

FICTION

SAMANTHA JAYNE ALLEN
Pay Dirt Road

Minotaur Books
Hardcover, 298 pages, \$27.99
MinotaurBooks.com

Recent college graduate Annie McIntyre has returned to her small Texas town, hardly knowing what her next steps will be. Waitressing gives her enough money to get by, but when a fellow waitress is murdered and the café cook accused, Annie can't rest until she learns the truth. This means taking up with her grandfather, the retired sheriff and now a private investigator, hired by the dead girl's grandmother. The small-town dynamics read true in this modern-day mystery, proving some things never change. A small-town girl myself, I found the setting, the characters and the reaction to events supremely believable. The author, winner of this year's Tony Hillerman Prize for best first mystery novel, has penned a winner, with everything a reader wants in a mystery novel.

– Carol Crigger

MONETTE BEBOW-REINHARD
Saving Boone: Legend of a Kiowa Son

Independently published
Paperback, 271 pages, \$10.50

This is a reworking of Monette Bebow-Reinhard's novel, first published in 2017 under a slightly different title. Set in 1853, young Boone Tyler's white mother may have been killed by his Kiowa father. She had refused to let the father into Boone's life, but he declared he would come for his son when the boy turned 12. Even though she loved the Indian father, she didn't want Boone to live in a harsh world. Boone seeks out his white grandfather, an army general, to help avenge his mother's death, but many in the white world see him as Indian. Boone goes on many adventures, including falling in love with a settler's disabled daughter. He often listens to a mysterious voice in his head that he thinks is his dead twin brother, Sam. The author is a historian and has studied Native American cultures.

– Denise F. McAllister

THOMAS D. CLAGETT
Blood West

Five Star Publishing
Hardcover, 255 pages, \$25.95
Gale.com/five-star

Thomas D. Clagett's *Line of Glory: A Novel of the Alamo* was a Spur Award finalist for best historical fiction. His *West of Penance* received a Will Rogers Medallion Award for best inspirational fiction and a New Mexico-Arizona Book Award for best historical fiction. In *Blood West*, real-life Pinkerton detective Hattie Lawton (one of the few female Pinkerton detectives at the time) is summoned to the fabulous and also real Montezuma Hotel in Las Vegas, New Mexico Territory. The year is 1885. The hotel (part of the famed Harvey House chain) has a telephone system and electric lights. These and other authentic details make the hotel almost palpably real as Hattie investigates a series of gruesome deaths there and in the neighboring town. This is an action-filled, inventive blend of historical Western, detective, thriller and gothic elements – especially intriguing to readers interested in different directions for the Western genre.

– David Morrell

PADDY CREWE
My Name Is Yip

The Overlook Press
Hardcover, 364 pages, \$28
AbramsBooks.com

Standing a little more than 4½ feet tall, Yip Tolroy possesses no body hair and never utters a word. Born mute in Georgia in the early 1800s, Yip suffers a cold childhood under his stern mother, who prepares her eyesore of a son for a cruel world by serving up cruelty from the get-go. With Yip as narrator, one might wonder how a story gets told by a wordless anomaly. For that we have a beneficent friend to thank — an older man who teaches Yip to write. And what a voice Yip provides. Paddy Crewe has managed to give his main character the best of backwoods dialects without regard for grammar, punctuation or syntax ... and at the same time deliver masterful literary momentum

as Yip encounters murder and mayhem and heads west. Mark Twain would have loved this book. He might even have wished he had written it.

– Mark Warren

MELODY GROVES
Trail to Tin Town

Five Star Publishing
Hardcover, 334 pages, \$25.95
Gale.com/five-star

The plot of *Trail to Tin Town* surrounds a highly unusual cattle drive from New Mexico to California in 1864. Conflicts abound as four brothers struggle to move thousands of long-horns across a swath of the Southwest before the arrival of rail or wire. The nonstop action keeps the reader motivated to continue turning pages. Although part of the “Colton Brothers Saga” series, *Trail to Tin Town* can be read individually. Melody Groves is an expert in Western history and geography. She infuses that knowledge into her writing. This reviewer was fascinated by the historical mentions and incorporation of real-life events into the storyline. Humor, history, mystery and imagination all contribute to a delightful reading experience.

