Review of Texas Books

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James Carlos Blake was born in Mexico and raised in Texas. He writes novels about violent men living in violent times. Among his literary honors are the Quarterly West Novella Prize, the Los Angeles Times Book Prize, the Chataugua South Book Award, and the Southwest Book Award. Having previously lived in El Paso, Texas, and DeLand, Florida, he now resides in southeast Arizona.

Stephen Curley holds a Ph.D. from Rice University. He is professor of English at Texas A&M University at Galveston. He is a frequent contributor to Review of Texas Books.

Editors' Choice: *Under the Skin: A Novel*James Carlos Blake

A Gunman in Galveston's Sin-City Era Review by Stephen Curley

In 1936, Jimmy Youngblood, child of one of Pancho Villa's merciless lieutenants and a one-night-stand Anglo whore, makes his aimless way from Mexico to Galveston. He joins the famous Maceo organization. He soon becomes indispensable to Papa Rose Maceo as the leader of the so-called Ghost Riders, whose job it is to keep Galveston's gambling in the family. Nested at the center of this hard-boiled novel, between two forays into Mexico, is Galveston in the 1930s. It's the wide-open era, when you could get anything for a buck or get into deep trouble for being at the wrong place at the wrong time.

As Jimmy tells it, violent things just happen. That's life. A business owner who has been shortchanging the take on Maceo-installed slot machines has to be taught a lesson. Jimmy prefers kneecapping to killing—it makes a better object lesson to others—but doesn't mind killing one bit. He's tough, and he's never truly fallen in love.

There's got to be a girl. And this one shows up with all the bravura and sensuality of Rita Hayworth in the movie Gilda. Daniela, like Jimmy, comes from Mexico. She arrives in Galveston with a bodyguard and a steamy past. She's on the lam from her brutal and jealous husband, the powerful Don Cesar. Infatuated with Daniela when she was a child, he had her kidnapped and then forced into marriage. He has the physical authority, but she controls him sexually. Desperate to keep her, despite her waning affection, he had made her a virtual prisoner on his hacienda. Everyone is afraid of him, everyone except Daniela. She escaped, made her way to the barrio where Jimmy lives, and when they meet-well, it's mad love at first sight.

Jimmy's adventures in Galveston make for brilliant historical fiction. Blake takes liberties with Galveston history and the Maceo family, but it's all in the interest of a good story.

Jimmy becomes Rose Maceo's protégé. Consequently we get to see close up the inner workings of a gambling empire from swanky roulette tables in the Hollywood Dinner Club (an actual precursor to Las Vegas nightclubs) to nickel slots in filthy corner stores. The Maceos have worries: Dallas is horning in on their territory. Rose asks Jimmy to stay close and keep his eyes open. The drive-by showdown between the Dallas and Galveston gangs makes for spectacular bloodshed, just what you'd want in a gangster procedural. One of the more interesting battles, almost as bloody, is staged in the fighting ring of the Maceo's Turf Athletic Club. A sadistic ex-prizefighter with an enormous ego and a vicious right hand has cruel fun knocking out all comers. Jimmy, no boxer but a street-smart fighter, gets in a surprise punch that rocks the champ. They schedule a return bout, this time without protective headgear. We can't wait to see it.

The inevitable climax, back in Mexico, reminds one of movie director Sam Peckinpah's endings—plenty of high-tech gun power and creative variations on ways to die. The novel, like Jimmy, doesn't disappoint. In terms of the plot, the way things come together is pure joy; in terms of the story, pure horror. And through it all, we care about Jimmy. He is a fine fictional creation: a generous neighbor, an absolutely loyal lover, an unswervingly dependable employee, and methodically violent when business—or love—calls for it. In short, he is a man of his word, regardless of the consequences.

Blake, born in Texas and raised in Mexico, has been compared to novelist Cormac McCarthy with good reason. This noir story has hair on its chest. Like McCarthy's, his style is clean and his subject is grimy. Strongly recommended for readers who like their

JAMES CARLOS BLAKE, *UNDER THE SKIN; A NOVEL*. NEW YORK: WILLIAM MORROW, 2008.
304 PP. \$25.95 CLOTH, ISBN 0-38097-751-6.
\$13.95 PAPER, ISBN 0-06054-243-6.

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Puro Border: Dispatches, Snapshots & Graffiti from La Frontera Luis Humberto Crosthwaite John William Byrd Bobby Byrd

An Indelible Border Picture Review by Sally Dooley

Wearied and offended by the traditional media's treatment of the border between the U.S. and Mexico, these three editors strive by their selections to present a more fleshed out portrait of the area, its peoples, and its realities. In his sensitive introduction, Bobby Byrd compares the Mexican border as an alley through which the poor people must pass in order to enter the rich man's house to work. As more poor people come to work, fences are erected with guards. Drugs, contraband, and people are smuggled, but the media give the world only sound bites and headlines. This collaborative effort of forty writers and artists from both sides gives an in-depth look at what is occurring with hope that Mexico and U.S. policy makers will understand the border issues more clearly.

The voices from Mexico describe the humiliation of border crossings, legal and illegal. The latter stories are replete with fear, despair, danger and death. According to the editors, the laws intending to protect the people from smuggling, corruption, and crime tend to affect them adversely. The demeaning wages and conditions of maquiladoras are recounted. Other stories honor the sights, sounds, and smells of the Americans who grew up on the border or have chosen to live there for the cultural diversity. The essays and memoirs are enhanced by documented statistics on water,

immigration, drug trafficking, and the economy. Together with the photographs and drawings, the book is a pastiche of dispatches, snapshots, and graffiti.

As the U.S. faces continued complicated relations with Mexico, this book is essential for those who seek more knowledge about the border. *Puro Border* should be in all public and university libraries in the state, other border states and D.C.

CROSTHWAITE, LUIS HÜMBERTON,
JOHN WILLIAM BYRD, AND BOBBY BYRD, FÜROBORDER: DISPATCHES, SNAPSHOTS & GRAFFITI
FROM LA FRONTERA, EL PASO: CINCO PUNTOS
PRESS, 2003, 254 PP. \$18.95 PAPER,
ISBN 0-938317-59-8, 2002006098

Eldercare in Texas: A Family Resource Guide Jenny Wilcoxson Davis

Caregiving to Our Elderly Review by Sally Dooley

With life expectancies increasing, many families face caring for elderly while managing careers and family lives. Jenny W. Davis' book delivers detailed, comprehensive information for individuals who desire to make wise choices for family members or for themselves. Davis begins with "Crisis Care": the senior citizen's accident or critical illness which catapults the family into seeking care. She introduces the resources available in Texas to attend to all the aspects of care: financial, physical, psycho-social, legal and spiritual well being of those sixty-five years of age or older. Her "Legal Checklist" is instructive for securing documents that can preclude problems and anxieties when the elderly continue to decline. She discusses the cost of long-term care and how to understand and make use of Medicare, Medicaid, veterans' benefits, and insurance. Web sites, phone numbers, and other exact contacts are given. For families who choose to care for elderly at home, she points out possible problems and how to avoid them, reminding that the caregiver will need support. How to judge the quality of retirement, nursing homes, and assisted living facilities is invaluable. The importance of maintaining the rights and dignity of the elderly, especially those with (Continued on page four)

Born in Tijuana,
Mexico, in 1962,
Luis Humberto
Crosthwaite is the
author of sevenbooks.

