



THE BILL GANZ WESTERN BAND. *Ridin' the Arizona Trail.* Bill Ganz Music Services, \$20, GanzMusic.com.

Suspension of disbelief is not a difficult chore for a 7-year-old kid, so I had no problem with the B Western movies I watched on my grandmother's TV back in the 1950s.

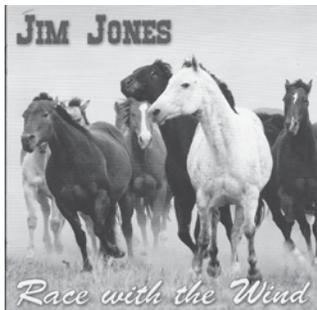
I did not think it unusual that Roy could clear leather in a heartbeat and shoot the pistol out of the villain's hand every time, or that Gene could rip off 10 or 11 shots with his six-shooter without reloading.



And when those cowboy crooners gathered with their sidekicks around the campfire at night to sing, it did not seem odd to me that they could produce the effects of a symphony orchestra with no more than a couple of guitars and a harmonica.

This CD, in which singer-guitarist Bill Ganz and his band team up with the Arizona Symphonic Strings, brings me back to those times.

I listen to these versions of "Tumblin Tumbleweeds," "The Cattle Call" and "Back in the Saddle Again" and suddenly I'm in Maw Maw's living room, on the floor, in front of the TV. And that's a good thing.



JIM JONES. *Race With the Wind.* Jim Jones Music, \$12.97, JimJonesMusic.com.

If you consider that Jim Jones is a Spur-winning songwriter and the Western Music Association's 2014 male vocalist of the year, the fact that this CD could pass for a best-of-Jim Jones compilation is well

worth noting. The 13 cuts include polished-up presentations of some of my Jones favorites: "Rustler's Moon," "Long May You Ride," "Smoke of the Brandin' Fire" (written with Alan Chapman) and "Race With the Wind," a Spur finalist song penned with Bruce Huntington.

But there are a few new ones here as well – "Common Ground," written with Andrea Renfree, about trying to find just that; "True Texas Treasure," a tribute to songwriter Guy Clark; and my newest Jones's favorite, the stirring and inspiring "On the Wings of the Wind."

E-mail Ollie at oreedjr@gmail.com and send CDs to him at P.O. Box 2381, Corrales, NM 87048.

Poetry

LAURA DA'. *Tributaries.* University of Arizona Press. Trade paperback, 79 pages, \$16.95, UAPress.Arizona.edu.

Seldom does one encounter such a moving work of poetry in an almost documentary style. Grounded in her American Indian heritage, Laura Da' carefully shapes language in a revelatory tone as she lays bare the realities of removal, allotment and struggle. Primarily set in northeastern Oklahoma, the dance of time and place sometimes catches one by the throat. The Shawnee experience of colonialism and modern-day struggle are reflected in these observations caught deftly by the poet. While reading the work, one is captured by chant and echoes of drums calling the reader back to a time and place imprinting a particular experience on Native America.

– Vernon Schmid

ROBERT AQUINAS McNALLY. *Simply to Know Its Name.* Grayson Books. Trade paperback, 66 pages, \$15, GraysonBooks.com.

This collection of moving poems is a splendid guide into the forces of nature and the creatures that abound within it. From whales to wasps, McNally deftly explores the minute reality of natural life. His use of language is masterful. It is as if an ancient psalmist praises the wonders of creation. One line, "wild music draws them out" could be the anthem for the whole collection. Unlike many books of poetry, this one should remain in the library so the reader can return again and again to touch unique sensitivity portrayed by the poet.

– Vernon Schmid

Juvenile

JAMES J. GRIFFIN. *A Ranger to Stand With.* Painted Pony Books. Trade paperback, eBook, \$8.99, \$2.99, 125 pages, PaintedPonyBooks.com.

James Griffin's understanding of younger readers is commendable. He seems to talk their language, understands their youthful exuberance and their often-bad judgments. Two of the younger rangers in Captain Quincy's Ranger unit, Nate and Hoot, are the best of friends. They stick together like glue, protecting each other's backs. Nothing can pry them apart. Well, maybe except a girl. Hoot's girl, Clarissa, decides to break up the boys friendship and nearly gets Nate killed. Captain Quincy and his Rangers are attacked by Comanches, outlaws and suffer through an unexpected severe snowstorm, all of which help teach young rangers what their mission is all about. This is an easy and entertaining

read, full of information that can make readers unaware that they are actually being taught about 19th Century heroes without having to sit in a classroom.

– Phil Dunlap

Fiction

GERALD BRENCE. *Ox in the Culvert.* Hodge Printing. Trade paperback, eBook, 288 pages, \$12.66, \$9.95, Amazon.com.

In 1851, Texas Ranger Ray Andrews loses his best friend and two other Rangers when the killer Sores Aguilar's band attacks the party in the dead of night. Devastated, Andrews boards a stagecoach bound for San Francisco. Meanwhile, Aguilar also journeys there and establishes an opium smuggling operation. After Andrews falls in love with Sarah Thomas, a preacher's daughter, he finds himself in a final, deadly confrontation with Aguilar.

PETER BRANDVOLD. *Once More into the Breach.* Five Star. Hardcover, 251 pages, \$25.95, gale.cengage.com/fivestar.

Fans of Peter Brandvold know what to expect from him: hard-hitting, rough-and-tumble Western action. The latest volume in the Sheriff Ben Stillman series doesn't disappoint. Trouble comes at the aging lawman from more angles than bad guys in a Chuck Norris kick flick. It will take more than Stillman's fast gun and accurate shooting to get him out of this predicament. The action is fast, furious and nonstop. If you like your Westerns tough and traditional, this one will fill the bill.