– Peter Bruce

MICHEAL E. JIMERSON
White Gold

Atmosphere Press
Paperback, 302 pages, \$15.99
AtmospherePress.com

E.J. Kane's world crashed when his son died in Afghanistan. His marriage and law-enforcement career crumbled; his daughter has become addicted to drugs and turned to prostitution. While he searches for a way to find and save his daughter, Kane's job as head of security for an energy company pulls him into a web of deceit and crime. Micheal E. Jimerson writes with the intelligence and sensitivity of a man struggling to cope with norms and values different from the ones with which he grew up. Lots of action and great East Texas dialogue round out this entertaining and thoughtful novel.

– Vicky J. Rose

**WILLIAM W. JOHNSTONE and
J.A. JOHNSTONE**
Forever Texas

Kensington
Paperback, 360 Pages, \$14.95
KensingtonBooks.com

Forever Texas is a novel based on the founding of the famous King Ranch of Texas. In a broader sense, it's the story of what most settlers faced in trying to establish themselves in the wilds of the Lone Star State. Steamship fleet owner Regis Royle (read Richard King) decides to found a great ranch in Texas. Partner Cormac Delany, friend and former Texas Ranger Jarvis "Bone" McGraw and Regis's kid brother join Regis. Their plans are complicated by the usual cast of villains: Slave traders, squatters, Apaches, white outlaws, Mexican *banditos*, and the most deliciously evil of all, Tomasina Valdez, a wealthy Mexican heiress who believes the land Regis bought is rightfully hers. The story is as full of action as any fan of traditional Westerns could want. Some of the violence is graphic, but it fits right in with the narrative.

— James J. Griffin

KEVIN T. JONES
A Quick Trip to Moab: Insurrection in the Wilderness

Lost Souls Publishing
Paperback, 216 pages, \$16
LostSoulsPress.com

What starts out as a familiar road trip from Salt Lake City to Moab, Utah, turns bad quickly. Stan Watson and his dog Speck pull off the highway for a bathroom break. A desperate woman emerges from the brush. "Please help, please. My husband has been shot." And away we go. This is an escape tale set in the landscape of the San Rafael Swell of central Utah, in the middle of a standoff between law enforcement and opponents of a wilderness designation imposed by the federal government. The reader can almost smell the rain and the sagebrush, feel the heat and the sweet relief of shade. An effective narrative device is the juxtaposition of news coverage of the protest between chapters of fast-paced drama, portraying the slow evolution from superficial reporting to getting the real story. This story invites us to think even while we're holding onto the edge of our reading chairs.

