

POETRY

JOHN G. NEIHARDT

A Cycle of the West: Bison Classic Annotated Edition

Bison Books
Trade paperback, 749 pages, \$44.95
NebraskaPress.unl.edu

The first copyright of material in *A Cycle of the West* was issued in 1915. More than 100 years later, John G. Neihardt's weighty tome still beckons readers. A new introduction and 148 pages of annotations explain and interpret the work. The rhymed couplets and liberal use of end-of-line enjambment lead readers on to a pleasurable reading experience. It is probable that this remarkable piece of American literature will continue attracting admirers for a long while and may even appear in different forms, such as with a recent motion picture *The Revenant*. This classic book fits well on the shelf of any lover of the literary West.

– Lynn Bueling

FICTION

PETER BRANDVOLD

Black Trails and Bloody Murder: Rogue Lawman: A Gideon Hawk Western Duo

Five Star Publishing
Hardcover, 309 pages, \$25.95
Gale.Cengage.com/FiveStar

The prolific writer of hard-edged, action-packed, R-rated pulp fiction is at it again with two novellas involving fast-shooting Gideon Hawk. In *Undertaker's Friend*, Hawk gives Cedar Bend's undertaker plenty of business and gives plenty of business to the marshal's wife. In *Bloody Canaan*, Hawk gives Idaho outlaw Quentin Burnett a hard time when not carrying on with Saradee Jones, Hawk's sometimes lover, sometimes rival. You get the general idea.

IRENE BENNETT BROWN

Miss Royal's Mules

Five Star Publishing
Hardcover, 233 pages, \$25.95
Gale.Cengage.com/FiveStar

In the Flint Hills of Kansas in 1900, Jocelyn Belle Royal needs a job. Her mother died when she was young, her father recently passed away, and she just lost the farm she had once saved. Finding herself destitute and determined to buy back the farm, she joins a mule drive. Jocelyn knows how to manage mules. When she talks, they listen. She is brave, bold, resourceful and all the good kinds of stubborn. When Wit Hanley, her boss, disappears and leaves her alone with the mules, she finds herself in repeated danger. She finds strength she didn't know she had but knew she'd need. Irene Bennett Brown's writing is kind, generous, suspenseful and adventurous. I really enjoyed her novel.

– Milana Marsenich

ANDREW J. FENADY

The Christmas Trespassers

Pinnacle
Mass-market paperback, 374 pages, \$7.99
KensingtonBooks.com

Originally released as *The Runaways* by Berkley Books in 1999, Owen Wister Award recipient Andrew J. Fenady's novel has been reissued under a new title with three bonus short stories told by Fenady's "Wise Old Man of the West." The larger-than-life creator of the TV series *The Rebel* and screenwriter/producer of the box-office hit *Chisum* tells a larger-than-life story about three runaways from an orphanage who take refuge on Shad Parker's land in post-Civil War Texas – and Parker is a crotchety old Scrooge who's handy with a rifle. Instead of Jacob Marley's ghost, Parker has to deal with a bank-robbing gang. OK, so this isn't Dickens or *It's a Wonderful Life*, but if you want to escape into a 1950s-style Western told by a one-of-a-kind storyteller, here's the perfect stocking-stuffer.

– Johnny D. Boggs

2019 Spur Awards deadline

Entry deadline for the 2019 Spur Awards, to be presented in various categories for original works first published in 2018, is January 15.

All material must be received by that date to be considered.

For entry forms and rules, log on to WesternWriters.org/2019-WWA-Spur-Awards-contest.pdf.

Winners and finalists will be announced in March. Awards will be presented during the WWA convention in Tucson, Arizona, June 19-22.



SCOTT HARRIS

Battle on the Plateau

Dusty Saddle Publishing
Paperback, 238 pages, \$8.99
ScottHarrisWest.com

Taking characters from his previous books, Scott Harris places them in Arizona's Grand Canyon. While the story chugs along nicely, readers new to these characters are confused. Brock Clemmons, with Sophie and Huck, leave Dry Springs, venture to the Grand Canyon, meet up with Paiutes who eventually befriend them. A battle at novel's end sets the tone for a sequel, which according to the author, is in progress. Confusion in tenses and first/third person makes the novel seem "amateurish," which it isn't, and typographical errors take away from the writing.

– Melody Groves

BONNIE HOBBS

So Wild the Wind

Five Star Publishing
Hardcover, 290 pages, \$25.95
Gale.Cengage.com/FiveStar

Fleeing the aftermath of the Civil War, Alida, a beautiful Southern belle, convinces her sister and brother-in-law into going along with her and her young son to Mexico to begin a new life. They shipwreck off the coast of

Texas and only Alida survives. She is rescued by an undercover Union soldier, sent to ferret out a possible nest of Southern sympathizers bent on an uprising. Together, they must rescue a little boy from a father whose mind has become unhinged. Although set in a Southwestern state during Reconstruction, romance rules in this novel that contains a definite Gothic feel.

– Vicky J. Rose

DIANA HOLGUÍN-BALOGH

Rosary Without Beads

Five Star Publishing
Hardcover, 310 pages, \$25.95
Gale.Cengage.com/FiveStar

A gem in the desert! *Rosary Without Beads* is an on-the-edge-of-your-seat sort of novel. Teenager Ambrosia Salazar, trapped in a traditional 1880s world where distinct lines are drawn between women’s and men’s roles, is tormented by the desire to be her own person, the shameful demise of her sister, the care of a retarded sister, death of her mother and assumed marriage to a neighboring boy. When William Bonney chances by, she falls for him – hard. Written in

multilayers, *Rosary Without Beads* puts the reader in the middle of the Lincoln County War and rural life in southern New Mexico where a farmer/rancher is indebted to a merciless landowner. Be sure to allow plenty of reading time – this novel is hard to put down.