Bobby Bard, the recipient of a poetry fellowship from the National **Endowment** for the Arts, a D.H. Lawrence fellowship, and an international fellowship to study in Mexico, is one of the most accessible poets writing today. His work is compassionate, tender & foyful. He is the author of eight books of poetry including-Pomegranates, Get Some Fuses for the House, and On the Transmigration of Souls in El Paso. He is also co-publisher of Cínco Puntos Press.

Jenny Wilcoxson Davis, MA, AD, is the Outreach/ Marketing Manager for the Hunt County Committee on Aging, Since 1999 she has worked as an activity consultant serving the long-term care industry of North Texas. She, her husband, and son live in Greenville, Texas.

James Hollis, who lives in Houston, is a Jungian analyst and executive director of the C. G. Jung Educational Center of Houston.

Larry Burrier, a native Texan, shares the Burrier tradition of Texas cooking through his Texas Link Cookbook Series. He and his wife Cheryl live in Lockhart, Texas.

Sally Dooley founded Review of Texas Books in 1986. A graduate of the University of Texas at Austin, she greatly respects Texas writers and their diversity.

(Continued from page three) dementia, is considered throughout the book. Involving all family members in the care and decision-making when the elderly are unable is another consideration she stresses. When to call in hospice care introduces the chapter on dying and planning the funeral. Six appendixes include resources and a glossary of terms.

This well researched and lucid guide is a must for all public, college, and university libraries. Davis is Outreach/Marketing Manager for the Hunt County Committee on Aging. She is the author of numerous articles on aging and eldercare in professional journals. This book will be a life and time saver for those beginning the care or those in the midst of it. Highly recommended.

DAVIS, JENNY WILCOXSON. ELDERCARE IN TEXAS: A FAMILY RESOURCE: BLUE RIDGE SUMMIT: REPUBLIC OF TEXAS PRESS, 2003—269 PP. APPENDIXES; ILLUSTRATIONS, INDEX. \$19.95 PAPER, ISBN 1-55622-930-5. 2002011867;

The Archetypal Imagination James Hollis

Active Imagination Explored Review by Sally Dooley

As another in the Carolyn and Ernest Fay Series in Analytical Psychology from Texas A&M University, this ninth publication continues to explore the psyche. James Hollis writes of the imagination as seen through the lens of Jung's theories on the spiritual aspects of life. In five dense but elegantly written essays. Hollis discusses the imaginings from different points of view: the archetypal, religious, literary, incarnational (visual art), and therapeutic. Drawing on the groundbreaking work of Jung, with examples from the literature of many cultures and photographs of the artwork of Nancy Witt, Hollis points out the use of metaphor as a method for healing the soul. Hollis states, "The archetypal imagination is the means by which we encounter the divine and how it may be reborn in us." David H. Rosen, the editor of the series, writes the book's foreword. Those interested in Jungian psychology, spirituality, and healing will appreciate the mental

stretching necessary to enjoy this book.

HOLLIS, JAMES. THE ARCHETYPAL IMAGINATION: COLLEGE STATION: TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2003. 160 PP. BIBLIOGRAPHY, ILLUSTRATIONS, INDEX. \$16.95 PAPER, ISBN 1-58544-268-2, 99-057388.

The Texas Link to Jerky Making Larry Burrier

The Truth About Jerky Review by Dale Farris

Larry Burrier, author of *The Texas Link to Sausage Making* and avid cook and hunter, introduces readers to the practical side of the delicious tradition of making jerky in this second of his "Texas Link" cookbook series. Here he shares tips on jerky making that have been passed down through generations of his family. The process of making jerky may have been introduced thousands of years ago, but its popularity as a lightweight, economical, and nutritious source of protein continues to grow.

Ever wonder how jerky got its name? According to Burrier, jerky is actually a mispronunciation of the Peruvian Spanish word *charque* (pronounced "sharkey"), meaning dried or preserved meat. As far back as 15,000 BC, the sun was used to dry foods as a method of preserving. Indians of North America evolved similar techniques, and soon American settlers learned to produce jerky.

Burrier explains the difference between cooking and drying and also presents different methods of drying jerky using your household oven, barbecue smoker, home dehydrator, or microwave oven, and provides delicious marinades and jerky recipes. He also includes handy information on the types of beef to use for jerky, describes the equipment necessary to make jerky, shows how to build your own smoker/dehydrator/cooker, and presents photographs demonstrating how to prepare the meat for drying. The recipes will appeal to those who enjoy eating jerky, and the handy tips on the process will help those eager to get involved in making their own jerky.

BURRIER, LARRY. THE TEXAS LINK TO JERKY MAKING. AUSTIN: EAKIN PRESS, 2002. 62 PP. ILLUSTRATIONS. \$10.95 PAPER. ISBN 1-57168-746-7.

The Light Crust Doughboys Are on the Air: Celebrating Seventy Years of Texas Music John Mark Dempsey

A Rich Slice of Texas Musical and Broadcasting History Review by Dale Farris

Dempsey serves up a solidly researched, but also entertaining story of the phenomenon that is The Light Crust Doughboys.

From 1930 to 1952, millions of Texans and other fans faithfully tuned their radios to their favorite Doughboys' early-morning (and later, noontime) radio program, and turned out in droves to hear the Doughboys play live. The Doughboys are now recognized in music history as an embodiment of the essence of the "golden era of radio," as a result of their long-running radio program and extensive live performances.

Their original radio program began as a way to advertise Light Crust Flour, and their early impresario, W. Lee "Pappy" O'Daniel quickly learned how to exploit the power of radio to influence voters, eventually serving as the model for the governor character in the quirky Joel and Ethan Coen brothers' film *Oh Brother, Where Art Thou?*.

When their radio program ended, the Doughboys had to remake themselves. They explored various other musical genres, including gospel, for which they were nominated for Grammys in 1998, 1999, 2001, and 2002. The Doughboys continue to play together with versatility and talent, now offering themselves up as the "official music ambassadors of the Lone Star State," as declared by the Texas legislature in 1995.

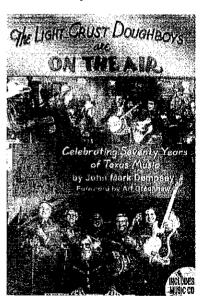
Dempsey provides an entertaining, complete history of this quintessential Texas music group, from their 1930s debut broadcast to their contemporary live performances. His rich story of this dynamic music group also serves as a corresponding story of how the music and broadcasting business was forever influenced by the unique talents of the Doughboys.

The author adds detailed descriptions of the Doughboys' recording sessions from 1936 through 1948 and a complete discography of their released albums, from 1969 to the present. In addition, he includes numerous researched references that are included in the bibliography, making this work highly useful to other musical researchers.