— Tom Carpenter

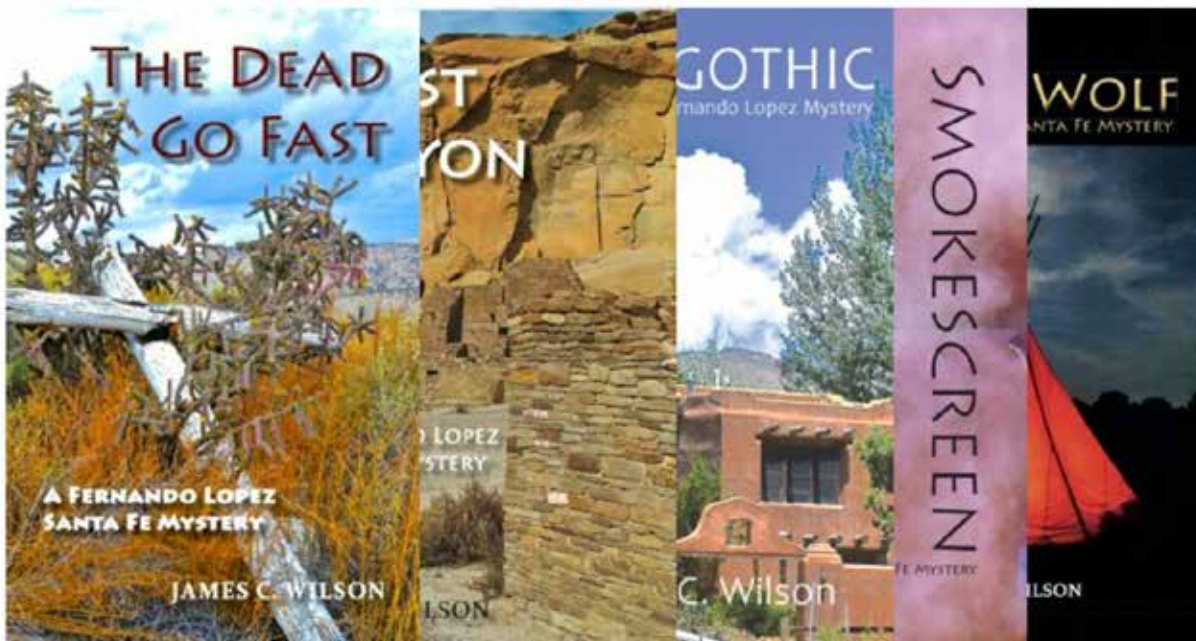
PAT BENEDICT JURGENS
Falling Forward: A Woman's Journey West

Purple Pine Publishing
Paperback, 326 pages, \$15.95
PatJurgens.com

The story of Louisa Steinbacher, a 17-year-old Mennonite woman, is a journey of self-discovery, spiritual awakening and coming of age set in the historical West near the turn of the century. With author Pat Jurgens's meticulous research and period details, Louisa's story comes alive. Jurgens's vivid descriptive writing gives readers a sense of place from the farmlands of Ohio to the unforgiving desert landscape of California to the majestic mountains of Colorado. It's an engaging story of a woman whose dreams are challenged as she navigates a patriarchal society. Through her suffrage activism, Louisa finds camaraderie with other like-minded women. When faced with several impossible situations, she is not afraid to take risks to follow her heart to find personal freedom.

— Sue Ready

From Sunstone Press in Santa Fe: the Fernando Lopez Santa Fe Mystery Series, a classic American detective series set in the ancient haunted landscape of northern New Mexico.



In *The Dead Go Fast*, the fifth in the series: a dead woman on Canyon Road, a missing Santa Fe artist, and a hidden Georgia O'Keeffe painting depicting the end of the world send my detective on a wild chase through northern New Mexico.

GREGORY J. LALIRE

The Call of McCall

Five Star Publishing
 Hardcover, 443 pages, \$25.95
 Gale.com/five-star

This is a tale of the Old West, sprinkled throughout with names and places of that era, including Wild Bill Hickok and Deadwood. The two main characters are narrator Zach McCall, bastard son of Fat Jack McCall and conceived in a brothel, and his younger half-brother, Little Jack (also known as Crooked Nose Jack). Zach's mother joined members of the Donner Party when Zach was an infant and died along with other members of that snowbound group. Zach was then raised by Belle Bragg and the other ladies of the brothel. Crooked Nose Jack was born to Fat Jack's wife, Hannah, and raised in Louisville, Kentucky. Another prominent character is Jasper Washington, Hickok's devoted friend and protective sidekick. The author is obviously a student of the history of the Old West, but the oft-times disjointed storyline can be an unwelcome distraction.

– Tom Claffey

ANDREW McBRIDE

Cimarrón

Five Star Publishing
 Hardcover, 302 pages, \$25.95
 Gale.com/five-star

The question of loyal friendship vs. self-interest is the theme of *Cimarrón*. In 1873, the Arizona Territory, Calvin Taylor's stamping grounds, is as rough and untamed as he is. Each adventure adds to his growing reputation as a gunman – skilled and deadly. But what happens when friends can't trust each other, and your best friend becomes your worst enemy? Treachery, lies, and deceit guide this story. Calvin Taylor, who is called "Choctaw," and Declan "Dec" Flynn ride together – when they can.