– James J. Griffin

PEGGY SIMSON CURRY. *So Far from Spring.* West-Winds. Trade paperback, 336 pages, \$19.99, GraphicArtsBooks.com.

Some novels provide pure pleasure from the git-go, and *So Far from Spring*, first published in 1956, gives readers everything they seek in a book: great story, believable characters to fall in love with or hate, and a grand setting. Peggy Simson Curry, Wyoming's first poet laureate, drew on her experiences growing up on a high country ranch near Walden, Colorado, to create the tale of Kelsey Cameron, who travels from his native Scotland in 1898 to work on a cattle ranch. His hopes of making a place for himself and his sweetheart and their daughter undergo all sorts of unexpected ups and downs and turnarounds. The couple's love for each other is sorely tested throughout these trials and triumphs, and their daughter learns life lessons from being raised around the cattle and the ranch hands and locals who teach her all the things – good, bad and ugly – that a young woman should know. What a wonderful treat that Graphic Arts Books is introducing Curry to a whole new generation of readers.

– Lori Van Pelt

STANLEY CRAWFORD. *The Canyon.* University of New Mexico Press. Trade paperback, eBook, 202 pages, \$19.95, \$8.99, UNMPress.com.

A collection of teen-angst anecdotes, about growing from a boy into a man and the desire to be noticed by the opposite sex – the opposite sex who is older and does not want a thing to do with you. Branded too young, too immature, girls are simply not interested, especially the girl who has captured your eye. While this is supposed to be a novel, without punctuation marks denoting who is speaking, it just doesn't quite do the job. If it is supposed to be all streams of consciousness, the injection of dialogue without denoting its speaker is confusing, making for a difficult read. The graphic sexual descriptions are clinical and without emotion leaving nothing to tantalize the reader.

– Sandy Whiting

RICHARD DAVIS. *Last Indian Summer: The Bloody Milk Creek Siege.* Five Star. Hardcover, 314 pages, \$25.95, gale.cengage.com/fivestar.

Richard Davis's book recommends itself to readers of Jeff Shaara, and the style is similar to Shaara's, with a well-documented historical event dramatically fleshed out, and with lengthy character backstories. The narrative follows a bungled Army attempt to squelch an 1879 uprising among the Utes, who responded with overwhelming force, besieging the troops for five bloody days before help arrived. Running parallel to the military action is the massacre of a dozen white men at the agency and the capture of several white women and children. The drama is dampened a bit by the certainty on both sides that Army reinforcements would arrive soon and prevail over the Utes, and some dialogue seems unrealistic. Nevertheless, it's an interesting tale, especially for military history enthusiasts.

– Loyd Uglow

PETER R. DECKER. *Red, White & Army Blue.* Western Slope. Trade paperback, eBook, 232 pages, \$14.95, \$8.99, WesternSlopePress.com.

Still trying to find his own path, Corporal Hiram Marlow encounters the world of brutality, unleashed by a man who is his superior, an all too self-righteous officer. Mostly set on the western slopes of Colorado, the hardships, trials and successes of living are lost in the forced dialogue and head-jumping between characters.

– Sandy Whiting

JOHN DUNCKLEE. *To the Harvest: A Novel of a Migrant Farm Worker.* Goldminds. Trade paperback, 222 pages, \$17.99, GoldmindsPub.com.

This is an empathetic portrayal of Antonio Beltrán, a young Mexican migrant farm worker who follows his father's footsteps across the border into the United States to work in the fields to support his family. Antonio marries Noemí and eventually decides the risks north of the border are too high. He stays at home to raise hogs. His trials provide

additional dramatic movement to the story and insight into the realities of farming south of the border. The late John Duncklee's *oeuvre* reflects his special affection for the under-represented stories of the American Southwest. This story, which Duncklee first tackled in his Spur Award-winning poem, "El Corrido de Antonio Beltran," is no exception.

– Tom Carpenter

BOB HERZBERG. *Borderline*. Rough Edges. Trade paperback, 218 pages, \$11.99, RoughEdgesPress.com.

Borderline follows the conflicts between whites and blacks through a series of murders, lynchings, legal chicanery and illicit love in the Colorado cattle country of the late 1800s. Black Federal land agent Will Landry must face down an unscrupulous cattleman who'll stop at nothing to get rid of small ranchers, nesters and anyone else who tries to thwart his attempts to fence in millions of acres of prime grazing land for his sole use. The land agent is at a distinct disadvantage. Many of the white locals are against him because of his color, and finding those who might back him proves formidable. He's no gunslinger. He carries no more weaponry than a pocket derringer and his fists, and with no explicit arrest powers, his road is rocky. Righteousness vs. a moral vacuum drives this story. An interesting take on one man's greed and his need to control a cattle empire.

– Phil Dunlap

ANNE HILLERMAN. *Rock with Wings*. Harper. Hardcover, 322 pages, \$27.99, HarperCollins.com.

A routine traffic stop ... a burned-out car ... a zombie movie being filmed at Monument Valley ... and a new grave, marked with stones. Yep, more trouble on the Navajo Nation as married officers Jim Chee and Bernie Manuelito work different investigations – with help from retired Lieutenant Joe Leaphorn, still recovering from a bullet to his brain. Anne Hillerman keeps the characters her late father, Spur- and Edgar-winning Tony Hillerman, fresh and vibrant in her second novel. She won a Spur for her first, *Spider Woman's Daughter*, and suffers no sophomore jinx. *Rock with Wings* is engaging and intriguing. Tony would be pleased.