Further enriching the already solid value of this lively, important book is the bonus audio CD that contains seventy-two minutes of Doughboys music, from their early studio recordings to contemporary tunes. The music is organized into thirty tracks, including the original Light Crust Doughboys Theme and two later reprisals of this now famous piece of music.

Readers not already clued in will now better understand the Doughboys' influence on the now legendary support by Powder Milk Biscuits of Garrison Keillor's National Public Radio program *Prairie Home Companion*.

Highly recommended for all university music collections and all public libraries.



DEMPSEY, JOHN MARK. THE LIGHT CRUST DOUGHBOYS ARE ON THE AIR: CELEBRATING SEVENTY YEARS OF TEXAS MUSIC, DENTON: UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS PRESS, 2002. 320 PP. AUDIO CD, BIBLIOGRAPHY. DISCOGRAPHY, ILLUSTRATIONS, INDEX, NOTES. \$29.95 CLOTH. ISBN 1-57441-151-9.

John Mark Dempsey is a native Texan and long-time admirer of the Light Crust Doughboys. He currently works as a newscaster for the Texas State Network and as an assistant professor of broadcast journalism at the University of North Texas. Dempsey is the editor of *The Jack* Ruby Trial Revisited: The Diary of Jury Foreman Max E. Causey by the University of North Texas Press, Dempsey holds degrees from East Texas State University and a Ph.D. from Texas A&M. He lives in Denton, Texas:

Dale Farris holds a master's degree from the University of Texas at Austin and a bachelor's degree from Lamar University. He is a professional reviewer for Library Journal, Quality Press, and Quality Progress magazine; He is completing a degree in computer information systems.



John Mason Hart is Professor of History at the University of Houston. His previous works include Revolutionary Mexico: The Coming and Process of the Mexican Revolution and Anarchism and the Mexican Working Class: 1860-1931.

David J.
Schmidly,
president of Texas
Tech University,
has a
distinguished
background as a
mammalogist and
naturalist. He is
co-author of
several books on
Texas mammals
and the Texas
environment.

Empire and Revolution: The Americans in Mexico Since the Civil War John Mason Hart

Americans in Mexico Review by Dale Farris

John Mason Hart presents a magisterial, sweeping chronicle of the economic and social connections between the two nations of Mexico and the United States, and that also illuminates the course of events that made the United States a global empire. Having spent twelve years researching this book, he brings to light sources not noted elsewhere and adds an important work to the growing interest in U.S.—Mexico relations.

Beginning just after the U.S. Civil War, Hart traces the activities of an elite group of financiers and industrialists who, sensing opportunities for wealth to the south, began to develop Mexico's infrastructure. He charts their activities through the pivotal regime of Porfirio Diaz, when Americans began to gain ownership of Mexico's natural resources, and through the Mexican Revolution, when Americans lost many of their holdings.

He concentrates more on the hidden interactions between Americans and Mexicans, especially on the unfolding story of industrial production in Mexico for export to the United States. Throughout, this impressive analysis highlights the development and expansion of the American railroad, oil, mining, and banking industries, and he shows how the export of the "American Dream" has shaped attitudes about Mexico. In the end, he presents his careful cautions of the role of NAFTA and continuing Mexican prosperity, if the country can manage to avoid the pitfalls that trapped the Diaz program that was driven by foreign capital and government expenditures.

The story is often dramatic, and this always fascinating analysis fills a gap in knowledge about the truth of the long, complex relationship between the United States and Mexico. Highly recommended for all university library history collections,

especially those with collections about international economics.

HART, JOHN MASON. EMPIRE AND REVOLUTION:
THE AMERICANS IN MEXICO SINCE THE CIVIL WAR.
BERKELEY: THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA PRESS,
2002. 688 PP. APPENDIXES, BIBLIOGRAPHY,
ILLUSTRATIONS, INDEX, MAP, NOTES. \$39.95
CLOTH, ISBN 0-520-22324-1. 2001027815.

Texas Natural History: A Century of Change David J Schmidly

Mammals: Patterns of Change Review by Dale Farris

Author Schmidly states, "The purpose of this massive book is to look back at the 20th century and evaluate what has happened to the natural history of Texas during this period," and in this latest oversized work, he focuses on mammals to illustrate the major patterns of biological change that have occurred in Texas in the twentieth century.

In 1905, the U.S. Bureau of Biological Survey (forerunner of today's U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service) surveyed the flora and fauna of Texas, emphasizing mammals as the target group. Vernon Bailey, leading mammalogist of his time, summarized the results of this survey in the Biological Survey of Texas, published as No. 25 of the North American Fauna series. Since that book, up till now the only comprehensive study of Texas natural history, has been out of print for more than seventy-five years, Schmidly's new work puts the Bailey work in context and cross-references the original work with updated scientific nomenclature and current ranges and habitats of the mammals first described nearly one hundred years before.

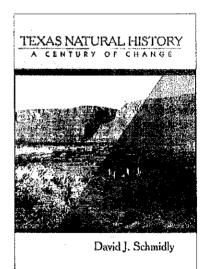
More than a comprehensive biological review of Texas, and more than a tremendous resource to biologists and natural historians, Schmidly's major work provides researchers sound scholarship that suggests how we can learn from past mistakes and become better stewards of the rich heritage found in the land and life of Texas.

Much of the work is devoted to a reprinting of Bailey's 1905 publication, and in addition, Schmidly includes historical background of that survey, and provides a modern interpretation (Continued on page seven)

(Continued from page six) of its scientific conclusions. Schmidly's work is organized into seven chapters, including an introduction to the Bailey survey, a reprinting of the original survey with references to endnote numbers that refer to annotations provided in chapter three, a description of Texas landscapes during the period of that survey, an overview of the major land cover and land-use changes in Texas in the twentieth century following the Bailey survey, and Schmidly's perspective on the major changes that have characterized mammals in Texas during the twentieth century. The final chapter presents Schmidly's views on what likely will be in store in terms of conservation efforts in Texas in the twenty-first century.

Photographs from the early years of the twentieth century and maps of the distribution of mammals then and now illustrate this volume that also includes a cross-reference list of scientific names and common names of Texas mammals and plants, and an extensive reference list. This book will give Texans a close and authoritative view of how their land once looked. More importantly, it will tell them what has happened to their wildlife heritage and what they might do to protect it in the future.

This reference work is a definite must for all university libraries supporting the life sciences, natural sciences, and ecology curriculum.



SCHMIDLY, DAVID J. TEXAS NATURAL HISTORY: A CENTURY OF CHANGE; LUBBOCK: TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2002. 576 PP. APPENDIX, BIBLIOGRAPHY, ILLUSTRATIONS, INDEX, MAPS. \$39.95 CLOTH, ISBN 0-89672-469-7. 2001004909.