– Melody Groves

ROD MILLER

This Thy Brother

Five Star Publishing
 Hardcover, 242 pages, \$25.95
 Gale.com/five-star

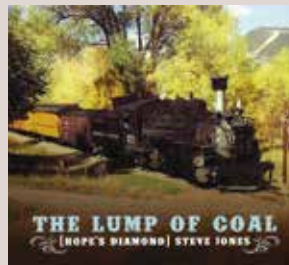
This sequel to *Father Unto Many Sons* continues the story of the Pate and Lewis families as they journey west to put down roots in the unforgiving landscape of western New Mexico in the late 1830s. This reviewer admires the author's historical research and extensive knowledge of the ways and means of life on the frontier. Yet ... is it the lengthy cinematic detail that tests the reader's attention span? Or is it the inconsistent free indirect discourse: "The town looked to be an architectural polyglot." "Through eyes near aflame, he stared at the man in the doorway." Nitpicking? Perhaps. Many readers will enjoy this book by an award-winning author. A few, perhaps, less so.

– Tom Carpenter

LeROY A. PETERS

Where the Wind Takes You

Dusty Saddle Publishing



STEVE JONES

The Lump of Coal (Hope's Diamond)

Irish Coyote Music, \$22
 IrishCoyoteMusic.com

Might as well get this out of the way right at the start.

Colorado's Steve Jones has a fine tenor voice, a voice that has garnered him a lot of praise from folks

who review music. But when it comes to cowboy songs, I prefer a voice that sounds more like it has been seasoned by campfire smoke, trail dust and good whiskey. Bad whiskey works, too.

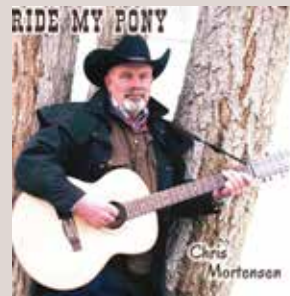
A voice as polished as Jones just doesn't ring true to my ear when I listen to songs such as "Night Guard Lullaby," written by Jones and Randy Huston.



OLLIE REED JR.

But, having got that off my chest, I must say "Night Guard Lullaby" is a well-written offering. Others I especially admire are "Coyotes of Copper Ridge," also penned with Huston, and Jones's cover of Jim Young's "Too Many Fences."

Befitting Jones's tenor tones, a half dozen of the album's 16 cuts have an Irish or Scottish flavor, including Jim Jones's (no relation) "It's a Cowboy I Will Be."



CHRIS MORTENSEN

Ride My Pony

South Canyon Music, \$15
 Available postpaid at Chris Mortensen, P.O. Box 405, Paradise, UT 84328

Unlike Steve Jones, Utah singer-songwriter Chris Mortensen has a voice that sounds as if it could be that of one of your friends singing

after a cookout in your backyard.

Mortensen wrote or cowrote 11 of the 16 cuts on this CD, and his songs are as honest and down-to-earth as his voice.

My favorites here are the pensive "Ain't Coming Back" and the lighthearted "Wish I Was Sam Elliot," both written with Bob Parson; and Mortensen's "Tri-Colored Paint," "Outlaw's Dream" and "Clown Without a Rodeo."

The latter, about a rodeo clown feeling lost when the COVID-19 pandemic shuts down the circuit, is particularly effective, a song we can all relate to.

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

Paperback, 269 pages, \$8.99
DSPublishingNetwork.com

Sixteen-year-old Isaiah Reinhardt leaves his home in Beaufort, South Carolina, after a confrontation with his family and goes to St. Louis, where he meets French trapper Jacques Ledoux. The latter teaches him to be a mountain man. The story goes into a lot of detail about what a mountain man had to encounter, including the dangers of wild animals. Isaiah's life changes when he lives with the Assiniboine Indians and learns customs different from those his parents taught him. The life that Isaiah has chosen will keep you interested. An enlightening and entertaining novel.