– Melody Groves

JANE ISENBERG

Murder in the Melting Pot

Oconee Spirit Press
Trade Paperback, 207 pages, \$14.95
OconeeSpirit.com

Accused of committing a crime of which she is innocent, Miranda Breitner moves, 20 years later, to the Yakima Valley and starts a bed and breakfast. All goes well until one of the crew certifying the grape harvest as kosher is murdered. With crooked cops and other forces plaguing the valley, Miranda needs to step in before her B&B goes broke. Here’s a good mystery set in the major grape-growing area of Washington. Strong characters people the story, each with diverse backgrounds. The book deals with much more than murder, however. Jane Isenberg touches on the

problems of immigration, white supremacists and much more. She also manages to educate on Jewish culture. With a touch of romance, this well-rounded story is a fine addition to your reading list.

– Carol Crigger

CRAIG JOHNSON

Depth of Winter

Viking
Hardcover, 287 pages, \$28
PenguinRandomHouse.com
penguinrandomhouse.com

Cady, Walt Longmire’s daughter, has been taken by Walt’s arch enemy, Tomás Bidarte, leader of one of Mexico’s most dangerous cartels. With Cady hidden away somewhere in Mexico and soon to go on the auction block, Walt follows. He’s determined to rescue her as he dodges the U.S. border patrol, FBI, Mexican authorities and everyone else who is dead set against him. This is an extremely violent novel. Lacking Walt’s usual cast of backup characters, new ones abound. Some are as strong and loyal as Henry and Vic, but Walt has never been up against so many truly evil forces all at once. A Longmire book is always good. Perfect pacing, per-

PHIL MILLS JR.

Spur Award Finalist

AVAILABLE AT
AMAZON.COM & SHALAKOPRESS.COM
FOR MORE INFORMATION
ON THESE TITLES GO TO
WWW.WRITESWESTERNS.COM

COMING SOON
Bandit: The Cow Dog (Children’s Book)
&
Where The Wildflowers Dance
Sequel to awarding winning Where A Good Wind Blows

fect dialogue, perfect characterization. I do think Walt is getting a bit old for this kind of derring-do, considering the many times he has taken wounds that would kill the average man.

– Carol Crigger

MARK EDWARD LANGLEY

Path of the Dead: An Arthur Nakai Mystery

Blackstone Publishers
Hardcover, 207 pages, \$24.99
BlackstonePublishing.com

Arthur Nakai, an ex-Marine whose job was to hunt smugglers of both drugs and humans on the Mexican border, has retired to a quiet life. Or so he thinks. When his wife Sharon, a TV reporter, is kidnapped by a serial killer, he'll have to draw on all his former skills to save her. A chase from New Mexico to Montana and the Canadian border is a race against time, the ticking clock upping already tense action. Along the way, Arthur relies on friends and his wolf-dog and the end will leave you breathless. The book sustains a high level of page-turning suspense. Here is a villain with no redeeming qualities pitted against a determined hero.

– Carol Crigger

JOHN LARISON

Whiskey When We're Dry

Viking
Hardcover, 387 pages, \$26
PenguinRandomHouse.com

A striking novel, *Whiskey When We're Dry* is the familiar story of a young girl who dons men's clothing to head west and find her estranged brother, a feared and famous outlaw and leader of an outlaw gang called the "Wild Bunch." It is the classic quest novel following the traditional cycle that can be traced back to Homer's *Odyssey*. One could hang this novel out to dry for its use of familiar characters in that all-too-familiar cycle, but that would do it a severe injustice. It is a savage and brutal novel that rivals Cormac McCarthy's *Blood Meridian* with its brilliant and lyrical prose, character development and sweeping panoramas that destroy myths by revealing the darkness behind them. This is not a novel for light reading. It places a demand upon the reader that cannot be ignored.

– Randy Lee Eickhoff

RICHARD D. PALACIOS

Chon

MCM Books
Trade paperback, 261 pages, \$14.95
MCMBooks.com

Ricardo D. Palacios has written an interesting and unique tale of a young man, named Chon. As a youth, he was trained to be a Samurai. Chon is later ordered to become a Japanese spy for the emperor and sent to Mexico. In the days leading up to the attack on Pearl Harbor, when Chon loses contact with his superiors, he is faced with a monumental decision: Will Chon keep his oath to kill himself or will he risk becoming a traitor to his place of birth? The author has penned a story which once again reveals to us the great diversity possible in Westerns.

– R.G. Yoho

TOM RUSSELL

Folk Hotel

Frontera Records, \$15.99
FrontereaRecords.com

In 2011, Tom Russell and Paul Zarzyski won a Spur Award for their song "Heart of a Bucking Horse." That was on Russell's *Cowboy'd All to Hell* CD, which also included "Navajo Rug," in my opinion a contemporary Western classic, penned by Russell and Ian Tyson; and Russell's spurs- and quirt-fueled "Tonight We Ride."

Russell's cowboy music credentials are solid. But he's a storyteller who knows no boundaries, as testified to by this 14-cut



OLLIE REED JR.