– Johnny D. Boggs

CRAIG JOHNSON. *Dry Bones*. Viking. Hardcover, eBook, 320 pages, \$27.95, \$14.99, PenguinRandomHouse.com.

Who doesn't love a dinosaur, although ... turtles? Not so much. Especially after picking up *Dry Bones*, the latest in Craig Johnson's Longmire mystery series. The complete skeleton of a T. Rex, nicknamed "Jen" after the woman (and her dog) who discovered it, has been found on land owned by an elderly Cheyenne. But just who owns the fossil and has the right to sell it is questionable after Danny Lone Elk is found dead in a turtle pond. Murdered, as it turns out, and Walt has plenty of suspects. Complications ensue, involving a death in the family, and including his friends, his co-workers and even the previous sheriff of Absaroka County, Wyoming.

– C.K. Crigger

STEPHEN GRAHAM JONES. *The Faster Redder Road: The Best UnAmerican Stories of Stephen Graham Jones*. University of New Mexico Press. Trade paperback, 408 pages, \$24.95, UNMPress.com.

The Faster Redder Road, a collection of novel excerpts and short stories by Stephen Graham Jones (b. 1972) shows an impressive range of 21st Century fiction. "State" is a realistic story about high school football players in Odessa and Midland, Texas. "The Parable of the Gun" is a modern *noir* story about a man who thinks he is Jesus joining forces with a lunatic gunman in a department store. "Deer" is a shorter *noir* story about a boy named Rudolph and a girl named Bambi, 12-year-old misfits who are about to go on a shooting spree in the school cafeteria. "Adultery: A Failing Sestina" is a magical realism story in which the narrator's father brings home an angel from the horse trap and keeps her in the cab of his pickup. "Little Lambs" tells of a metal structure, the guts of a prison built in West Virginia in 1918 that has been transported, as in a dream, to the open country of Wyoming, where a crew monitors its movement. These selections and others hold the reader's interest.

– John D. Nesbitt

STEVEN W. KOHLHAGEN. *Chief of Thieves*. Sunstone Press. Trade paperback, 382 pages, \$26.95, SunstonePress.com.

Based on the factual story of how Lieutenant Augustyn P. Damours conned the Army, the Catholic Church and the New Mexico Territory out of millions of today's dollars, *Chief of Thieves*, a sequel to *Where They Bury You*, takes its time getting to the point. Main characters Auggy (who becomes Gus) and Lily Smoot, head for Washington Territory but get sidetracked by Indian attacks, a stuffed black bear, a stint working as ranch hands, a baby and Black Kettle, who opts for peace with the "white man." While the first novel won "Best Western" from the Indie Book Awards, this sequel needs to make transitions more obvious, dialogue more lifelike, and characters more three-dimensional to compete.

– Melody Groves

PAUL JOSEPH LEDERER. *On Cimarron*. Five Star. Hardcover, 368 pages, \$25.95, gale.cengage.com/fivestar.

A sprawling saga of settlers moving into Kansas, and the ensuing conflicts with the Kiowa tribe. At first, both groups coexist peacefully, if uneasily, but the War Between the States changes all that. Soon, the Comanches and Kiowas are once again at war with each other, and war with the white settlers soon results. The book is written from the viewpoints of two unusual protagonists, a Kiowa woman and a white one, who become friends. This is a book with characters well drawn, and which the reader will deeply care about. The author does an excellent job of telling his story while maintaining a fine balance between the traditional history viewpoint of whites taking the land from red savages, and the revisionist history viewpoint of all whites were evil, and all Indians were peace-loving naturalists, who never

fought with each other, or other tribes. There is much in this book for proponents of either view to both love and hate.

– James J. Griffin

M. JOHN LUBETKIN. *Custer's Gold*. Bookstand. Hardcover, trade paperback, eBook, 404 pages, \$29.95, \$2.99, BookstandPublishing.com.

After writing nonfiction such as *Custer and the 1873 Yellowstone Survey*, M. John Lubetkin has traversed to fiction in this account of Northern Pacific Railroad's 1872 and 1873 Yellowstone surveying expeditions through Dakota Territory and Montana. Lubetkin stays true to historical events and characters: the energetic George Armstrong Custer, the gallant chief surveyor and former Confederate major general Thomas Lafayette Rosser, and those who would stop them: Gall and Sitting Bull. Lubetkin has added stolen gold and beautiful women to the historical facts of the expeditions. *Custer's Gold* is an entertaining mix of fact and fiction.

– Bill Markley

P. MORREALE. *Bullpen*. Silk Label. Trade paperback, 224 pages, \$14.99, SilkLabelBooks.com.

Insurance investigator Steed Wilson and his Apache sidekick, Charlie Tall, are at it again in the latest in the series of Steed Wilson Western mysteries. Steed is called upon to investigate the death of a highly insured horse belonging to the family of baseball player Brent Lamont. Lamont has an eye-candy wife who gets lonesome whenever the team travels. She has been clubbing with a suspicious lot of rodeo performers. When their truck breaks down, she invites them to unload their cargo of angry bulls in a corral on the ranch. That's when bodies begin turning up. Can Steed and Charlie solve the mystery? P. Morreale is the pen name of Western novelist Phyllis de la Garza.

– Richard Lapidus

JOHN D. NESBITT. *Justice at Redwillow*. Five Star. Hardcover, 229 pages, \$25.95, gale.cengage.com/fivestar.