— Lowell F. Volk

POETRY

ROY SCHEELE

Produce Wagon: New and Selected Poems

University of Nebraska Press
Paperback, 213 pages, \$19.95
NebraskaPress.unl.edu

One of the finest things that could be said about the poetry of Roy Scheele before even opening this lovely collection is that the poems were chosen by former national poet laureate Ted Kooser in the “Ted Kooser Contemporary Poetry” series. What esteemed praise! Scheele's book definitely holds up to this honor. I was captivated by the very first poem, “Remembrances,” as he compares birds to his mother-in-law, himself, his love: *And for you, the little bat we rumped with our/breathing as we crowded round its sleep/on the side of the oak tree the evening we moved in.* Lush love words carefully crafted to seem so effortless. And my favorite, “Lightning Bugs,” which Scheele describes as “a drifting constellation” designed to *find one who/has read the impulse right and then returned it/(which is, as I recall, how I found you).* *Produce Wagon* made me smile poem after poem and will bring up wonderful memories of family and love.

— karla k. morton

JUVENILE

JENNIFER BOHNHOFF

Where Duty Calls: Rebels Along the Rio Grande, Book 1

Kinkajou Press

Paperback, 228 pages, \$12.95
KinkajouPress.com

Former history and art teacher Jennifer Bohnhoff pens a dramatic story based on Civil War events in New Mexico Territory, as seen through the eyes of two teen boys on opposite sides of the conflict. Jemmy, a softhearted farm boy from Texas, is swept unwillingly into serving a Confederate regiment on the march to New Mexico. Raul works for his powerful uncle in Socorro, supplying food and laborers to the Union Army at Fort Craig. Like Jemmy, Raul is thrust into the front lines and the two seem destined to meet. With rich details and compelling characters, *Where Duty Calls* focuses on an overlooked region of Civil War history. Young (and adult) readers will be educated and entertained.

— Micki Fuhrman

MARIANA LLANOS (author)
and **MARIANA RUIZ JOHNSON**
(illustrator)

Run, Little Chaski! An Inka Trail Adventure

Barefoot Books

Hardcover, paperback, 32 pages, \$16.99,
\$9.99

BarefootBooks.com

The author is Peruvian-bred and proud of her country's rich and colorful Inka history, which comes through loud and clear in this beautifully illustrated children's book. A *chaski* was a fleet-footed royal messenger during Inka times, one entrusted to deliver important messages and packages via a relay system throughout the vast territory. Many of the words in the text are Quechua, and I found myself often looking back and forth between the story and the glossary in the back to be able to understand what was being related. But that's the purpose of this book – to teach young readers about this ancient civilization of the Americas. The message is also to never give up and always be strong, swift, sharp and ... kind.

— Rocky Gibbons

DON L. PARKS (illustrator) and
MINDA PARKS (author)
Beside That Windmill

Texas Tech University Press
Hardcover, 40 pages, \$24.95
TTUPress.org

The first few pages of this beautifully illustrated picture book tell the history

of the windmill and its significance in the settling of the plains. It then focuses on the day-to-day life of a boy who lived on a ranch that had no electricity or indoor plumbing. A diagram at the end of the book explains how windmills worked. This peaceful, nostalgic book makes a delightful read-aloud, but the big, dramatic skies and broad plains depicted in the lovely impressionistic paintings will draw even nonreaders back again and again.

— Jennifer Bohnhoff

NONFICTION

SALLY DENTON

The Colony: Faith and Blood in a Promised Land

Liveright

Hardcover, 288 pages, \$27.95
WWNorton.com

DIANA CANNON RAGSDALE

Loose Cannons: A Memoir of Mania and Mayhem in a Mormon Family

Legacy Launch Pad Publishing

Hardcover, paperback, 408 pages, \$30.95,
\$17.95

LegacyLaunchPadPub.com

“A picture-perfect Mormon family ... at least, from the outside looking in.” The assessment is apropos to both these books. In *The Colony*, Sally Denton returns to her roots as journalistic investigator. Her quest is to unravel the story of nine Americans murdered on a lonely road used principally by drug cartels in northern Mexico. Victims included three mothers and six children in three cars. Five other children escaped. All were members of two Mormon families whose polygamous ancestors had settled near the towns of La Mora and LeBarón to become well-to-do nut planters. Supposedly, they had a truce with the cartels, but as Denton shows, the families themselves might have been catalysts to the violence. In seeking a reason for the murders, which became a news sensation, Denton tells of the internecine dysfunction of the polygamous LeBarón clan. As can be the case with such journalistic explorations, a welter of detail and intertwined story lines weave a sordid tale but fall short of answering why.