CD that takes us from New York City to middle America, from Belfast to Copenhagen. He stirs up some trail dust here with songs such as "Leaving El Paso," in which a thirsty mountain lion wanders into a cafe; "I'll Never Leave These Old Horses," a salute to his compadre Tyson; and "The Light Beyond the Coyote Fence."

But all the cuts, sung or talked in that distinctive, hook-you-from-the-start Russell voice, are multi-layered spellbinders. My favorites, the most haunting, are "Scars on His Ankles," about blues musician "Lightnin'" Hopkins and the white boy journalist Grover Lewis who wrote about him, and "Harlan Clancy," a respectful look at an American working man who's tired of bad news shows, who's laboring hard and drinking beer and who "ain't no racist."

THE RIFTERS

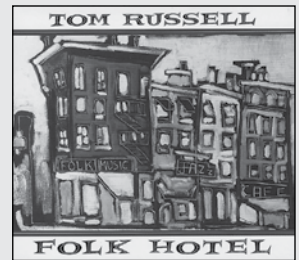
Live at Uptop

Howlin' Dog Records, \$20
HowlinDogRecords.com

The RifTERS are Jim Bradley, vocals and bass; Don Richmond, vocals, acoustic guitar, mandolin, banjo, fiddle, dobro and accordion; and Rod Taylor, vocals, acoustic guitar and mandolin. They take their name from Rio Grande rift, they live in the West, and Taylor retired recently after 34 years as a cowboy at the Philmont Scout Ranch in Cimarron, New Mexico.

But this is no cowboy band. The RifTERS plays songs by Bob Dylan, Steve Earle, Townes Van Zandt, Van Morrison, Guy Clark and Rodney Crowell, as well as originals such as "Before the Great River Was Tamed," about the Rio Grande. All that is here on this 30-cut double CD recorded live in August 2017 in a former dance hall in Uptop, a sort of ghost town in southwestern Colorado. If you like skillfully played string music, some laid back, some high energy, folksy and blue(grama)grass, take this along on a road trip. It'll make the miles melt away.

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



LISA PRESTON***The Clincher: A Horseshoer Mystery***

Skyhorse Publishing
Hardcover, 254 pages, \$24.99
SkyhorsePublishing.com

When Patsy-Lynn Harper is murdered on the afternoon horseshoer Rainy Dale shoes Patsy's prize stud, Rainy becomes the chief suspect. A comparative newcomer to her small Oregon town, Rainy is an easy mark. Especially since someone seems determined to set her up. But Rainy has friends, too, and her boyfriend, a gourmet chef on the cusp of owning his own upscale restaurant, is willing to give up everything to save her. The plot touches on many subjects: adoption, teenage waywardness and angst, bullying, and drug use – in this case steroids. And the shoeing of horses, one aspect of which fuels the title of the book. The novel boasts a fast-paced plot, sympathetic characters who come alive and writing that is excellent overall. I can't wait to read the sequel.

– Carol Crigger

ANNE SCHROEDER***Walk the Promise Road: A Novel of the Oregon Trail***

Prairie Rose Publications
Trade paperback, 265 pages, \$15.99
PrairieRosePublications.com

Mary Rodgers loses her mother, father and brother to the flu. Not wanting to be left alone in her parents' empty house, Mary convinces her cousin, Philip – who is about to leave on a wagon train for Oregon – to take her along. Since two single people traveling together would be improper, they pose as a married couple. That secret becomes a heavy burden when Mary falls for the trail guide. As their friendship develops, Mary overcomes tragic loss and multiple trail hardships with fortitude and dignity. *Walk The Promise Road* is a well-researched historical novel set on the Oregon Trail in 1848. It is full of authentic detail, young wisdom and amazing courage. Like Mary's trip, it is well worth the journey.

– Milana Marsenich

WALLACE J. SWENSON***The Devil's Due: Journey to the White Clouds***

Five Star Publishing
Hardcover, 334 pages, \$25.95
Gale.Cengage.com/FiveStar

“You've covered a lot of ground for your age, Buell.” Readers familiar with Wallace Swenson's “Journey to the White Clouds” series will agree with that summation of the main character Buell Mace and his journey from rejection to redemption. *The Devil's Due* is the fourth book in the series and it focuses on the return to Carlisle, Nebraska, of Buell Mace and his best friend, Simon Steele. With a Nebraska and Platte River setting, Swenson offers a refreshing change from the usual locales of Western fiction. Sharp dialog, strong suspense and smart scene choices lead the reader to an ending that is both surprising and inevitable. Alas, Swenson died in 2015.

– Tom Carpenter

MARK WARREN***Born to the Badge***

Five Star Publishing
Hardcover, 257 pages, \$25.95
Gale.Cengage.com/FiveStar

In Mark Warren's pages, the young Wyatt Earp confirms his calling – law enforcement – in Wichita and Dodge. Wyatt is soft-spoken and low-key unless crossed by miscreants, all Texans and all bad. The resulting fireworks only add to his notoriety and the respect in which he is held. His reputation often is as important to keeping the peace as his pistol. When not engaged in official work, Wyatt earns income at the card tables. Likewise, the enigmatic Doc Holliday, who becomes Wyatt's colleague and friend. Wyatt's dalliance with a sporting woman by the end of the book takes a serious turn. The ending promises another volume. A well-crafted narrative that flows smoothly, with a nice sense of place and aura, exceptional dialogue. The author includes a useful bibliography, not common in novels, but a trend that is catching on among historical novelists.