Trees, Shrubs and Cacti
of South Texas
James H. Everitt
D. Lynn Drave
Robert I. Lonard

Guidebook's Graphics Add to Its Appeal Review by Mary M. Fisher

The eye-catching front and back of this revised edition with its vertical titling, trio of color photos and more than ample white space promises that graphics will be emphasized inside. The page layouts live up to that promise. Nearly two hundred color photographs, taken at the flowering or fruiting stage and stretched across the top each page, add visual impact to what could have been just another ordinary guidebook. Succinct descriptions of the nearly 180 species—twelve more that in the earlier edition—include family, scientific and common names; range and habitat; a general description; and value and uses to wildlife and livestock. (We learn, for example, that livestock and white-tail deer both browse frequently on desert olive and that rattlebrush is poisonous to livestock). The plants listed range from the rare star cactus to the common retama. Though most are natives, the authors also included a few plants that have escaped into the wild and flourished. In most cases, ample white space is left at the bottom of each page, enhancing graphic appeal. While the book focuses on fourteen South Texas counties, many of the plants listed range farther in and beyond Texas. Thus the snappy looking field guide, authoritatively written by the authors of a guide to herbaceous plants in the same region, will appeal to a wide audience of ranchers, laymen and scientists. All of them will no doubt appreciate the practical glossy coated cover as well as the plant keys, glossary, bibliography and index.

EVERITT, JAMES H., D. LYNN DRAVE, AND ROBERT I. LONARD. TREES, SHRUBS AND CACTI OF SOUTH TEXAS. REVISED EDITION. LUBBOCK: TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2003. 264 PP. BIBLIOGRAPHY, GLOSSARY, ILLUSTRATIONS, INDEX, \$19.95 PAPER. ISBN 0-89672-473-5. 2001005009.



James H. Everitt is range scientist with the Kika de la Garza Subtropical Agricultural Research Center in Weslaco, Texas.

D. Lynn Drave is director of the Rob & Bessie Welder Wildlife Foundation in Sinton, Texas.

Robert I. Lonard is professor of Biology at the University of Texas-Pan American in Edinburg.

Mary M. Fisher, an award-winning journalist and author of a children's book, *Rosita's Bridge*, is a school administrator.

Geoff Winningham is best known for his six books and three documentary films relating to Texas and Mexican culture, including Friday Night in the Coliseum, a study of professional wrestling, and Rites of Fall, his now classic book on high school football in Texas. He also published A Place of Dreams, a look at the city of Houston at the time of its 150th anniversary and In the Eye of the Sun, a photographic study of popular Mexican fiestas, Winningham is a professor of art at Rice University, where he has taught photography in the Department of Art and Art History since 1969.

Along Forgotten River: Photos of Buffalo Bayou and the Houston Ship Channel, 1997-2001 with Accounts of Early Travelers to Texas, 1767-1858 Geoff Winningham

Book Describes Buffalo Bayou in Words and Pictures

Review by Mary M. Fisher

When Nicholas Clopper came in 1828 from Ohio to Texas to inspect the land he had bought, he was struck by the beauty of Buffalo Bayou, which he referred to as an "enchanting little stream." As the title of this evocative photographic book suggests, today it is a mostly forgotten river even though it passes through one of the largest cities in the country. Now, thanks to Rice University art and photography professor Geoff Winningham, readers can witness its beleaguered beauty in eighty-two black and white photographs. Over a five year period, Winningham photographed the Bayou and its environs from the Houston Ship Channel to the headwaters, a shallow lake he discovered on the plains near Katy. He also selected excerpts from accounts by a dozen and a half eighteenth and nineteenth century travelers- among them the aforementioned Clopper—to pair with the pictures. As Willingham's photographs attest, there are still some pristine vistas even in the heart of Houston. An image of a vine clad tree next to a stretch of water near Memorial Park proves the point. Others, such as a view of the Bayou under Interstate forty-five, vividly demonstrate how development has degraded the stream. Thankfully, a number of others, including the dust jacket photograph of the tree-lined Bayou with the downtown skyline in the distance, depict an attractive dynamic between the forces of nature and civilization. A master of the medium of black and white, Winningham uses light, shadow and reflections to create a shimmering sense of timelessness. Paired with early day remembrances, his powerful and often poignant images of the "forgotten river" bear witness to a beauty that, despite the ravages of encroachment, endures.



WINNINGHAM, GEOFF, ALONG FORGOTTEN RIVER, PHOTOS OF BUFFALO BAYOU AND THE HOUSTON SHIP CHANNEL; 1997-2001 WITH ACCOUNTS OF EARLY TRAVELERS TO TEXAS, 1767-1858, AUSTIN: TEXAS STATE HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION, 2003, 160 PP. ILLUSTRATIONS, MAPS, \$39.95 CLOTH, ISBN 0-87611-189-4. 2002153956.

Stadium Stories: Dallas Cowboys Brad Sham

The Informal Side of America's Team Review by Howell H. Gwin, Jr.

This book is a collection of anecdotes about Dallas Cowboys. It provides personal glimpses of the team's development over the past twenty-five years. The great players from Don Meredith and Blaine Nye to Troy Aikman and Emmitt Smith are here. The great builders—Tom Landry and Tex Schramm, Don Meredith and Roger Staubach—are represented, as are the rebuilders—Jerry Jones, Jimmy Johnson, Troy Aikman, and the rest.

To Tex Schramm and Tom Landry, the image as "America's Team" was as important as the team's record. Players who furthered that image (Roger Staubach and Chad Hennings) were idolized; those who did not (Duane Thomas and Thomas "Hollywood" Henderson) were quickly replaced. Jerry Jones admits that this image is the main reason he bought the Cowboys and even now he seems surprised at the outcry which followed his unceremonious firing of Tom Landry. There is a happy ending, though, as Tom Landry and Tex Schramm were added to the "Ring of Honor" in Cowboy Stadium. With the team's redemption under Bill Parcells, all once more appears serene in Cowboyland.

As the voice of the Cowboys for twenty-five (Continued on page nine)

(Continued from page eight) years, Sham speaks with affection and authority about the great, the near-great and the others. His stories give the personal side of the Cowboy saga.

The book is suitable for anyone with an interest in the Cowboys. In view of its brevity and its price, however, it would best fit in a larger library with a large clientele.

SHAM, BRAD. STADIUM STORIES DALLAS COWBOYS. GUILFORD: THE GLOBE PEQUOT PRESS, 2003, 166 PP. ILLUSTRATIONS. \$8.95 PAPER. ISBNO-7627-2759-43

Woman in the Great Outdoors: Adventures in the National Park Service Melody Webb

A Woman Invades a Man's World Review by Joan T. Hollier

The American people are custodians of some of the most beautiful natural areas on the earth's surface, the locations designated as national parks. Yet, according to writer Melody Webb, we are loving our national parks to death through inappropriate use and unskilled management. "The greatest threat to the national parks is ignorance of what is happening to them," says Webb. In her recently published book, A Woman in the Great Outdoors: Adventures in the National Park Service, the author tells about her experiences in the wilderness, her work as a public historian, her role as historian of the Southwest Region in Santa Fe, and her career as a National Park Service superintendent. She hopes her book will elevate awareness of the way in which national parks "our national treasures, the nation's crown jewels" are managed and how these unique treasures are threatened.