Family dysfunction is also at the heart of Diana Cannon Ragsdale's memoir of growing up in a Mormon family with

the well-known Cannon name. Not unlike the LeBaróns, they strived to present a placid, worshipful face to the community, but behind the scenes, the family flew apart under the pressures of mental illness, secret liaisons and church expectations. Written with a ghost writer's acknowledged help, the book is one of unabashed self-discovery. Despite recreated dialogue, reconstructed events and composite characters, it has the ring of truth. Unlike Denton's tale of the LeBaróns, Ragsdale's is one of survival and healing.

– Charles E. Rankin

CHRIS ENSS and HOWARD KAZANJIAN with CHRIS KORTLANDER

The Widowed Ones: Beyond the Battle of the Little Bighorn

TwoDot

Hardcover, 200 pages, \$26.96

TwoDotBooks.com

This is a compelling though heartbreaking history of the 7th Cavalry widows of Little Big Horn. It belongs in the library of anyone studying George Custer's last battle or the 19th Century military. The officers' wives were initially left without income or housing, told to vacate Fort Abraham Lincoln as they were no longer Army wives. It took months for the military and civilian supporters to organize meager pensions. In the meantime, survivors and commanders, Marcus Reno, Frederick Benteen, General Alfred Terry and even President Grant denigrated fallen Custer to cover the multitude of their own sins. The Widowed Ones, as the press named them, came together to honor their husbands swearing never to remarry. They worked through extreme depression and in one case madness. The Custer family had lost three sons, a son-in-law and a nephew. The bodies of two of the officers could



Prey

20th Century Studios (streaming on Hulu)
Hulu.com

In the past two decades, Western movies and TV have been in an eternal brawl, knocked down but never knocked out. As if the Gregory Peck-Charlton Heston fight in *The Big Country* was the genre's struggle to stay on its feet, reproving its worth for new audiences, the Western has – remarkably – done more than that these past years. Not in COVID-decimated movie theaters, but via streaming direct to our living rooms.

Producer-writer Taylor Sheridan smashed all commercial expectations with his contemporary *Yellowstone*, leading to the wonderful *1883*. Western TV projects from Kevin Costner and others are thundering toward us in the next year, while features like Walter Hill's *Dead for a Dollar* will ultimately play out on our home screens instead of the local bijou.

Descriptions of science-fiction films have overused the phrase “But it's really a Western” to death. That phrase finally has meaning with Fox's *Prey*, the fifth film in its *Predator* series.

Prey is actually a pre-Western, a 1750s frontier tale of a young Comanche woman (Amber Midthunder) who, in trying to prove her worth as a hunter, ends up battling the savage alien predator that's slaughtering her tribe.

Highlighted by stunning visuals and a defiant, athletic performance by Midthunder, *Prey's* strengths are on display as humans battle the monster in the Great Plains. The scenes between Midthunder and her family, who doubt her hunting ability, are *Prey's* quiet strengths. Their English interplay often sounds too modern, but the producers also offer a version in Comanche language only.

Make no mistake, *Prey* is a bloody monster movie, but one mixed with period, frontier adventure, drawing quality from both genres. It's also the biggest hit on Hulu streaming, showing again that tales set centuries ago will always bring in the viewers.

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



One Last Look

“Joyce is a superb copy editor/proofreader who even corrected a phrase in Latin for me. Incredible! I give her the title of ‘World’s Best Copy Editor/Proofreader’ along with a well-deserved 5-star rating!”