– Harlan Hague

ALETHEA WILLIAMS***Joy That Long Endures***

Self-published
Trade paperback, 171 pages, \$17.95
ActuallyAlethea.blogspot.com

In the late 1800s, Devin Cavanaugh works for a transfer company, carrying goods by wagon train from Bryan to South Pass City in Wyoming Territory. In South Pass he meets Dulcietta Jackson, a saloon manager skilled at turning dreams into reality. She is bright, hard-hitting, and a force to be reckoned with. Cavanaugh, happy enough as a hired hand, stumbles into a rich vein of golden luck – if he can survive the bad luck tracking him. Alethea Williams tells a story full of great wit, surprising turns and good courage. Her characters are complex, endearing and sometimes despicable, as they overcome hardship through fierce independence and brute strength.

– Milana Marsenich

ETHAN J. WOLFE***The Cattle Drive***

Five Star Publishing
Hardcover, 248 pages, \$25.95
Gale.Cengage.com/FiveStar

Orphaned 12-year-old twins Michael and Michele Dunn are living with their wealthy, socialite businesswoman aunt in Chicago. When their aunt decides she doesn't have the time or inclination to properly raise the twins, she arranges to send them by rail to live with relatives in San Francisco, hiring a detective agency owner to make sure they get there – but the owner plans to kidnap the twins. Michael overhears the plans, so he and Michele jump from the train at an isolated water stop. It isn't long before they are lost, hungry, and Michele is desperately sick. They stumble upon a lone cowboy's camp. Adventures follow. It's a standard plot, but the journey makes a perfect read for the beach, a rainy afternoon or a long flight.

– James J. Griffin

MICHAEL ZIMMER***Hard Ride Across Texas***

Five Star Publishing
Hardcover, 346 pages, \$25.95
Gale.Cengage.com/FiveStar

Gage Pardell sets out to seek justice for the harm done his sister by Henry Kalb – and kills Henry. A classic blood-feud tale forms the structure of the story, with enough money to allow relentless hired hands to carry it out. Gage doesn't lay in wait to take down

the bounty hunters. He runs – and rides into a hornets' nest of trouble. The first-person narrator has a remarkably chatty manner, mostly with words of more than one syllable and some of them remarkably erudite for a little-educated boy from Louisiana. The manner makes it difficult to keep track of just how much trouble he faces. By the end, the reader starts to think that was the author's goal.

– Edward Massey

NONFICTION

EVERETT AAKER

Television Western Players, 1960-1975: A Biographical Dictionary

McFarland & Company
Trade paperback, 478 pages, \$49.95
McFarlandBooks.com

This book describes the life and career of every actor and actress who had a regular or semi-regular role in a Western series on American television between 1960 and 1975. It begins where the author's previous book, *Television Western Players of the Fifties*, ended. There's some overlap because many Western series of the 1950s continued into the 1960s. The author concludes with the year 1975 because that's when *Gunsmoke* ended production as a series. An appendix offers brief production statistics for the impressive total of 89 series that the author considered. The numerous entries themselves are long, thorough and informative. Accompanied by abundant photographs and an index, this is a useful reference book.

– David Morrell

BOB ALEXANDER

Old Riot, New Ranger: Captain Jack Dean, Texas Ranger and U.S. Marshal

University of North Texas Press
Hardcover, 544 pages, \$34.95
UNTPress.unt.edu

Bob Alexander's well-researched biography of Texas Ranger Captain Jack Dean captures not only the essence of an honorable man, but also of the dynamic Texas Ranger organization itself. Spanning from the mid-20th Century into the 21st, Alexander's account of Dean's life and career reflect a man determined to become the best law enforcement officer possible in times of turbulence and uncertainty. Dean, who was only one of five men to serve in both the Officer's Corps of the Rangers and also as a president-appointed U.S. marshal, investigates double murders, suicides, home invasions and many other crimes, all while balancing the politics of the job with his family life and ambitions. This book will stand out for many reasons, but Alexander's storytelling aplomb is on full view here. Captain Dean is a Texas Ranger well worth spending time with.

– Larry D. Sweazy



A Minute to Pray, a Second to Die

Kino Lorber
Blu-ray \$29.95, DVD \$19.95
KinoLorber.com

Euro-Westerns fall into different categories, from the serious-minded epic to the astonishingly brutal or wildly humorous, sometimes both, and, finally, the near-insane and incoherent. Often the only things these hundreds of movies have in common is their political bent, astonishing body count and stunning leading ladies. During the later 1960s, when Paramount was betting heavy on *Once Upon a Time in the West*, American producers were setting up films in Spain and Italy, bringing higher budgets and stars to the productions along with directors like



C. COURTNEY JOYNER

Tom Gries and John Guillermin to capture the feel and visuals of the Spaghetti West. *100 Rifles*, *El Condor* and *Hannie Caulder* were part of this international trend, as was *A Minute to Pray, a Second to Die*, which has just received a fine Blu-ray release from Kino.

Starring Alex Cord as an outlaw dogged by the memory of his father's murder, and sometimes paralysis, *A Minute to Pray, a Second to Die* follows an unusual path, veering into some dark and sadistic areas as Cord, who has no interest in an amnesty offered by Governor Robert Ryan, takes refuge in a community of law-breakers to stay free and seek revenge for his family's killing. Instead, they turn on him to get the bounty on his head. Cord is betrayed at every turn, except by Ryan and sheriff Arthur Kennedy, who are the personification of tough-but-fair lawmen.