A Woman in the Great Outdoors is a two-fold story: an account of a woman entering the "man's world" of the wilderness and the testimony of one who succeeded in promoting important changes in national park management. Stories describe Webb's adventures floating down Alaska's Yukon

River, revamping the Lyndon B. Johnson Historical Park, and influencing policy for reintroducing native species and coping with snowmobiles in Yellowstone National Park and the Grand Tetons. This lady wasn't just there when it happened--she helped call the shots.

I devoured the pages describing Ms. Webb's personal background and experiences, believing that if one woman can do it, so can others. How does one of five sisters grow up a "tomboy" attracted to rugged experiences such as joining Outward Bound, climbing the Chilkoot pass in Alaska, exploring the Yukon alone with a trapper- guide, working as a volunteer fireman in Santa Fe, and climbing the highest peak in the Teton range? Even as she writes about working in areas that had traditionally been assigned to men, Webb never wavers from a feminine introspection and awareness of the impact of her personality on her professional life. Early in her career as an historian in Alaska, her attempts to assert herself in project management areas caused her to be called "opinionated, dogmatic, adversarial, stubborn, and tactless." she writes. But the author was not deterred from setting goals, building a team, dealing with sticky problems, and moving on in her career at appropriate points.

In the area of park management, Ms. Webb reviews national policy for the parks from Gerald Ford's administration to the Clinton era showing the impact of capriciously shifting policies and practices that reflected attitudes of the chief executive and his Interior Secretary. She traces the shift in general policy from one of providing enjoyment to visitors by "making the parks accessible, enjoyable, and comfortable" to a management style focused on scientific research and sound ecological principles.

Webb's most exciting and fulfilling experience, she claims, was serving as superintendent of the Lyndon B. Johnson National Historic Site. In that location she worked to build a harmonious working relationship with everyone from seasonal workers and maintenance people to her personal staff and important political figures. The final evaluation of her work at this site confirmed her belief in teamwork as the key to successful park management and in her own ability to achieve that.

Enjoying a rewarding experience in Texas likely (Continued on page ten)

Brad Sham has been an announcer for the Dallas Cowboys Radio Network. KLUV-FM. for twenty-five years-seventeen seasons of play-byplay and eight seasons of color commentary. He has been named Texas Sportscaster of the Year eight times. He lives in Coppell, Texas.

Melody Webb
received her
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from the
University of
New Mexico, She
is also the author
of Yukon: The Last
Frontier. She
resides in
Georgetown,
Texas:

Dr. Howell H. Gwin, Jr. is professor of ancient and medieval history at Lamar University. His interests include music, aviation, medical education, and reading fiction.

As a free lance writer, Joan T. Hollier submits advance stories for various organizations, feature stories, and a travel column, "RV With Me," Her book reviews and other stories appear regularly in Georgetown's Williamson County Sun.



Cindy Weigand of Georgetown is an award-winning author and amateur historian. She has several published works. Her most recent acclamation is The DALTON Pen Award of Merit for her article "Vankee Doodle Gals of World War II" published in Texas Co-op Power. Texas Women in World War II is her first book.

Linda Lipscomb is a children's book author and freelance writer residing in Georgetown. (Continued from page nine) colored Ms. Webb's desire to return here in retirement. In her work as public historian she attended writers' conferences where she met her future husband, historian and writer Robert Utley. After they married, Mr. Utley followed her to various assignments as he wrote a long list of bestsellers, including the definitive book on the Texas Rangers, Lone Star Justice.

After retirement, they built a dream house in Georgetown where they continue their work as historian-writers while advocating preservation of sites not only to permit visitor enjoyment, but also to retain tracts of wilderness as an important part of our national heritage. Ms. Webb continues to be actively involved as an advocate for natural historic areas under management of the federal government.

WEBB, MELODY. A WOMAN IN THE GREAT.
OUTDOORS: ADVENTURES IN THE NATIONAL,
PARK SERVICE, ALBUQUERQUE: UNIVERSITY OF
NEW MEXICO PRESS, 2003, 286 PP. \$39.95
CLOTH. ISBN 0-8263-3175-0.

Texas Women in World War II Cindy Weigand

Texas Women Bound for Duty By Linda Lipscomb

World War II newsreels documented one of most traditional roles that women played during wartime, nursing wounded soldiers in remote make-shift hospitals. Though women's participation in the military has grown significantly since then, many people do not realize the extent to which women actually were involved during that war.

Texas Women in World War II chronicles the experiences of twenty-seven Texas women who served in the Women's Army Corps, Women's Air Force Service Pilots, Women's Auxiliary Ferrying Squadron, Women Accepted for Voluntary Emergency Service, and Women's Reserve of the Coast Guard. Many also worked as Army Nurses, Navy Nurses, and representatives of the American Red Cross and Civil Air Patrol. The book captures the veterans' memories of service, which often were brushed aside after the war.

Each story is supported with "then and now" photographs that help establish a sense of individuality and continuity over time. Using individual accounts of historical events, Weigand manages to pull these lives together while documenting the separate accomplishments of each woman.

"Born on the heels of World War I and having grown up during the Great Depression, life hadn't been easy for these women, yet they wanted to serve their country to preserve the ideals they held dear. Each individual intended to pay her debt, even if it meant at the cost of her life," writes Weigand.

Women tell their stories of life as airplane mechanics and pilots during the war. After planes had been repaired, they took them up for "slow-time," flying straight and level and slow to make sure they were operating correctly. Others ferried aircraft from closed bases, transported personnel to different bases, or towed flag-like cloth targets for cadets to fire at so they could practice aerial gunnery.

Navy and Army Nurses describe the carnage they saw while working with wounded patients, caring for soldiers who lost legs, were burned, or suffered brain damage. Rather than letting their patients know they felt sorry for them, the nurses tried to ignore the illness and focus on the person and do what they could to keep the soldiers' minds off the war.

One Army Nurse reflected on the three years spent as a prisoner of war in Santo Tomas, an internment camp in the Philippines. Others recalled having performed surgeries by the light of Coleman lanterns as the Japanese were bombed the camp.

Members of Women Accepted for Voluntary Emergency Service recall ferrying mail across the U.S. and sorting it to send overseas. Others remember the concessions made allowing them to even be in the Navy in the first place. One Marine who served as an electrician expressed the difficulties many encountered during boot camp because the country was in the middle of war and there was not time to learn more than the basic foundations.

As the women recall specific dates and times during the war, many of their lives seem intertwined. In particular, women who worked (Continued on page eleven)

(Continued from page ten) with the Woman's Army Corps were brought together through their work with one woman, Oveta Culp Hobby, director of the Woman's Army Auxiliary Corps. Born in Killeen, Ms. Hobby became the wife of Texas governor William Hobby, but she was destined to become a leader on her own by virtue of her accomplishments.

Texas Women in World War II includes joyful stories, but there are just as many stories of horrific events. Many women remember precisely where they were and what they were doing on December 7, 1941 when the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor, on April 12, 1945 when President Roosevelt died, and on September 2, 1945 when the Japanese signed the surrender agreement.