– E. Alan Fleischauer, 2021 Chanticleer 1st Place Book Series Award Winner for Western Fiction

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not be found, leaving widows to wonder if they had survived as captives being tortured. The *Widowed Ones* is eminently readable.

– Doug Hocking

PAUL FORMISANO

Tributary Voices: Literary and Rhetorical Explorations of the Colorado River

University of Nevada Press
Paperback, 297 pages, \$45
UNPress.nevada.edu

Paul Formisano argues for a humanistic approach to the Colorado River's problems (and there are many problems). He examines the writings of people who have traveled down the river and described its natural wonders. Chapters include discussions of women river guides; Hispanics, Latinas and Mexicans whose lives were adversely affected by the construction of dams on the river; and Native Americans whose first rights on river water have been shamefully rejected by the federal government. Formisano offers some cautious optimism as to the stewardship possibilities in future plans for the river. Surprisingly, he makes no mention of the creation of the Salton Sea, a once-popular Southern California tourist

destination of saline waters that have become increasingly toxic. Whether the river will be enough to satisfy everyone's needs is problematic.

– Abraham Hoffman

JOHN M. GLIONNA

Outback Nevada: Real Stories from the Silver State

University of Nevada Press
Paperback, 234 pages, \$27.95
UNPress.nevada.edu

John Glionna provides 45 fascinating vignettes about eccentric people who live, or recently lived, in Nevada. The author began writing the narratives in 1994 while working as a newspaper reporter for the *Los Angeles Times*. He completed several of the stories after moving to Nevada where he worked freelance for the *Las Vegas Review-Journal*. The articles originally appeared in these and other publications. Only a few are tales about folks from the half-dozen population centers in Nevada. Most of his encounters involved individuals who preferred the more remote parts of the state, such as along "America's loneliest road." You don't have to be a resident of Nevada, as I am, to appreciate Glionna's writing style. He deftly

depicts the men and women who chose to live life as true Westerners in a land of boundless vistas.

– Robert Lee Murphy

MARK T. JOHNSON

The Middle Kingdom under the Big Sky: A History of the Chinese Experience in Montana

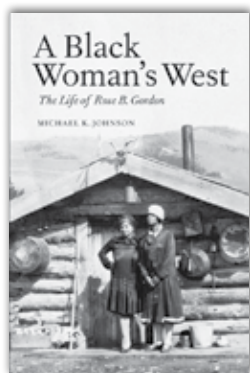
University of Nebraska Press
Hardcover, 284 pages, \$55
NebraskaPress.unl.edu

The number of Chinese people in Montana was never large, peaking at more than 2,500 in 1890, declining to fewer than 250 by the 1950s. The reasons, as Mark T. Johnson explains in this well-crafted history of the Chinese in Montana, were racism, persecution and restrictive laws, which combined to prevent the very assimilation that critics said Chinese people should embrace and yet maintained they were incapable of achieving. But this is not a book about victimhood. Instead, Johnson shows how both men and women, rocked by national and global pressures as well as local discrimination, fought for their right, legally and economically, to reach for the American dream. Making the most of scant historical sources,

A Black Woman's West

The Life of Rose B. Gordon

by MICHAEL K. JOHNSON



Born in Montana Territory, Rose Beatrice Gordon (1883–1968) was the daughter of an African American couple that migrated west in the early 1880s. Gordon's life in White Sulphur Springs was ordinary in terms of its day-to-day struggles but extraordinary in its sum. Her story offers unique insights into the Black experience in the rural West in the twentieth century.

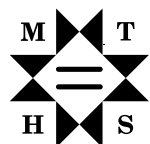
256 pages, photos, softcover,
ISBN 978-1940527-07-0, \$24.95



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Johnson also describes Chinese burial customs and how misinterpreted they were and explains through individual lives how Chinese women persevered in the face of gender prejudice. This is a model study.