Even after 1966's *Stagecoach*, studios were trying, and failing, to turn Cord into a movie star, but he's good in this film. No typical, stoic stranger, Cord's tortured as hell, but that doesn't stop him from piling up the bodies. To that end, he's surrounded by a dozen familiar faces from Euro-Westerns, all beautifully photographed in their sweating glory. Well-mounted action scenes point to the care behind this Albert Band production, as does Ryan's leathered presence which gives the film true dramatic weight.

Saying I like *A Minute to Pray, a Second to Die* is akin to explaining to a bourbon-sipper why I like Scotch. I just do. This film's a perfect example of international moviemaking, when Euro-Westerns still made it into theaters. This one is helped by a great poster painted by James Bama. Kino's presentation – with commentary from historian-director Alex Cox, a trailer and the film's original European ending – can't be bettered.

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

JOHN M. ALEXANDER*The Man in Song: A Discographic Biography of Johnny Cash*University of Arkansas Press
Hardcover, 283 pages, \$36.95
UAPress.com

Since singer-songwriter Johnny Cash's death in 2003, a number of memoirs, biographies and miscellaneous books have come out about the Man in Black, but perhaps none more intriguing or original as this one. Music historian John M. Alexander documents the songs recorded by Cash, those he wrote and those he sang, Western, gospel, autobiographical, rockabilly, comic, prison, story songs, hits and misfires – from Cash's Sun years through his historic comeback with American Records. Alexander even pays Owen Wister Award recipient Andrew J. Fenady, creator of *The Rebel* TV series and co-writer of the hit theme song recorded by Cash, the highest compliment: "And although Cash did not write it, you would never know it."

– Johnny D. Boggs

EMILY C. BURNS*Transnational Frontiers: The American West in France*University of Oklahoma Press
Hardcover, 231 pages, \$45
OUPress.com

Buffalo Bill Cody appears in just one chapter in Emily Burns's analysis of the West's influence in France at the dawn of the 20th Century. An art historian, Burns explores the visual impressions of American Indians, American artists and writers who attended the 1900 Paris Universelle World Exhibition. This book is full of cartoons, drawings, photographs and illustrations (documents, newspaper headlines), many in color, that dazzle the eye. Burns looks beyond the pictures to reveal how the French people found much to admire – and some to criticize – and how the visiting Americans took their measure of French society. Burns did her homework in researching this book: 40 pages of endnotes, many of them glossing on the text, plus a large bibliography that may invite readers to look further into this fascinating topic.

– Abraham Hoffman

MICHAEL L. COLLINS*A Crooked River - Rustlers, Rangers, and Regulators on the Lower Rio Grande, 1861-1877*University of Oklahoma Press
Hardcover, 345 pages, \$29.95
OUPress.com

The author has written a thorough study about the tumultuous and deadly era during the Civil War and Reconstruction on the South Texas border. The area of the Rio Grande from Brownsville to Laredo was the primary field of battle. Expanding on the work of Walter Prescott Webb, Michael L. Collins details the violence between rustlers, army deserters, both blue and gray regular troops, Mexicans, Germans, Indians and the Texas Rangers. The cause of the conflicts was due to a long list of racial and cultural issues. Of particular interest is the coverage of Captain Leander McNelly and his Rangers. Both friends and enemies saw him as a devil on horseback, an apparition, one who stared death in the face without flinching.

– Monty McCord

ROBERT K. DeARMENT*Man-Hunters of the Old West, Vol. 2*University of Oklahoma Press
Hardcover, 344 pages, \$29.95
OUPress.com

History buffs and others who read Robert K. DeArment's *Man-Hunters of the Old West, Vol. 1* will not be disappointed with *Vol. 2*. Once again, he focuses on the careers of eight man-hunters, "outlaw trackers of the American frontier," as he likes to call them. Of the eight, Bass Reeves and Pat Garrett, are readily identifiable; others are less so. However, DeArment pulls no punches in describing the questionable brutality often used to capture and document their prey, cautioning readers not to judge these man-hunters by 21st Century law enforcement and judicial standards. The book, presented in short biographies, paints a realistic picture of frontier justice, is riveting and finally credits these eight men for deeds that remained unheralded for too long.

– Stan "Tex" Banash

JOE DOBROW*Pioneers of Promotion: How Press Agents for Buffalo Bill, P. T. Barnum, and the World's Columbian Exposition Created Modern Marketing*University of Oklahoma Press
Hardcover, 391 pages, \$32.95
OUPress.com

Joe Dobrow has expertly researched and written a comprehensive book detailing the origins of publicity in the late 1800s. With my particular interest in Buffalo Bill Cody and the Chicago World's Fair, I appreciated reading biographies of three men responsible for many modern promotional tactics – John M. Burke of Cody's Wild West, Tody Hamilton of Barnum & Bailey's Circus and Moses P. Handy of the 1893 Columbian Exposition. Besides their talent as persuasive wordsmiths, often featuring alliteration and exaggeration in published newspaper campaigns, the three depended on parades, celebrity endorsement and ubiquitous posters to glorify the venues they represented. Several relevant photos enhance the text, and Dobrow's final chapter illustrates the continued utilization and success of marketing techniques they originated. A terrific, informative, five-star read.