Weigand's book concludes with a brief timeline of World War II in Europe and a chronology of events at the Philippine Islands and the Santo Tomas internment camp.

Anyone interested in war history will be impressed with the coverage given to this important period seen through the eyes of those who have not, until now, spoken much about a different side of war. This book is highly recommended to young readers interested in learning more about the jobs women held during war years.

WEIGAND, CINDY. TEXAS WOMEN IN WORLD WAR II, BLUE RIDGE SUMMIT: REPUBLIC OF TEXAS PRESS, 2003. 280 PP. \$18.95 PAPER. ISBN 1556229488.

Lone Star Confederate George Skoch Mark W. Perkins

Robert Campbell of the Fifth Texas Infantry

Review by Max Loges

Lone Star Confederate is a first-hand record of a young soldier's experience in the early days of the Civil War written shortly after the war had in ended. The author, Robert Campbell, was a member of Hood's famous Texas Brigade and was a native of Houston. The narrative primarily concerns Campbell's experiences with the brigade in the battles around Richmond during the spring of 1862 and Second Bull Run in August of 1862 where he was wounded. Additional letters and an article that Campbell most likely wrote for *The Land We Love* have also been included as appendix items. Their chief historical significance is that the article is one of the main sources for the often quoted line of Robert E. Lee ("Texans always move them.") concerning the valor of the Texas Brigade.

While not as captivating or as thorough as Sam Watkins' "Co. Aytch" or Elisha Hunt Rhodes' *All for the Union*, the story is an interesting picture of the Texas Brigade written by an obviously educated man whose memories are still fresh.

The editors have done a fine job of introducing Robert Campbell and explaining how the manuscript came to be found. They have also provided abundant explanatory endnotes that give additional information about men, places, and events mentioned by the author along with accurate causalities for the various engagements. I recommend this book for anyone interested in Texas' contribution to the Civil War.

SKOCH, GEORGE, AND MARK W. PERKINS, EDS. LONE STAR CONFEDERATE, COLLEGE STATION: TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2003. 192 PP. APPENDIX, BIBLIOGRAPHY, INDEX, MAPS. \$27.50 CLOTH, ISBN 1-58544-238-0. 2002014491.

Ollie Jolly, Rodeo Clown Jo Harper

Ollie Jolly Saves the Day Review by JoAn W. Martin

Everyone who meets Ollie Jolly cannot help but smile. He chuckles, has kinky red hair and that kind of cute and freckled face. But Shoate Shotley, a loathsome character, abhors him. Why? Because everyone else loves him.

In addition to suffering Shotley's hatred, Miss Tut Tuttle, the meanest teacher in town, takes the starch out of Ollie. She gives him cold feet and turns him into a chicken. When she assigns her students to write a paper about what they want to be when they grow up, Ollie is desperate for an idea.

The rodeo comes to town, and when Ollie Jolly meets Limber Lem, he has an inspiration. Limber (Continued on page twelve)



George Skoch, from Fairview Park, Ohio, has written several books and articles and served as Gray magazine.

Mark W. Perkins is a member of the Kent Civil War Society and a Civil War reenactment group that portrays the Fifth Texas Infantry, Company A. He lives in Copely, Ohio.

Dr. Max Loges is a professor in the Department of English and Modern Languages at Lamar University. He has published articles on a broad range of subjects including the American Civil War.

Former English teacher, Jo
Harper has
Written a string of hilarious
children's books and has received the Willa Cather and Wrangler

H. J. Ralles was born in the United Kingdom. Her first story was published in a New England camping six magazine when == she was thirteen = years old. She now lives in Dallas with her husband. two teenage sons and a devoted black Labrador. She is a member of Plano Writers and the Society of Children's Book Writer's and Illustrators. H.J. Ralles is also a Regional-Representative for the National Association of Women Writers.

JoAn W. Martin is a retired teacher from Baytown schools and author of a young adult historical novel, *Yankee Girl*. She has published thirty-five articles and numerous book reviews.

(Continued from page eleven)
Lim is the bravest man in the rodeo, saving the cowboys and making the audience laugh. If
Ollie becomes a rodeo clown like Limber Lem, he has found his future. True to his character, detestable Shoate Shotley lets the meanest bull in the rodeo out of his pen, and Ollie has to act fast to save the Dixie Cup Ice Cream Parlor and Limber Lem.

HARPER, JO. OLLIE JOLLY, RODEO CLOWN. PORTLAND: WESTWIND PRESS, 2002. 32 PP. ILLUSTRATIONS. \$8.95 PAPER. ISBN 1-55868-553-7. \$15,95 CLOTH. ISBN 1-558685529.

Keeper of the Empire H. J. Ralles

More Than a Computer Game Review by JoAn W. Martin

H. J. Ralles is at it again. Reading is back. Computer literate children will desert their computer games and be captivated by Ralles' third book in this science fiction series.

When series protagonist Matt completes Level 2 in *Keeper of the Realm*, the reader is naturally led to *Keeper of the Empire* in which Dorin, Matt's friend, challenges him to beat Level 3. Having previously survived two levels of existence in the game, the Cybergons in Zaul (*Keeper of the Kingdom*) and the Noxerans on Karn (*Keeper of the Realm*), Matt finds himself on the third level.

In *Keeper of the Empire*, the invaders are the most hazardous confrontation of all. The Vorgs, upon discovering that their planet is on a collision course with another star in six years, leave to find a home on Earth, Matt must decide how to deal with these large iguanna-like creatures which belong in a zoo but are straight out of a prehistoric tale.

Of course Matt's two old friends, Varl, his elderly mentor, and Targon, make their appearance in this third story and try to aid their companion. Finding himself stuck in Matt's computer game, Varl is rescued by Snake, a member of the Resistance movement who travels via jetpack. Snake takes him to a cliff home, safe for the time being from the Vorgs. Varl joins the Resistance and puts his scientific mind to work to help them rid Earth of Vorgs.

Meanwhile, Matt loses his laptop and finds out that he is in danger of being put through the desensitization process which turns humans into zombies. In a dangerous maneuver, he retrieves his laptop computer from an old barn. Now he can access the rules of Level 3 game, but our heroes get yet another poetic riddle. He, Targon and Angel have hope of joining up with the other humans who have not yet been desensitized.

Jesper of the Mount is a worthy antagonist, stamping out humans, or at least sending them to the Gilded State. But when Jesper makes a mistake and incurs the wrath of Gubala, the Great Leader, he dreads facing him. Unlike the other Vorgs, Jesper maintains a grudging respect for the cunning intelligence of the Govan, humans who are secretly trying to organize a revolt and reclaim their planet.

When Angel and her brother, Fly, find each other, Matt becomes homesick for his own brother, Jake. He longs for his help, remembering how well Jake played computer games. Using databases, screenballs, passcodes, search mechanisms, and cosmic locators, problems of a co-existence are solved by negotiation instead of war. Matt and his friends conclude that no species is all bad.

