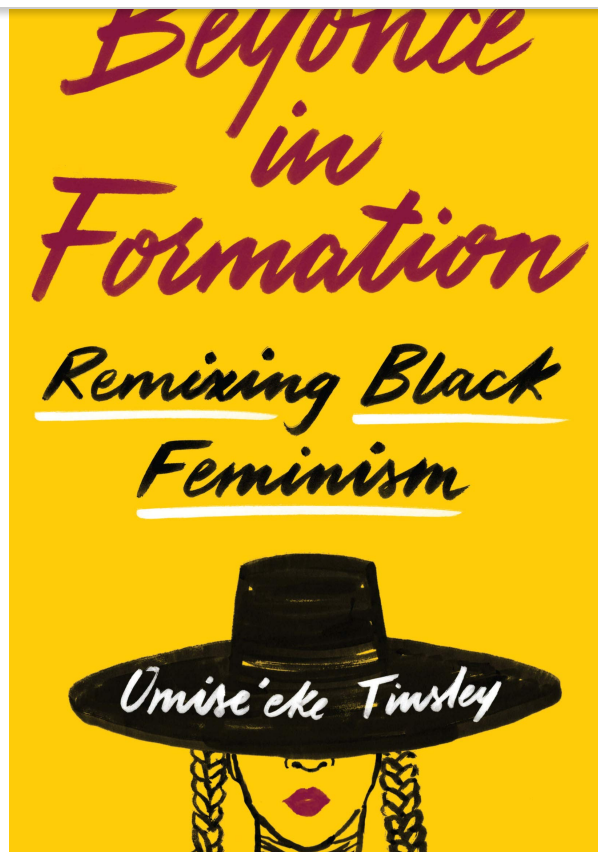
Collapsing is also a storybook, which seems a romantic word for a collection of memories that are anything but. There are stories of love, but it is the hard-won kind that is a “fine servant but...a tyrannical master” (80). There are stories of adventure, of “Kerouacing through West Texas,” but they are “a little on the small side” (23), more lean than lusty. Perhaps some men’s stories grow wilder as they grow older, but not these. They are charming, wry, wistful, and above all, they feel honest; a poet looks courageously into the “cracked mirror” of a life and responds with humility and grace.

Bradley, Jerry. Collapsing into Possibility. Lamar University Press, 2020. 116 pp. Paperback.

FROM THE BACKLIST

{fantastic books you may have missed}





The Mixtape Revisited

Review by Natalie T. J. Tindall

As OutKast announced at the 1995 Grammys, the South has something to say. Although (mostly) men from the major cities have rapped about Southern style and life over beats for years, Beyoncé Knowles Carter has allowed the South as a place, a cultural gumbo of identities, to take the stage with her. Beyoncé is a black girl from Houston who can be vegan but likes Popeyes and boudain. She is a superstar married to another musical superstar/mogul who acknowledges her family's past and her cultural roots in her attire, iconography, and children's names. Beyoncé raised her fist at the Superbowl adorned by dancers in Black Power-chic attire and performed with the Dixie Chicks on country music's most hallowed event.

Life imagined and theory lived through Beyoncé as an artist is what Tinsley examines in this book. How do we seek queer spaces in black feminist thought and through Beyoncé's music and image? Can black queerness be seen in the southern landscapes and sonic pieces referenced by Beyoncé, a self-described "Texas bama" or country girl?

Tinsley works the metaphor of a mixtape through the entire book deftly and expertly. Mixtapes can be viewed as emancipatory tools of resistance or as a sound collage. As a '90s hip-hop head, I grew up on mixtapes that provided a clear presentation of the sound and format the DJ and emcee wanted you to experience. As a mixtape, the book shares a lot with a visual depository or commonplace book or a kaleidoscope, and this framing resonates with my understanding of Beyoncé and how the author stitched and spliced together the various presentations and representations of Beyoncé.

One would benefit from having knowledge of Beyoncé's history and her musical catalog for ease of reading. However, it isn't required. You can hop on a search engine for clarity. What you do have to possess to engage with the text is the willingness to dive deep into LGBT politics and sexuality, the pleasure of Black femininity, the importance of place to identify, and the absence of Black femmes in mediated culture. The book is a refreshing breath of criticism and memoir. A mixture of theory brings the book together, and the

Tinsley, Omise'eke. Beyonce In Formation: Remixing Black Feminism. University of Texas Press, 2018. 216 pp. Paperback. Color and black and white photographs.

CHC@LU

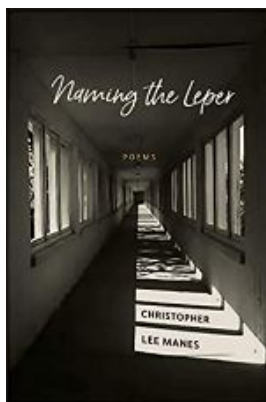
Center for History and Culture of
Southeast Texas at Lamar University

A Note from the Center for History and Culture of Southeast Texas and the Upper Gulf Coast at Lamar University

“The health officer says that all of us must be vaccinated,” began a paragraph printed in the Beaumont Enterprise. The year? 1918. That autumn, an influenza pandemic swept across the United States, and public health authorities debated how best to respond. “But,” the local journalist added by way of amelioration, “there is a silver lining for the girls. They may be vaccinated so their modern skirts won’t show the mark, for a lady is doing the work at city hall.”