– Sandra K. Sagala

CHRIS ENSS and HOWARD**KAZANJIAN***Cowboys, Creatures, and Classics: The Story of Republic Pictures*Lyons Press
Hardcover, 251 pages, \$35
Rowman.com

From 1935 through the late 1950s, Republic Studios was a small Hollywood studio with, sometimes, big dreams, caught between Poverty Row and the majors like MGM and Warner Bros. Republic was also the studio that helped make Western icons Gene Autry, Roy Rogers, Dale Evans and John Wayne stars. Spur finalist Chris Enss and her frequent writing partner, film producer Howard Kazanjian, document the studio's up-and-down history in this handsomely illustrated book. Like most Republic movies, this book lacks depth – a thorough history of the studio remains desperately needed – but casual film buffs will enjoy it.

DON GRAHAM

Giant: Elizabeth Taylor, Rock Hudson, James Dean, Edna Ferber, and the Making of a Legendary American Film

St. Martin's Press
Hardcover, 323 pages, \$27.99
StMartins.com

Similar to Glenn Frankel's books about *The Searchers* and *High Noon*, Don Graham's *Giant* explores the historical, social and Hollywood background to this classic film. The dynamic among James Dean, Elizabeth Taylor and Rock Hudson is described in detail, as is the kind of film that director George Stevens wanted to make after his horrific experiences in World War II. More could have been added about Edna Ferber's career and about Glenn McCarthy, the oil tycoon whose rags-to-riches Texas-sized personality was the inspiration for Jett Rink in Ferber's novel. But those are minor issues about this satisfying, informative profile of a film whose theme is as relevant today as it was in the 1950s.

– David Morrell

BRIAN HANNAN

The Making of The Magnificent Seven

McFarland & Company
Paperback, 280 pages, \$35
McFarlandBooks.com

Few movies have had the impact of this 1960 Western starring Yul Brynner and directed by John Sturges, a reimagining of the Japanese classic *Seven Samurai*. Brian Hannan tackles the making of the movie that led to sequels, remakes, a TV series, an instantly recognized musical score by Elmer Bernstein and – almost – a Broadway musical. Box-office minutia bog down the narrative, but the factual errors are worse. To correct just a few: Gary Cooper starred in neither *Union Pacific* nor *The Tin Star*; George Sherman did not direct *The Sheepman*; Polly Bergen and Sterling Hayden weren't in *The Gunfight at the O.K. Corral*; Budd Boetticher never directed a film starring Joel McCrea; and pirate Jean Lafitte was dead long before the Alamo so he couldn't have "participated in the most famous last stand in U.S. history." These imbecilic errors unfortunately cast doubt on all of Hannan's reporting.

– Johnny D. Boggs

VALERIE SHERER MATHES and**PHIL BRIGANDI**

Reservations, Removal, and Reform: The Mission Indian Agents of Southern California, 1878-1903

University of Oklahoma Press
Hardcover, 344 pages, \$36.95
OUPress.com

The tribes of Southern California were peaceful people, many having converted to the Catholic religion, adopting agriculture, and wearing white people's clothing. Their biggest problem was dealing with white settlers who coveted their land and water rights and were untroubled by trespassing or filing fraudulent claims on Indian land. The authors assess the successes and failures of seven agents appointed to the Mission Indian Agency. Some were dedicated and others incompetent. In the end most of the tribes under their jurisdiction were removed to arid reservations. This is a compelling study of injustice to American Indians, bringing attention to a lesser known aspect of the interactions of whites and Indians in late 19th Century California.

– Abraham Hoffman

SUE MATHESON (editor)

A Fistful of Icons: Essays on Frontier Fixtures of the American Western

McFarland & Company
Paperback, 308 pages, \$39.95
McFarlandBooks.com

Twenty-one academics wrestle with the iconography of Western films and television programs with essays on masculinity, gender roles, "the sexual signification of the gun" (an oldie but a goodie), modernization, the usage of coffee, hotels, cemeteries and dynamite – just about everything except cowboy dental hygiene. Most are written in a dry, airless style smothered in terms like "deconstruction," "cultural-coding" and other familiar clichés of post-modern academic discourse. Editor Sue Matheson gamely seeks to make the case in her introduction that "little critical attention has been directed to the iconic images found in the Western films." Still, it's hard to escape the feeling it has all been said before.

– Glenn Frankel

R. GREGORY NOKES

The Troubled Life of Peter Burnett: Oregon Pioneer and First Governor of California

Oregon State University Press
Trade paperback, 270 pages, \$19.95
OSUPress.oregonstate.edu

Peter Burnett has been largely forgotten in spite of significant achievements in Missouri, Oregon and California. The author chose to judge Burnett by today's standards of political correctness and ignore or belittle many of his real accomplishments. The author is a competent writer and the book is worth reading since this is the first book devoted to the man. Burnett died a wealthy and esteemed man, and the reader will surely want to know more about his contributions to our history.

– Nancy B. Samuelson

R. BARTON PALMER and**MURRAY POMERANCE (editors)**

The Many Cinemas of Michael Curtiz

University of Texas Press
Paperback, 335 pages, \$29.95
UTexasPress.com

Director Michael Curtiz, the genius behind *Casablanca*, *Yankee Doodle Dandy* and scores of other classics, continues to interest film historians. Editors R. Barton Palmer and Murray Pomerance have called upon leading scholars to showcase the Budapest native's incredible range. Only one short chapter, by University of Arizona professor Homer B. Pettey, tackles Curtiz's Westerns, including *Dodge City* and *Santa Fe Trail*, but focuses on the film – as in two-strip or three-strip color – or improved "recording and projection techniques," not the story or history.