When Matt's mom bakes brownies, we relax at home from a strenuous adventure, but the sight of purple words across the computer screen hints that another book in the *Keeper* series is on its way. Ralles knows how to set a dangerous scene. She takes her readers step-by-step to the height of suspense, and players of computer games will see themselves as right in the middle of the game, rather than simply watching on the monitor.



RALLES, H. J. KEEPER OF THE EMPIRE, DALLAS: TOP PUBLICATIONS, 2004. 258 PP. \$9,95 PAPER. ISBN 1-929976-25-9.

Texas Vendetta Elmer Kelton

Young Texas Ranger Learns His Trade Review by Frances M. Ramsey

With an interesting cast of characters, Elmer Kelton fleshes out the history of the Texas Rangers in post-reconstruction Texas in this fifth in his Texas Rangers series. Private Andy Pickard, once Comanche captive Badger Boy, and bitter veteran Farley Brackett are sent to return prisoner Jayce Landon to Hopper's Crossing for trial where a bitter Hopper-Landon feud makes a fair trial unlikely. Judge Hopper uses Deputy Biglun Hopper to bully everyone into doing his will. Andy's mentor, retired ranger Rusty Shannon, re-enlists after hail destroys his corn. Scooter Tennyson, young son of a convicted robber, has been living with the rangers while his father was in prison. He aspires to be a ranger and is learning useful skills, but his father Lige returns for him, intending to rob a bank to stake their move to Oklahoma. Lige offers himself to Biglun as a sharp shooter. Biglun tricks him into making it appear that he has killed the sheriff. When Scooter is shot by the deputy, it is Old Shanty, a kindly former slave, who helps care for him. While Rusty and Farley are recovering from injuries, Andy must take things into his own hands to provide justice with or without the law. There is a hint of romance for both Andy and Rusty, and Scooter's father shows his love for his son by sending him to live with a good family. Various attitudes to government and the effect of the telegraph and railroads on the rangers effectiveness are explored. Kelton, seven time winner of the Spur Award, writes with care for historical accuracy and well rounded characters.

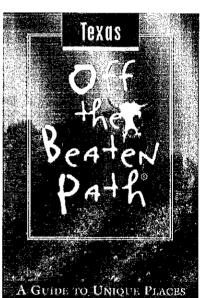
TEXAS VENDETTA

KGLTON, ELMER. *Texas Vendetta*. New York: Forge, 2004. 320 pp. \$24.95 cloth. ISBN 0-765-30572-0. 2003017352.

Texas Off the Beaten Path June Naylor Rodriguez

Texas Travel to Unique Places Review by Frances M. Ramsey

This travel guide makes interesting reading whether you plan a weekend get away, break up a long journey across the state, or learn more about your own area. The state is divided into eight areas: Texas Panhandle, North Texas, Piney Woods, Brazos-Republic Trail, Hill Country, Wildwest West Texas, South Texas, and the Gulf Coast. Each section contains a map of the area; history of the area; points of interest such as museums, parks, or structures; unusual local restaurants; and bed and breakfast accommodations. Sidebars list the author's favorite attractions, anecdotes, annual events, trivia, and bizarre Texas stuff. Rather than patronize franchise establishments, she recommends special menu items from locally owned eateries and describes the distinctive charms of smaller places to spend the night. Whether it is shopping or nature trails, museums or ranches, the author gives necessary information such as times of operation, telephone numbers, addresses, cost indications, and sources of further information. This is a recommended resource for both armchair and real travelers.



RODRIGUEZ, JUNE NAYLOR. TEXAS OFF THE BEATEN PATH: A GUIDE TO UNIQUE PLACES. ATH. ED. GUILFORD: THE GLOBE PEQUOT PRESS, 2002. 306 PP. ILLUSTRATIONS, INDEX, MAPS; \$13.95 PAPER. ISBN 0-7627-1244-9.

Elmer Kelton, of San Angelo. Texas, is a seven-time winner of the Spur Award, has earned four Western Heritage Awards from the National Cowboy Hall of Tame, and was named the Greatest Western Author of All time by the Western Writers of America in 1995. In 1998 he received the first Lone Star award for Lifetime Achievement from the Larry McMurtry Center for Arts and Humaníties.

Awriter for the Fort Worth Star-Telegram since 1984, June Naylor Rodriguez has also co-hosted a weekly food and travel radio show and is the author of Globe-Pequot's Ouick Escapes Dallas/Fort Worth Romantic Days and Nights in Dallas/Fort Worth, and Recommended Bed & Breakfasts Southwest.

Mark T. Adams isthe assistant director of the University of Texas at Austin-McDonald Observatory and lives in Fort Davis, Texas. He serves as sub-regional director for the Trans-Pecos for North American Birds, published by the American Birdina Association, and conducts Breeding Bird Survey 3 counts for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Karen Harden
McCracken, who
herself learned
birding from
Hagar, has
worked as a
newspaper
reporter, teacher,
and freelance
writer in
Rockport and
Corpus Christi.

Jed J. Ramsey taught math and science in Kansas high schools before obtaining his Ph. D. in zoology from Oklahoma State University. He was on the biology department faculty at Lamar University for twenty-five years before retirement in 1990.

Chasing Birds Across Texas: A Birding Big Year Mark T. Adams

Seeing Lots of Birds in One Year Review by Jed J. Ramsey

A "Big Year in Texas," in birding parlance, is the number of birds which one person can find and identify within the state of Texas from the beginning of January in one year to the last second of December that same year. Of course, the object is to find the largest number of species possible. The author, an astronomer by trade but an expert birder living in West Texas, was able to devote enough time to travel around the state during the year 2000, to attempt to count a record number. He traveled about 30,000 miles by car, and an additional 18,000 miles by plane in his effort. He was able to find 489 species, 92% of those known to be in Texas, while continuing with his regular work as the assistant director of the University of Texas at Austin--McDonald Observatory. His account of his travels around the state takes the reader from pineywoods to prairie, from seacoast—even out into the Gulf—to mountains, from panhandle to the Rio Grande valley, and from East Texas forests to West Texas deserts. This is a fine recounting of his adventures as he meets some of the leading bird watchers of the state, and exalts in the beauty of Texas. This book is most attractive to the birdwatcher, but the quest for more and more birds is engrossing and likable and would be of use in a high school or city library.

ADAMS, MARK T. CHASING BIRDS ACROSS TEXAS: A BIRDING BIG YEAR. COLLEGE STATION: TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2003, 224 PRILLUSTRATIONS, INDEX, MAPS, \$40,00 CLOTH. ISBN 1-58544-295-X. \$18,95 PAPER. ISBN 1-58544-296-8. 2003005681 The Life History of a Texas Birdwatcher: Connie Hagar of Rockport Karen Harden McCracken

She Put Her Town on the Map Review by Jed J. Ramsey

Connie Hagar was a native of Corsicana, Texas, and in her mid-life, decided to learn all she could about birds. She eventually started her "Nature Calendar," a listing of nature events (including birds seen), things which happened to her during that particular day, and other pertinent information. She visited the Central Bend of the Texas Gulf Coast when her sister needed saltwater and sunshine for her arthritis and enjoyed the birds there so much that she and her husband decided to invest in a group of rental cabins in Rockport. She took notes, studied birds, collected photographs, and grew to be the leading authority of birds in that area. There have been very few amateurs which made such a profound difference in the known migration routes, the vagrant species, the nesting habits, and the basic ornithology in any area of the world. She was extremely likeable, dainty and delicate, played piano, discussed literature, quoted poetry, and made notable collections of shells and antique glass. The outline for this book was found in the "Nature Calendar" which she kept faithfully from those early birdwatching days. The author guides the reader along every path and road around Rockport, introduces every ornithological expert of the country and shows how this little lady made Rockport the "Birding Mecca." This book is a good biography and would be of most interest to the birdwatching public.