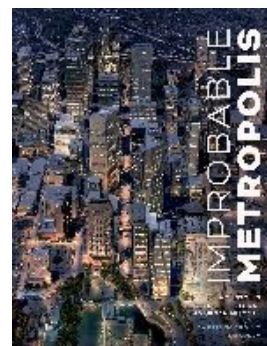
The history of our region includes several instances during which epidemics disrupted the patterns of daily life. So, too, can we find precedent for what comes next, as our region bounces back from a period of turmoil, disruption, and loss.

As was the case in 1918, and in the wake of various other disasters, the scholarly, cultural, and artistic output of our region continues unabated. This spring, the [Center for History and Culture of Southeast Texas and the Upper Gulf Coast at Lamar University](#) recognized two remarkable recent books from a rich field of submissions with its [2021 Summerlee Book Prize](#). With the goal of promoting scholarship and the creation of knowledge about our region, this award recognizes the best books written in or about Southeast Texas and the Gulf South.



Christopher Lee Manes won in the creative category with *Naming the Leper: Poems* (LSU Press, 2020). This collection uses archival fragments to reconstruct the lives of individuals, including the author’s ancestors, at a leper colony in Carville, Louisiana. “Manes’ poetry and prose combined with actual documentary evidence creates an unforgettable reading experience steeped in history and the distinctive flavor of our region,” explained prize juror Jennifer Ravey. “He respectfully and lovingly illuminates the tragic treatment of those with Hansen’s disease as well as their active inner lives.”

The 2021 Summerlee Prize in nonfiction went to Barrie Scardino Bradley’s *Improbable Metropolis: Houston’s Architectural and Urban History* (University of Texas Press, 2020). “When one thinks of Texas history, or even Houston history,” noted Tony Chauveaux, Executive Director of the McFaddin–Ward House Museum, “rarely does architecture come to mind. Yet, Barrie Scardino Bradley carefully weaves the history of the city’s built environment into the story of Houston’s cultural coming of age. Both scholarly and beautifully illustrated, *Improbable Metropolis* chronicles the



As circumstances continue to improve, we anticipate resuming in-person programs on campus in September. In addition to events featuring Summerlee Prize winners, plans are in the works for lectures and discussions focusing on the oral history of Hurricane Harvey, the Apollo 13 disaster, Zydeco music, and the past and present of Juneteenth celebrations across the region. We hope you'll join us.

Brendan Gillis

Assistant Director, Center for History and Culture of Southeast Texas and the Upper Gulf Coast at Lamar University

Reviewers

Katt Blackwell-Starnes is an Assistant Professor and Writing Director at Lamar University where she teaches rhetoric, writing, and composition. Her research areas include veterans studies and Virginia Woolf.

Caitlin Chávez is an instructor of French at Lamar University and adjunct instructor of Arts and Humanities at Lamar State College-Orange with research interests in Gulf Coast literature and art. Most recently, she contributed entries to the Three Centuries of American Art: Masterpieces from the Faye S. Sarofim Collection catalogue as a Curatorial Intern at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston for the summer 2021 exhibition.

Lloyd M. Daigrepoint taught in the Department of English and Modern Languages for forty years and is now coping with retirement. He was also Co-Editor of *Lamar Journal of the Humanities* and Supervising Editor of *Review of Texas Books*.

Dale Farris is retired, does contract grant writing for nonprofit organizations, and lives in Groves. He is a Lamar graduate and earned his graduate degree from UT Austin. He is a 30+ year reviewer for *Library Journal*, *Quality Press*, and *Quality Progress Magazine*, and is an occasional guest columnist for the *Beaumont Enterprise*. Dale has 50 years' experience in regional planning, healthcare quality improvement, human resource development, and mental health/substance abuse treatment. He presents Impact Business Writing training for professionals and he donated his 50-year old collection of 2,000+ nonfiction volumes to the Port Arthur Public Library and the Port Neches Public Library.

Casey Ford is an English instructor at Lamar University ('13, '15). She will complete her MFA in

Fischer's primary research focuses on the iconography, reception, and propaganda of Roman Imperial cameos. Her other areas of interest include issues of cultural heritage, Roman topography, the minor arts of antiquity, travel photography in 19th century Japan, and anything Italian. She is the author of two books and the editor of two books. In 2016, Dr. Fischer was named Lamar University's Distinguished Faculty Lecturer.

Gretchen Johnson was born and raised in Minnesota but now lives in Beaumont, Texas, where she works as an Assistant Professor of English at Lamar University. Her novel, *Single in Southeast Texas*, was published by Golden Antelope Press in 2017 and won the Summerlee Book Prize in 2018.

Marianne LaChance is an alumna of Lamar University with a bachelor's degree in corporate communications. She currently works for the Lamar University Writing Center as the center's social media manager.

Angela Morris earned her bachelor's and master's degrees in English from Lamar University. She currently works as the training coordinator for Lamar University Writing Center.

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If you are interested in reviewing for *Review of Texas Books*, please see our submission guidelines and form on our website: lamar.edu/txreview.

Julia Fischer is an assistant professor of art history at Lamar University, where she teaches courses in ancient, Asian, and Renaissance art along with a specialized class in art crime. She received a BA Classics in art history from Loyola University Chicago, an MA in classical archaeology from the University of Missouri-Columbia, and a PhD in art history from The Ohio State University. Dr.

for any book submitted, authors and publishers can submit books for review by mailing them to Review of Texas Books, P.O. Box 10049, Beaumont, Texas 77710.

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