John Nesbitt is a premier practitioner of the Western mystery genre. In *Justice at Redwillow*, Jim Fontaine falls for a new arrival in town and tries to help her discover what happened to her sister. The mystery deepens as questions arise about who is involved and why certain people acted as they did. The narrative appears to move slowly at times, but the unwary reader will be taken by surprise when suspense builds as the complex and intertwining elements of the mystery deepen. Dialogue is smooth and often sounds like good old boys talking. Tender love scenes are understated but probably closer to reality for the 19th Century than the steamy scenes in many Westerns. A good read from one of the best writers of Westerns.

– Harlan Hague

CANDACE SIMAR. *Shelterbelts*. North Star. Trade paperback, 267 pages, \$14.95, NorthStarPress.com.

Enter the world of Tolga Township, Minnesota, a small

farming community of Norwegian immigrants, at the close of World War II. The main character, Tia Fiskum, echoes the thoughts of many of her neighbors when she says about her farm, "It's all I've ever wanted. To work the land for children and grandchildren, so Pa's and Grandpa's lives will count for something besides living and dying." The farmers have planted rows of trees to protect them from wind and weather, but these shelterbelts have not been able to guard against the events of a turbulent century. Tolga's people, who we come to know well, endure the drought of the 1930s, the changes wrought by two world wars, and the many hardships of life behind the plow. This is a story of courage and small miracles, told with clarity and power.

– Nancy Plain

JOANNE SUNDELL. *Arctic Shadow*. Five Star. Hardcover, 277 pages, \$25.95, gale.cengage.com/fivestar.

Set in early 20th Century Nome, Alaska, this supernatural story involves two teenagers – a boy with Viking ancestry and a girl of Siberian Chukchi descent – and their Siberian huskies. Throughout the tale, they are threatened by and fight against shadowy threats and mysterious dangers from an unknown world.

PAMELA NOWAK. *Escaping Yesterday*. Five Star. Hardcover, 281 pages, \$25.95, gale.cengage.com/fivestar.

An interesting and different setting, the real Elitch's amusement park and gardens at turn-of-the-19th Century Denver, frames this story of star-crossed lovers. Abandoned in Denver, Lottie Chase secures a job at Elitch's working with elephants and bears. Caleb Hudson, the garden manager, sees through her lack of experience and suspects she is not who she seems. Caleb and Lottie each have their own ghosts, including his war memories of Cuba and her uncle's abuse of her and the 10-year-old daughter passing as her sister, whom she could not claim in a past life. Heroes and villains abound in this fast paced roller coaster ride.

– Linda Jacobs

JULIE WESTON. *Moonshadows*. Five Star. Hardcover, 304 pages, \$25.95, gale.cengage.com/fivestar.

Nellie Burns, a young photographer from Chicago, arrives in Ketchum, Idaho, with the intention of building a career for herself. Her attempt at nighttime photography, moonshadows on snow, are groundbreaking for the 1920s. During a storm, she stumbles upon a body and photographs it. But the body disappears, and her negatives are stolen. In her quest to get to the bottom of the mystery, Nellie becomes mixed up with many off-beat, dangerous and sometimes generous characters. I found Nellie's behavior odd at times, although she can't be faulted for her determination to solve a mystery she believes the sheriff is ignoring. The story moves along at a good pace, with a setting that comes alive with cold and snow.

– C.K. Crigger

Nonfiction

BOB ALEXANDER. *Six-Shooters and Shifting Sands.* University of North Texas Press. Hardcover, 468 pages, \$34.95, UNTPress.unt.edu.

This large volume, another thoroughly researched work by Bob Alexander, is the most complete biography of Texas Ranger Captain Frank Jones I've seen. Beginning when Jones was only 16, the biography follows the dedicated Ranger through the ranks all the way to his murder in 1893 during the Pirate Island shootout. A formidable series of actual photos of Jones, many of his compatriots and scenes where important events took place accompany this volume. Alexander digs deeply into Ranger history with small details often missing in many Texas Ranger books. This book is a fine example of the author's expertise concerning his subject. While fairly long, Alexander makes all the facts so interesting, it's hard to put down.

– Phil Dunlap

BLAKE ALLMENDINGER. *The Melon Capital of the World: A Memoir.* University of Nebraska Press. Hardcover, 140 pages, \$21.95, BisonBooks.com.

The author had a rough childhood in Rocky Ford, Colorado. His father was cold, his sister standoffish. He had no friends. Most of all, his mother was cruel. Still, he went back after a 40-year absence to research this book. With so much unhappiness on every page, you may come to wish the author would just stop. And while the book includes a telling variety of stories from his youth and some interesting regional history, the arrangement is erratic – more a collection of random thoughts than an orderly narrative.

– Rod Miller

PHILIP F. ANSCHUTZ. *Out Where the West Begins: Profiles, Vision & Strategies of Early Western Business Leaders.* University of Oklahoma Press. Hardcover, 392 pages, \$34.95, OUPress.com.

Philip Anschutz provides biographical sketches of some 50 prominent businessmen who in some way influenced the development of the West, arranged in seven topical categories. Anschutz culled his selection from a large list, but his final cut omitted women, not even Elizabeth McSween, the “Cattle Queen of New Mexico,” who would have qualified for the Agriculture and Livestock section. While it might be argued that Andrew Carnegie, Henry Ford and J.P. Morgan had at best an indirect influence on Western history, other selections were of people who made their homes in the West. Each biography ends with a brief bibliography, a rather odd list that includes books more than a century old along with recent works. Entries include men who could be classified as robber barons, but Anschutz finds something nice about all of them, such as their charitable and philanthropic donations. The subtitle of “Early Western Business Leaders” stretches the definition quite a bit as some of the

men lived well into the 20th Century. It's an easy read that somewhat simplistically profiles notable entrepreneurs.