– Charles E. Rankin

MICHAEL K. JOHNSON

A Black Woman's West: The Life of Rose B. Gordon

Montana Historical Society Press
Paperback, 265 pages, \$24.95
MHS.mt.gov

“It is a great adventure to be born with dark skin.” So wrote Rose B. Gordon (1883-1968) in a newspaper column titled, “Battle of the Pigment.” Gordon, the daughter of an emancipated slave who moved his family to the south-central Montana town of White Sulphur Springs, lived her life as a single woman who became an integral part of the place made famous by Montana writer Ivan Doig. For Gordon, as author Michael K. Johnson shows, life had indeed been an adventure – especially in making a living and gaining genuine love and respect in an overwhelmingly white rural West. Johnson does not slight Rose’s more famous brother, Taylor Gordon, but his story centers on Rose and the Gordon family. He shows how Rose built community relationships through writing, music, friendships and hard work to create home “as a protective place of memory.” This book brings one more deserving African American woman out of the shadows and onto the historical stage.

– Charles E. Rankin

CAROL A. LIPSCOMB

The Lady Makes Boots: Enid Justin and the Nocona Boot Company

Texas Tech University Press
Hardcover, 252 pages, \$29.95
TTUPress.org

For any fan of Western culture and history, this biography tells the story behind one of the West’s most treasured brands, Nocona Boots and its CEO, Enid Justin, who was born into the legendary J.H. Justin family, makers of Justin Boots, originally founded in Nocona, Texas. Resuming production in Nocona after her father and brothers moved Justin Boots to Fort Worth, Enid built a hugely successful company against all odds. Well-researched and beautifully written, Enid’s story is

entertaining and educational. She ran her company with style and grace for 53 years, even after enduring a stroke. Nothing could keep her off the factory floor, interfacing with employees. Once she retired in her 90s, the company was sold to the Justin Boot Company, becoming a part of Justin Brands and returning rightfully “to the family.” After her death, Enid was immortalized in the Cowgirl Hall of Fame Museum in Fort Worth and is listed among the most successful women leaders in Texas.

– Corinne Joy Brown

JENNIFER MANDEL

The Coveted Westside: How the Black Homeowners' Rights Movement Shaped Los Angeles

University of Nevada Press
Paperback, 351 pages, \$39.95
UNPress.nevada.edu

Jennifer Mandel’s deeply researched case study, in the University of Nevada Press’s “Urban West” series, examines the restrictive covenants and other racist policies that African Americans endured in Los Angeles through most of the 20th Century. Adverse court decisions, redlining and white neighborhood organizations confined Black homeowners to the city’s Eastside, an area realtors defined as “undesirable.” Despite racist opposition, Black professionals – physicians, attorneys, teachers and entertainers (including Academy Award-winning actress Hattie McDaniel) – were financially able to move into the Westside. Mandel’s research gets down to the level of street addresses and specific Westside neighborhoods. Fifty-seven pages of end notes and a 20-page bibliography of archival collections, interviews, legal cases, real estate and census records, along with published sources, testify to the quality of her research. The only problem I had was the inclusion of only one map; others focusing on specific neighborhoods would have been helpful. This excellent book fills a major gap in examining racial tensions in a growing Western city.

– Abraham Hoffman

BOB ROSEBROUGH

A Place of Thin Veil: Life and Death in Gallup, New Mexico

Rio Nuevo Publishers
Paperback, 360 pages, \$16.95
RioNuevo.com

A Place of Thin Veil is a penetrating, memorable, and – at times – touching account of life in Gallup, told through the eyes of an outsider who fell in love with the place. It is both at once a history of the western New Mexico city and a memoir infused with charming set pieces. Author Bob Rosebrough sees his adopted hometown, of which he eventually became mayor, as beset with a struggle between good and evil. Through this lens, he details the labor conflicts, rampant alcoholism and other hallmark woes of Gallup. Certainly, there are Gallupians who will not take kindly to his portrayal of their city. But it is clear the stories are not maliciously told. In fact, Rosebrough balances his account with wondrous and inspiring tales.

– James McGrath Morris

DAVID H. WILSON JR.

Northern Paiutes of the Malheur: High Desert Reckoning in Oregon Country

Bison Books
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– Robert Clark

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