– Johnny D. Boggs

LAURENCE PARENT

Official Guide to Texas State Parks & Historic Sites: New Edition

University of Texas Press
Paperback, 226 pages, \$27.95
UTPress.utexas.edu

Can the same information about state parks be found on the web? Probably. Will it be as interesting and detailed as Parent's book? Probably not. I'd surfed the Texas State Parks website many times but had never heard of the Old Tunnel State Park near Fredericksburg,

where bats fly out nightly between May and October. Chock full of photographs that are not overly large, every one of them is stunning. A wonderful guide beautiful enough for the coffee table but easy enough to throw into the car on the way to a new adventure.

– Vicky J. Rose

SUSAN COSBY RONNENBERG

Deadwood and Shakespeare: The Henriad in the Old West

McFarland & Company
Paperback, 206 pages, \$39.95
McFarlandBooks.com

Frank James, if he were alive today, would enjoy reading this scholarly work. Frank loved Shakespeare, carrying with him a complete works edition and often quoting from it. In *Deadwood and Shakespeare*, Susan Cosby Ronnenberg explores the relationship between the HBO Series *Deadwood* and William Shakespeare's first set of history plays known as the Henriad: *Richard II*, *1 Henry IV*, *2 Henry IV* and *Henry V*. David Milch, the *Deadwood* series creator has said that he read *1 Henry IV* before writing *Deadwood* and based his Al Swearingen character on Shakespeare's Falstaff, whom Milch says is his favorite character. Ronneberg states her goal is to encourage *Deadwood* viewers to read Shakespeare's Henriad and then view *Deadwood* again for a richer more in-depth experience.

– Bill Markley

JEB ROSEBROOK

Junior Bonner: The Making of a Classic with Steve McQueen and Sam Peckinpah in the Summer of 1971

BearManor Media
Hardcover, trade paperback, 230 pages, \$35, \$25
BearManorMedia.com

Screenwriter Jeb Rosebrook spent much of his youth near the small ranching community of Prescott, Arizona. Years later, he went back, shocked to find paved roads and a retirement community where cattle had once grazed. This gave him the idea for a screenplay about an aging rodeo star who returns to Prescott for its historic Fourth of July rodeo and mourns the changes he sees. The journey from script to location filming was amazingly fast. Rosebrook's

memoir tells the charming and often revealing story behind this Steve McQueen/Sam Peckinpah classic. Numerous photographs.

– David Morrell

RON ROZELLE

Exiled: The Last Days of Sam Houston

Texas A&M University Press
Hardcover, 205 pages, \$29.95
TAMUPress.com

Despite the misleading title – the book starts in 1850 and Sam Houston died in 1863 (that's a lot of days) – *Exiled* is a good study of Houston's final years, including his pro-Unionist stance that had him dismissed as governor of Texas and shunned, even threatened, by many Texans. While focusing on years often glossed over by Houston biographers, Ron Rozelle paints a fine picture of the man and his times, revealing Houston's strengths and flaws.

– Johnny D. Boggs

NANCY SCHOENBERGER

Wayne and Ford: The Films, the Friendship, and the Forging of an American Hero

Nan A. Talese Doubleday
Hardcover, 240 pages, \$27.95
PenguinRandomHouse.com

There are an extensive number of publications reflecting on the film careers of John Wayne and John Ford, resulting in a wide spectrum of quality and originality. Nancy Schoenberger did not tread the same trail as authors of fan literature or the critical analysis of film historians but chose to examine the nature of maleness and manhood as portrayed by Wayne and defined by Ford. Schoenberger, professor of creative writing at the College of William and Mary, tapped letters and personal documents by Wayne and Ford for signs on "how to be a man." Her reflections on perceived masculinity are engaging. She also reflects on the type of hero codified by these two men who were known to have a long-lasting friend/mentor relationship. Schoenberger further argues that the films of these two men provide insights into characteristics of ideal masculinity objectified in Western cinema, a cultural legacy greatly influenced by Duke and "Pappy" Ford.

– Don Reeves

CATHY A. SMITH

The Demise of Tonto or Hollywood Meets the Sioux: The Motion Picture Costumes of Cathy A. Smith

Self-published
Hardcover, paperback, 32 pages, \$49.95, \$29.95
NambeTradingPost.com

Artist-historian Cathy A. Smith is best known for her costume work in *Dances with Wolves* and *Son of the Morning Star*, the latter winning her an Emmy Award. In this short but handsomely illustrated book, Smith discusses her costumes and career while offering personal insights such as, "As well as being historically accurate, good costumes must say something about character and plot." Available at the historic Nambe Trading Post, which Smith (who still outfits film and TV productions) operates in northern New Mexico.

MARY DODSON WADE

Amazing Texas Girls: True Stories from Lone Star History

Lone Star Books
Trade paperback, 248 pages, \$16.95
GlobePequot.com

In a collection of stories about 15 women who shaped the history of the Lone Star State, Mary Dodson Wade has created a well-researched homage. She includes such notables as the woman who saved the buffalo from extinction, Molly Goodnight, wife of famed rancher Charles Goodnight, and Babe Didrikson Zaharias, who dominated every sport she played and broke the ground for future women athletes. Politicians such as Ma Ferguson and Ann Richards are left out to make way for important but lesser known figures – Clotilde Perez Garcia, one of the first Mexican-American women to practice medicine in Texas, and Annie Mae McDade Prosper Hunt, who encouraged fellow African-Americans to get out and vote. Black and white photos are included in this thoughtful compilation.