– Abraham Hoffman

GARY CLAYTON ANDERSON and **LAURA LEE ANDERSON** (editors). *The Army Surveys of Gold Rush California: Reports of the Topographical Engineers, 1849-1851.* Arthur H. Clark. Hardcover, 256 pages, \$34.95, OUPress.com.

During the Gold Rush Era the U.S. Army Topographical Engineers conducted a series of surveys of California, reporting on the region's geography, creating maps delineating rivers, mountains and feasible routes, and making observations on Indian tribes, including their customs, friendliness or hostility, and clothing (or lack of it). This book reprints these surveys in their entirety, making them more useful for researchers than the U.S. serial sets or previously published versions. Lieutenant George Derby's four surveys are accompanied by the reports of R.S. Williamson, Nathaniel Lyon, Henry W. Wessells and Erasmus D. Keyes. The editors have annotated the reports with brief biographical sketches and other information. The book includes reproductions of survey maps conveniently tucked into a back cover pocket as well as putting some maps into the text.

– Abraham Hoffman

ROSE MARIE BEEBE and **ROBERT M. SENKEWICZ.** *Junipero Serra: California, Indians, and the Transformation of a Missionary.* Hardcover, 504 pages, \$39.95, OUPress.com.

With Pope Francis in the process of declaring sainthood for Franciscan Padre Junipero Serra and the controversy surrounding whether Serra merits sainthood, this book comes as a timely source that places Serra in an 18th Century context. The authors do not see him as either a saint or cruel exploiter of native peoples. Their concern is less with the mortality rate of Mission Indians (often from epidemics for which Serra and other Europeans of his time could not know the causes) than with his constant struggles with Spanish bureaucrats and military-political officials. Sources on Serra's life prior to his arrival in Alta California in 1769 are scarce; the authors reconstruct that early period by making careful use of contemporary and secondary writings. A major virtue of this book is the publication of the exchange of correspondence between Serra and his rivals. The letters capture Serra's frustrations and ambitions, showing the reader that the issue of Serra's sainthood is far more complicated than partisans and polemicists have made it.

– Abraham Hoffman

JOHN BIETER. *Showdown in the Big Quiet: Land, Myth, and Government in the American West.* Texas Tech University Press. Hardcover, trade paperback, 352 pages, \$70, \$39.95, TTUPress.org.

Southwestern Idaho's Owyhee County is larger than some eastern states. Much of it is devoid of humanity as a similarly sized tract of the sea. The author uses these remote deserts and canyon lands to portray historic and

contemporary conflicts common throughout the West. Tensions between indigenous Indians and white settlers, clashes between cattle ranchers and sheep herders, the manhunt for mountain man and murderer Claude Dallas, taking on the military over establishment of a bombing range, and uncomfortable coalitions to protect the environment are among the struggles he recounts, all set against the received mythology that attempts to define the West and its place in American history.

– Rod Miller

PETER J. BLODGETT (editor). *Motoring West, Volume I. Automobile Pioneers, 1900-1909*. University of Oklahoma Press. Hardcover, 360 pages, \$34.95, OUPress.com.

Anyone interested in covered wagons struggling across the Great Plains will be equally fascinated by the pioneering efforts of a later generation that dared to travel across the continent in that strange new invention, the automobile. Peter Blodgett has assembled 18 contemporary articles – from motor company brochures, magazines and long-neglected archives – that tell of intrepid “automobilists” riding in vehicles without windshields or roofs, and traveling on poor to nonexistent roads. The authors describe their inventory of equipment and spare parts, the hospitality of farmers and ranchers encountered on the way, and the frequent mishaps that left them stranded in isolated places. While the authors generally see their journeys as an exciting adventure, taken at a time when the West was transitioning from horse to horsepower, these automobilists could afford the expense of taking months to set endurance and distance records. Working-class people would have to wait for a low-cost automobile that would transform their lives the way the expensive vehicles had done for the leisure class.

– Abraham Hoffman

GARNA L. CHRISTIAN. *El Paso's Muckraker: The Life of Owen Payne White*. University of New Mexico Press. Hardcover, 208 pages, \$45, UNMPress.com.

A loose interpretation of “Muckraker” is one who digs up dirt on others. In this case, the muckraker, Owen Payne White, was a serious newspaperman and historian who, amid his many years of sticking pins in the unworthy, allowed none of his critics to humble him. His dislike of FDR and the New Deal, prohibition, the Ku Klux Klan and hypocritical politicians, coupled with his love of the Old West kept newspapers and magazines coming back for more. White was born in 1879 while Indians were still raiding ranches (including his own family's) and outlaws (he was a teenager when John Wesley Hardin was killed by John Selman) were continuing their quest for illicit gains. Garna Christian's treatise on White's life is educational, easy to read, hard to put down.

– Phil Dunlap

AMY T. HAMILTON and **TOM J. HILLARD** (editors). *Before the West was West: Critical Essays on Pre-1800 Literature*

of the American Frontiers. University of Nebraska Press. Paperback, 376 pages, \$30, NebraskaPress.unl.edu.

This book's subtitle pretty well reveals its contents. The 13 articles written primarily by English literature scholars explore the definition of “‘Western’ American literature ... and when that designation originated.” Challenged here is the old paradigm that all Western history and literature centers on cowboys, cattle driving and other Hollywood-inspired subjects. Reminding the reader that some of North America's earliest writings are filled with tales and sagas of American Indians and French and Spanish adventurers leads to the proposition that “no single, unified idea or geography defines the American West.”