MCCRACKEN, KAREN HARDEN. THE LIFE
HISTORY OF A TEXAS BIRDWATCHER: CONNIE
HAGAR OF ROCKPORT. COLLEGE STATION:
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2001. 336 PP.
APPENDIX: ILLUSTRATIONS, INDEX, MAPS,
\$29.95 CLOTH. ISBN 1-58544-144-9. \$17.95.
PAPER. ISBN 1-58544-164-3. 2001027373.



Carole Nelson Douglas Under the Magnifying Glass: The Irene Adler and the Midnight Louie Mystery Series



Chapel Noir

Irene Adler vs. Sherlock Holmes Review by Frances M. Ramsey

The author has taken one of Arthur Conan Doyle's characters from the Sherlock Holmes tales and given her fuller development. Irene Adler, charismatic opera star and sometime private inquiry agent, is the only woman who has gotten the better of Holmes. In this Victorian detective novel, rich in details of the period, Irene is living in Paris while her husband Godfrey Norton is away on assignment for the Rothschilds. She is called to a bordello to investigate the murder of two young women and protect an eminent personage who may have been present at the time of the murder. With her companion Nell Huxleigh she examines details which seem similar to the case of Jack the Ripper in London. Here they meet Pink, an American undercover journalist who uses the pen name of Nelly Bly. Sherlock Holmes arrives to take charge and tries to keep the ladies from intruding on his territory, but they keep finding macabre details and getting into dangerous situations connected with the 1889 Exposition in Paris. This volume ends with Godfrev's disappearance from Prague and Nell's kidnapping from the Exposition. She is being transported to parts unknown in a coffin. If you want to know the outcome, you must read the second volume, Castle Rouge (Review of Texas Books, Summer 2003). The bibliography indicates the extent of the author's research which is apparent in her use of detail making the suspense more real. Recommended for those who enjoy detective stories or Victorian

novels with strong female characters.

CAROLE, NELSON CHAPEL NOIR Cat in a Leopard Spot, Cat in a Midnight Choir, Cat in a Neon Nightmare

Midnight Louie Strikes Again –and Again Review by Janet Turk

In the Midnight Louie series, Carole Nelson Douglas offers a mystery-solving cat, Midnight Louie; its human partner, Temple Barr: Temple's love interest, Max Kinsella who is a retired counterintelligence agent/magician; a former priest, Matt Devine; and a homicide lieutenant, C.R. Molina. All of these characters' lives are intricately intertwined primarily as a result of the evil Kathleen O'Connor's vicious acts of sabotage, stalking, sexual predation, and murder. As O'Connor, also known as Kitty the Cutter, releases mayhem among the human characters, they must find a way to solve mysteries left in her wake, mysteries which generally suggest lawlessness on the part of Max Kinsella. While Max, Temple, Matt, and Molina attempt to solve mysteries and stay safe from Kitty. Midnight Louie must aid his human associates. Louie and his maybe/maybe not daughter Midnight Louise must search for clues, lead the human characters to correct conclusions, guide them to specific locales, and keep them from harm's way--all without the aid of verbal communication.

Each book in the fifteen book series presents recurring themes, which illustrate the connections between all characters, human and non-human. Likewise, each novel offers various points of view from all characters. Perhaps the most enjoyable perspective is that of Midnight Louie who often drops literary allusions and social commentaries on the foibles of humans in his speeches. Readers new to the series need not worry about not understanding background issues among the

(Continued on page sixteen)

USA Today bestselling author Carole Nelson Douglas has won an American Mystery Award and was an Agatha Award Nominee. She is a five-time 🔄 Romance Writers of American finalist and has received several Romantic Times awards in various genres including its Lifetime Achievement Award for Versatility, Douglas is also the editor of the critically acclaímed collection of short fiction Marilyn. Shades of Blonde. Douglas lives in Fort Worth with her husband and various pets.

Frances M, Ramsey is a retired librarian from the Beaumont ISD. She received her B,S in zoology from Kansas State University and received her library certification from Oklahoma State University.

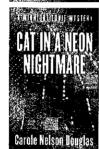
Janet K. Turk has been a lecturer of English at Lamar University for eight years. She teaches composition classes, distance education courses, and sophomore literature classes.

2.39 E

(Continued from page fifteen) participants since each book offers an overview in "Previously in Midnight Louie's Lives and Times." In this introduction, readers learn of previous escapades, characters' connections to one another, recurring themes, and background information necessary for understanding the multiple storylines. In Cat in a Leopard Spot, Louie and Max must save Osiris, a performing hig cat, from hunters who pay premium prices for canned hunts. The plot only thickens as the characters encounter a woman surgically altered to resemble a big cat, stumble upon a dead man who appears to have been killed by a wild animal, and seek to solve the underlying mystery of murdered strippers. In Cat in a Midnight Choir, "alphacat" Midnight Louie and Max hunt the mysterious and possibly murderous Synth, a renegade organization of magicians who are obsessed with keeping magical illusions safe from the public. Meanwhile, former priest Matt encounters Vassar, a call girl ready to rid him of his virginity, a trait which makes him highly appealing to Kitty the Cutter. In Cat in a Neon Nightmare, Vassar, the prostitute from the previous novel, is found dead at a plush casino. Molina seeks to pin the dastardly act on Kinsella while keeping her connection to Matt and the call girl a secret, Louic and Max search for clues







to the identity of the real murderer, and both attempt to keep Temple safe. As this novel closes, Kitty the Cutter, the bane of all the characters' existences, appears to be dead. This cliffhanger detail only leaves readers curious about what new or old nemesis will appear in future storylines.

CAT IN A LEOPARD SPOT NEW YORK: FORGE, 2001, 380 PP. \$24.95 CLOTH, ISBN 0-312-85370-X, 00-047711.

CAT IN A MIDNICHT CHOIR. NEW YORK, FORGE, 2002 350 PP \$24.95 CLOTH. ISBN 0-312-857-77-7. 2001058281.

CAT IN A NEON NIGHTMARE, NEW YORK, FORGE, 2003. 365 PP. \$24.95 QLOTH, ISBN 0765-30680-8.

CHAPEL NOIR. NEW YORK: FORGE 2001. 480 PP. BIBLIOGRAPHY, \$25,95 CLOTH: ISBN 0-312-85493-5. 2001040151.

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