– Vicky J. Rose

MATT WANAT and LEONARD ENGEL (editors)

The Films of Clint Eastwood: Critical Perspectives.

University of New Mexico Press
Hardcover, 288 pages, \$75
UNMPress.com

Clint Eastwood's enduring career as actor, producer and director has been extraordinarily long and produced films that are both entertaining and thoughtful. He has come to rival John Wayne in popularity, although the Western star he most resembles in style and appearance is Gary Cooper. This book is the third in a collection of scholarly essays about Eastwood's films and significance. Previous volumes explored his most iconic works, leaving this book to strip-mine more barren fields, including *The Eiger Sanction*, *The Gauntlet*, *Firefox* and *Space Cowboys*, none of which will be mentioned on the sad day when Eastwood's obituary finally appears. For those willing to part with \$75 there are detailed treatments of Eastwood's sensitive work with actresses like Meryl Streep, Hillary Swank and Angelina Jolie; the inspirational storytelling of *Hereafter*, *The Bridges of Madison County*, *Gran Torino* and *Invictus*; and a shot-by-shot deconstruction of his two-minute "Halftime in America" Chrysler commercial shown at the 2014 Super Bowl. Six essays manage to squeeze every last drop of meaning and significance from the veins of *American Sniper*, Eastwood's biggest box office hit as a director and a stunning, jarring blend of patriotism and pessimism. Finally, there's a lively and revealing dialogue between Eastwood's longtime film editor Joel Cox and fellow editor Paul Seydor that alone would be worth the price of admission were it not so astonishingly steep.

– Glenn Frankel

AMANDA J. ZINK

Fictions of Western American Domesticity: Indian, Mexican, and Anglo Women in Print Culture, 1850-1950

University of New Mexico Press
Hardcover, 360 pages, \$75
UNMPress.com

Amanda J. Zink grapples with the idea that writers of the 1850-1950 period transferred ideas of domesticity from white women to indigenous women. Willa Cather's priests "civilize" them, Edna Ferber's white women try to make Americans of them, curricula of federal Indian boarding schools indoctrinated and forced assimilation to Euro-American ideals and much more. The author

cites numerous examples from novels, advertisements, even cookbooks to illustrate her thesis. A large bibliography supports this Idaho State University professor's thought-provoking findings.

– Lynn Buelsing

PLAYS

RED SHUTTLEWORTH

1940: Bryan, Texas; 1941: Sunbeam, Colorado; 1942: Boise, Idaho; 1943: Kief, North Dakota; 1944: San Francisco, California; 1945: Glentana, Montana; 1946: Springerville, Arizona; 1947: Wagontire, Oregon; 1948: Hulett, Wyoming; 1949: Garrison, Utah

Bunchgrass Press
Chapbooks, no prices listed
PoetRedshuttleWorth.blogspot.com

From two friends bickering over the end of the West in a Sunbeam, Colorado, post office to an Irish cop waiting for a young bank robber to die in a Glentana, Montana, church, Red Shuttleworth continues his "Americana West" series of 100 short plays and monologues, delivering what he does best: a grim, honest look at the West told through a poet's voice.

RED SHUTTLEWORTH

1950: Adrian, Washington; 1951: Lincoln, Nebraska; 1952: Blunt, South Dakota; 1953: Socorro, New Mexico; 1954: Ulysses, Kansas; 1955: Vici, Oklahoma; 1956: Ely, Nevada; 1957: Weatherford, Texas; 1958: Sterling, Colorado; 1959: Bruneau, Idaho

Bunchgrass Press
Chapbooks, no prices listed
PoetRedshuttleWorth.blogspot.com

OK, it's not every play where you have a young couple wearing Lone Ranger Halloween costumes in a small Colorado motel while planning a bank robbery and then getting into an argument that starts with Tonto. Red Shuttleworth's sixth decade of his "Americana West" series is full of pathos and originality. These short plays and monologues bring to mind Sam Shepard with a touch of Dylan Thomas.

BOOK NOTES

ROGER L. NICHOLS

Indians in the United States and Canada: A Comparative History, Second Edition

University of Nebraska Press
Paperback, 490 pages, \$40
NebraskaPress.unl.edu

Roger L. Nichols's book tracing the relationships between Indians and whites from colonial to modern times – and how those relationships changed – in Canada and the United States was first published in 1998. This second edition includes new chapters regarding changes from 1945 to the present, including transracial adoptions and media exposure.

SUE RITCHIE

Transformational Bereavement: A Guide Through Grief and Mourning into Healing of the Self

Ritchie Publishing
Paperback, 182 pages, \$29
TransformationalBereavement.com

For nine years beginning in 1988, WWA member Sue Ritchie lost a loved one each year – including her husband. Realizing that she was not "truly healing," she set out to heal herself. Since then, she has designed workshops to help people with grief. Now she has updated and republished her memoir and guide to the healing process, first published in 2001. "Yes, I can replace the pain of grief," she writes. "But more importantly, I will regain my life. And Dear Reader, if I can do that, so can you!"

BRAD SYKES

Terror in the Desert: Dark Cinema of the American Southwest

McFarland & Company
Paperback, 304 pages, \$39.95
McFarlandBooks.com

The author explores "desert terror" films that blend elements from horror, *noir* and road movies into movies about isolation and violence. Cult exploitation, art-house movies and horror films dominate, but while the author considers some Westerns, the theme remains horror.