– James A. Crutchfield

CARRIE C. HEITMAN and **STEPHEN PLOG** (editors). *Chaco Revisited: New Research on the Prehistory of Chaco Canyon, New Mexico*. University of Arizona Press. Hardcover, 376 pages, \$60, UAPress.Arizona.edu.

The title is instructive. This is not an introduction to Chaco Canyon. It is a collection of articles written by Chaco scholars. It will be appreciated mostly by Chaco scholars. The articles are meticulously documented. The volume is the product of a conference called in 2010 to examine the latest research on the history and culture of the canyon. Each of the conference members, archaeologists and anthropologists, contributed an article. Subjects include agriculture, social interaction, ritual, Chacoans and the universe, and analysis of skeletal remains. It would be interesting to see a narrative volume for the general reader, which includes an introduction to the site, as updated by the scholarship in *Chaco Revisited*.

– Harlan Hague

CARLOS R. HERRERA. *Juan Bautista de Anza: The King's Governor in New Mexico*. University of Oklahoma Press. Hardcover, 308 pages, \$29.95, OUPress.com.

This is an immensely readable and interesting book covering the life of Juan de Anza, one of the most dynamic figures of late colonial New Spain. While providing background on de Anza's early life and career, this tome focuses on his years as governor of New Mexico, rather than his service as presidial captain in Tubac and the expedition to establish a land route to California. He was remarkable for his times in being “the king's governor,” that is, he neither sought wealth from office nor self-aggrandizement. Instead, he sought to carry out the will of a distant, absolutist, Bourbon monarch. Juan de Anza was born in Sonora at the furthest end of the Spanish empire and governed New Mexico its most remote province. Nonetheless, he did not take the path of residents of the Rio Arriba who considered themselves independent of the wishes of southern officials. He endeavored to carry out the king's will.

– Doug Hocking

CULLEN JOE HOLLAND (author) and **JAMES P. PATE** (editor). *Cherokee Newspapers, 1828-1906: Tribal Voice of a People in Transition*. University of Oklahoma Press. Hardcover, 578 pages, \$45, OUPress.com.

James P. Pate skillfully turns Cullen Joe Holland's doctoral dissertation into not only a story of Cherokee journalism but also a detailed overview of Cherokee history. Those with a newspaper background will be especially interested in the struggle of a nation to communicate its culture and defend its existence and independence. From New Echota, Georgia, to Indian Territory in present-day Oklahoma, a key element of tribal cohesiveness was the evolution and distribution of the *Cherokee Phoenix* and subsequently the *Cherokee Advocate*. A patient reading of the details shared by Holland reveals the unusual talent and dedication of early editors who maintained the dissemination of news concerning the Cherokee Nation. The volume is a significant addition to Cherokee historical archives.

– Vernon Schmid

NASARIO GARCÍA. *Hoe, Heaven & Hell*. University of New Mexico Press. Trade paperback, 340 pages, \$24.95, UNMPress.com.

Memoirs of an idyllic childhood 70 years ago can fascinate when they are a well-crafted window on the past, which this book is. Poverty can be enriching and character-building while growing up amid crops and animals on a small farm or ranch, especially if you're so isolated that you don't realize you're poor. Nasario García has written or edited 19 books on the barren desert of the Río Puerco Valley in New Mexico, where Hispanics tried farming into the 1940s until irrigation became impossible. This is a touching memoir of a man looking back on a boyhood of "eating, sleeping, and playing." Only ruins of ghost towns remain.

– Dennis Herrick

RON J. JACKSON JR. and **LEE SPENCER WHITE**. *Joe, the Slave Who Became an Alamo Legend*. University of Oklahoma Press. Hardcover, 352 pages, \$29.95, OUPress.com.

There are special instances in research where service and inspiration merge. Authors Ron J. Jackson Jr. and Lee Spencer White have achieved both attributes in their work. *Joe* tells the story of Alamo commander William Barret Travis's slave who witnessed the siege and the fall of the Alamo. While Joe was present at the Alamo, little was known about his life before or after that event. Jackson and White took on the momentous task of filling in the blank pages of Joe's life. In researching the life a slave the obstacles are overwhelming and the likelihood of success remote. Yet, their desire to uncover the past set them on a journey that neither of them could have imagined. *Joe* reminds us that minor figures in history need advocates. The authors should be applauded for their obsessive desire, seasoned discernment, brilliant writing and remarkable diligence in finding that which was lost.

– Cowboy Mike

MARGOT KAHN. *Horses That Buck: The Story of Champion Bronc Rider Bill Smith*. University of Oklahoma Press. Trade paperback, 212 pages, \$19.95, OUPress.com.

With three world championships in saddle-bronc riding and 13 trips to the National Finals Rodeo, "Cody" Bill Smith is a familiar name among rodeo fans. This book takes readers beyond familiarity to make us feel we actually know the man. The author, a rodeo neophyte, spent years understanding Smith and his sport, and the result is a well-researched, well-written book that gets it right. A new paperback edition of a hardcover original from 2008, this important book chronicles a legendary cowboy and his life in and beyond professional rodeo.

– Rod Miller

KEN LAMBERTON. *Chasing Arizona: One Man's Yearlong Obsession with the Grand Canyon State*. University of Arizona Press. Trade paperback, 364 pages, \$19.95, UAPress.Arizona.edu.

If you liked Richard Shelton's *Going Back to Bisbee* or David Robert's *In Search of the Old Ones*, you are sure to like *Chasing Arizona*. It is a lively romp through Arizona's legendary history marked by frequent visits to interesting ghosts and haunted sites. The author's goal was to see Arizona in a year, visiting its famous sites, parks and points of interest. It is tremendously entertaining and fun to read. Don't read this book for the history but rather for an introduction to places in Arizona you might otherwise miss. The author exposes himself to interesting nooks and corners.

– Doug Hocking

VALERIE SHERER MATHES (editor). *The Women's National Indian Association: A History*. University of New Mexico Press. Hardcover, 352 pages, \$45, UNMPress.com.

Not for the casual reader but of great interest to those concerned with female activists and Indian policy, this collection of essays recounts, in laborious detail, the history of the National Women's Indian Association. From 1879 to 1951, the organization was involved in the well-meant but misguided assimilationist movement to, as one contributor to the anthology put it, "de-Indianize" Indians. But, as the same author points out, "Indians were never brought into the conversation and asked how they envisioned their future."

– Rod Miller

ROBERT S. McPHERSON. *Life in a Corner: Cultural Episodes in Southeastern Utah, 1880-1950*. University of Oklahoma Press. Paperback, 304 pages, \$24.95, OUPress.com.

Sturdy people live in the Four Corners area. Although the author's 42 pages of notes, bibliography, including oral histories, and index focus on southeastern Utah, his sweep covers Colorado and New Mexico (where I lived a while). To be sure, this is not art or fiction. It is pretty serious and scholarly stuff. The book basically explores every aspect of Western (human) life, from vigilante to sheriff to organizing a commercial existence based on logging. There's a lot of church in there, too – at least church influence. You cannot read these pages without feeling the inner determination it took simply to carve out a life. Read-

ing it takes some work, but so does writing, and as a reference it holds the answer to the question: What exactly was life like?

– Edward Massey

BILL NEAL. *Skullduggery, Secrets, and Murders: The 1894 Wells Fargo Scam That Backfired.* Texas Tech University Press. Hardcover, 217 pages, \$34.95, TTUPress.org.

In 1894, using Wells Fargo, the ne'er-do-well George Isaacs shipped bags of money to himself from Kansas City to Canadian, Texas. The idea was that Isaacs's cohorts would rob the Canadian office of the bags, and Isaac would make an insurance claim for \$25,000. Sounds clever, but Neal makes clear the scam couldn't have worked because the Wells Fargo agent would have had to count the money for a claim to have been valid – and if he had, he would have found that each bag contained only \$100. In any case, when the Canadian sheriff grew suspicious of the toughs hanging around Wells Fargo, the toughs killed him, and the dubious scam exploded into a series of murders, and trials, which Neal thoroughly explores. Neal makes a very cold case suspenseful, and in the bargain offers up an insightful portrait both of the lawless Oklahoma Territory and the almost-lawless Panhandle.

– John Mort

ROBERT M. OWENS. *Red Dreams, White Nightmares: Pan-Indian Alliances in the Anglo-American Mind, 1763-1815.* University of Oklahoma Press. Hardcover, 304 pages, \$32.95, OUPress.com.

Covering the period from Pontiac's Rebellion to the end of the War of 1812, this book examines the fear that permeated the frontier settlements of the United States and the efforts of the federal government to ally with or placate Indian tribes in order to prevent a coalition of Indians that could result in a general war. Indian leaders such as Tecumseh, Dragging Canoe and Alexander McGillivray played important roles in negotiating from strong positions against a United States attempting to expand its borders. Robert M. Owens provides an unusual and fresh perspective in analyzing a tumultuous era in early American history.

– Abraham Hoffman

SEAN PRENTISS. *Finding Abbey: The Search for Edward Abbey and His Hidden Desert Grave.* University of New Mexico Press. Trade paperback, 230 pages, \$21.95, UNMPress.com.

The burial place of author, anarchist and environmentalist Edward Abbey is a closely held secret, known only to family and a few close friends. Here, the author mounts a quest to locate the wilderness grave in the deserts of the Southwest, based on clues gathered from reading and interviews. If he is to be believed, he found it – but he's not telling where. Abbey fans will enjoy the biographical information, much of it new, and the account of the search itself is enjoyable. The author does seem to spend an inordinate amount of time in self-indulgent introspection and philosophizing on the nature of mystery, journey and home.

– Rod Miller

GARY SCHARNHORST. *Owen Wister and the West.* University of Oklahoma Press. Hardcover, 244 pages, \$24.95, OUPress.com.

In this absorbing biography of the Pennsylvania-born, Harvard-educated writer whose 1902 novel *The Virginian* took America by storm and pretty much created the Western genre, Gary Scharnhorst focuses on Wister's Western writings, his friendship with Theodore Roosevelt and his successes and failures. An enlightening read, *Owen Wister and the West* could bring today's Western fans to reexamine their opinions of Wister and *The Virginian*, though probably not enough to bring Wister down from "the attic of American letters." And, yes, Henry Fonda did play *The Virginian* – on a New York stage in 1937 with a cast that included Dan Duryea and Harry Morgan.

– Johnny D. Boggs

C. GILBERT STORMS. *Reconnaissance in Sonora: Charles D. Poston's 1854 Exploration of Mexico and the Gadsden Purchase.* University of Arizona Press. Hardcover, 191 pages, \$40, UAPress.Arizona.edu.

Charles D. Poston, the Father of Arizona, had only passing acquaintance with the truth. His versions of the Reconnaissance varied with his audience, his age and his purpose at the time. Nonetheless, he might have been influential with business and government in opening Arizona to settlement and development. Boosterism and failing memory may account for some of the varieties of "truth" he told and wrote, but purpose at the time seems to have had more to do with it. In the final analysis, Poston's *Reconnaissance in Sonora* was more influential with historians than anyone else. It has led to great confusion in the historical record. C. Gilbert Storms attempts to set the record straight. He illuminates the place, time and politics of business and government, separating the real and not so real in Poston's work. This is an important addition to the library of anyone interested in 1850s Arizona as it shows how events in Sonora, San Francisco, Texas and Washington influenced its growth.

– Doug Hocking

WILLIAM WELLMAN JR. *Wild Bill Wellman: Hollywood Rebel.* Pantheon. Hardcover, 656 pages, \$40, PenguinRandomHouse.com.

This in-depth biography of one of Hollywood's mavericks, written by his son, details William Wellman's extraordinary life. The World War I fighter pilot made a name – and not always good reputation – in Hollywood, from silent to sound. His dogfight scenes in the Oscar-winning *Wings* (1927) remain among the best ever filmed. Although he did all genres, including war (*The Story of G.I. Joe, Battleground*), gangster (*Public Enemy*) and aviation (*The High and the Mighty*), Wellman also was more than adept in Westerns. *The Ox-Bow Incident* and the underappreciated *Westward the Women* rank among the genre's all-time best.

– Johnny D. Boggs

WESTERN DVDs

The Rebel: The Complete Series: The Collectors Edition. Shout Factory. DVD, \$59.97, ShoutFactory.com.

The fog of memory for TV shows we loved years ago can be pretty thick. What thrilled us once, made us beg to stay up late and grab the tie-in comic books, can be wincing when viewed after so many decades.

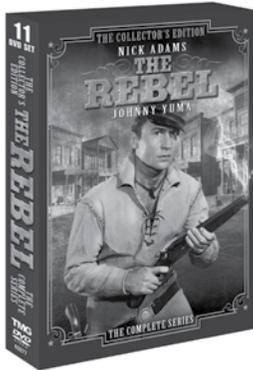


C. COURTNEY JOYNER

Not so *The Rebel*.

Produced, written and co-created by Western Writers Hall of Fame inductee Andrew J. Fenady, the entire saga of Johnny Yuma, now available for the first time on DVD, fulfills every memory of quality I've had for more than 40 years.

Working with his longtime partner, director Irvin Kershner (*The Empire Strikes Back*), Fenady guided *The Rebel* to be different than the other Westerns thundering into



living rooms in the late '50s. He knew the white-hat/black-hat formula wasn't true to anything, except "B" oaters, and with its background of a land healing after the Civil War, *The Rebel* was to be more complicated, more shaded, than its counterparts, and a perfect vehicle for co-creator Nick Adams.

Young, brash, mistake-prone and honor bound, Johnny Yuma was Adams's star-turn, and he makes the most of it in every half-hour show. *The Rebel* wasn't a Western about gunfights, although there are plenty;

it was about people, which is just what Fenady intended.



Andrew J. Fenady

In its 76 episodes, *The Rebel* is driven by its characters, and the grand actors playing them. In the pilot, John Carradine inspires Yuma to take his journey, with Dan Blocker the first villain he encounters, and Strother Martin giggling on the sidelines. In other shows, Warren Oates adds his lighter, eternally frustrated touch to "School Days," while Agnes Moorehead stuns as a mother grieving the loss of her son in "In Memoriam."

Adams's intensity is on full display in "Johnny Yuma at Appomattox," where it's revealed that Yuma almost assassinated Ulysses S. Grant on the fateful day Lee signed the terms of surrender. Written by Fenady, this haunting story personifies the lost art of the half-hour drama.

Taken from film masters, carefully gathered by producer Duke Fenady, each show is as originally aired, and includes Johnny Cash's hit rendition of the theme. An interview with Fenady by historian Bob Anderson, commercials and still gallery are bonuses, but the real treasure find is *The Yank*, a sequel to *The Rebel*, starring James Drury and never shown anywhere.

No memory fog here. *The Rebel* is the finest Western TV collection of the year.

C. Courtney Joyner writes in many formats, including screenplays, fiction and nonfiction. E-mail him at ol-court@yahoo.com.

BOOK NOTES

PATRICK DEAREN. *The Illegal Man.* TCU Press. eBook, \$9.99, prs.TCU.edu.

A revised version of Patrick Dearen's 1981 novel about an illegal Mexican immigrant who seeks work on a Midland, Texas-area ranch has been released as an eBook. Dearen won a Spur Award this year for his novel *The Big Drift*.

WILLIAM W. JOHNSTONE with **J.A. JOHNSTONE.** *Hell's Half Acre: The Butcher of Baxter Pass.* Pinnacle. Mass-market paperback, 324 pages, \$7.50, KensingtonBooks.com.

In Fort Worth, Texas, Sheriff Jess Casey has to protect an ex-Union officer who massacred paroled Confederate prisoners. The *New York Times* and *USA Today* best-selling Johnstone franchise continues its traditional, if somewhat quirky, series.

LEWIS B. PATTEN. *Lone Rider: A Western Duo.* Five Star. Hardcover, 212 pages, \$25.95, gale.cengage.com/fivestar.

Two short novels, *Where the Backshooter Waits* and the title story, from the three-time Spur Award winner who wrote more than 90 Westerns.

JAMES R. WALKER. *Crack of the Bat: A History of Baseball on the Radio.* University of Nebraska Press. Hardcover, 305 pages, \$28.95, NebraskaPress.unl.edu.

In this history of baseball on the radio since the 1920s, James Walker focuses on how America's pastime helped develop the radio industry and includes stories from Los Angeles, St. Louis and Iowa, where future cowboy star and president Ronald Reagan would recreate Chicago Cubs and White Sox home games for listeners.