

NONFICTION

GEORGE W.T. BECK (author),
LYNN J. HOUZE and **JEREMY M. JOHNSTON** (editors)

Beckoning Frontiers: The Memoir of a Wyoming Entrepreneur

University of Nebraska Press

Paperback, hardcover, 432 pages, \$29.95, \$75

NebraskaPress.unl.edu

Cody, Wyoming, is widely regarded as “Buffalo Bill’s town.” There’s no denying his promotional expertise helped the town grow and prosper. But behind the scenes, and denied credit he so richly deserved, was George Beck, the *real* founder of the town named after frontiersman/showman William F. Cody. Beck’s memoirs from childhood to old age make good reading. He seemed to know everybody who was anybody from Abe Lincoln to Jesse James and tried nearly every occupation from homesteader and sheepherder to prospector and surveyor. The incorporation of edits by Beck’s daughters rounds out the text to proffer a satisfying biography of a man it would have been nice to know. Includes an introduction and annotations by Lynn J. Houze, director and curator of the Cody Heritage Museum, and Jeremy M. Johnston, Tate Endowed Chair of American Western History at the Buffalo Bill Museum.

– Sandra K. Sagala

ART T. BURTON

Cherokee Bill: Black Cowboy – Indian Outlaw

Eakin Press

Trade paperback, 181 pages, \$17.95

EakinPress.com

Art T. Burton, a Spur finalist for *Black Gun, Silver Star: The Life and Legend of Frontier Marshal Bass Reeves*, a biography of a legendary black lawman, looks at another black frontiersmen – but this one wound up on the other side of the law. Cherokee Bill, born Crawford Goldsby, described himself as “one half white, one half Indian and one half Negro,” and his violent exploits in what is now Oklahoma caught the attention of newspapers nationwide, including the *New York Times*. There are many legends about Cherokee Bill, but Burton sorts out the facts.

RUSSELL COBB

The Great Oklahoma Swindle: Race, Religion, and Lies in America’s Weirdest State

Bison Books

Hardcover, 272 pages, \$29.95

BisonBooks.com

Weird doesn’t quite describe the Oklahoma many of us know intimately. Just listing much of its unbelievable history sets your teeth on edge. A land of wandering plains Indians followed by incursions of displaced tribes forcibly transplanted from the east; a promised land for African Americans who suffered a wholesale massacre; a powerful Socialist party controlling the state’s politics for decades; an armed farmers revolt; an insurrection led by a Muskogee named Crazy Snake; a statewide takeover by the Ku Klux Klan; oil booms; religious zealots; all evolving into a right-wing political hotbed. A native of Oklahoma, Russell Cobb’s research reveals his love of the state with a critical analysis.

– Vernon Schmid

JASON COLAVITO

The Mound Builder Myth: Fake History and the Hunt for a Lost White Race

University of Oklahoma Press

Paperback, 400 pages, \$24.95

OUPress.com

Indians, naturalist George-Louis Leclerc wrote, are weak, lazy, mentally deficient, and their men have abnormally small penises. Although he never met an American Indian, Leclerc, *Comte de Buffon*, authored a 36-volume history, including America’s racist, fabricated prehistory. Ben Franklin, Andrew Jackson, William Henry Harrison, Abraham Lincoln and the Mormon Church were among those believing that whites were the first Americans and a century-long theory that American Indians roots were Asian, Jews, displaced Aztecs, Danes, none of the above – and, above all, incapable of building the hundreds of mounds scattered from the East Coast to middle America. The damage done by pseudo-historians includes America’s psychosis regarding white nationalism, alternative facts, science and knowledge. This book is a must in all historical libraries.

– Vernon Schmid

JIM HAMILTON

Ozarks RFD: Selected Essays, 2010-2015

Cornerpost Press

Trade paperback, 248 pages, \$19.95

CornerpostPress.com

In “A Mind Like a Bucket of Bolts,” Jim Hamilton philosophizes on those collections of nuts and screws a lot of us keep in coffee cans – potentially useful little things you can’t bear to throw away. That’s how his mind works, he says, and his 109 short essays, originally appearing in newspapers from the small Missouri towns of Buffalo and Bolivar, are accordingly eclectic: how mud used to plague small farms; the smells of childhood (new sawdust, horses, smoke); fishing for the fighting carp; the pleasure of wearing overalls; and, though Hamilton eschews any sort of politics, memories of the Kennedy assassination and 9/11. Always nostalgic, Hamilton is homespun without being sentimental. Keep this handy for those times when you need a shot of hard-earned, humble wisdom.

– John Mort

BRADY HARRISON and **RANDI LYNN TANGLEN** (editors)

Teaching Western American Literature

University of Nebraska Press

Paperback, 322 pages, \$30

Nebraskapress.unl.edu

This reviewer (with an undergraduate English major) can attest to the dearth of texts in which the teaching of Western literature is the focus. Geared to the post-secondary level, a high school teacher writing instructional units can also benefit. Able practitioners like Wallace Stegner, Charles Portis, Willa Cather, Edward Abbey, et al, find frequent mention as do other lesser-known authors who have produced good relevant literature. Culture, gender, regionality, human rights and more find a voice within the pages with the contributors representing a wide breadth of experience and interest. Each chapter contains its own notes and bibliography that can lead the reader to greater depth and additional sources.

– Lynn Bueling

MICHAEL HILTZIK

Iron Empires: Robber Barons, Railroads, and the Making of Modern America

Houghton Mifflin Harcourt
Hardcover, 448 pages, \$30
HMHCo.com

Pulitzer Prize winner Michael Hiltzik writes a fascinating story about the impact of the expansion and consolidation of the nation's railroads on American history. The "robber barons," disparaged by muckraking journalists, are presented in vivid color. We learn what drove Cornelius Vanderbilt, Jay Gould, J. Pierpont Morgan, Edward H. Harriman and others to use the railroads to achieve fame, accumulate fortune and occasionally fail. Their financial shenanigans sparked stock-market booms and busts. Their stubborn determination created unprecedented conflicts between labor and management. The dreams and demands of these "unreasonable men," (George Bernard Shaw's descriptive term) resulted in some of the greatest industrial accomplishments of the 19th Century. Their desires to control their destinies through monopolization led to increased government regulation. Despised by politicians, most notably Theodore Roosevelt, their undaunting determination to succeed, amid accusations of corruption and greed, catapulted the United States into dominance among the world's economies.

— Robert Lee Murphy

LOUIS KRAFT

Sand Creek and the Tragic End of a Lifeway

University of Oklahoma Press
Hardcover, 430 pages, \$34.95
OUPress.com

Veteran historian Louis Kraft, author of *Ned Wynkoop and the Lonely Road from Sand Creek*, a 2012 Spur finalist, has dedicated much of his career to researching the incomprehensible massacre of a peaceful Cheyenne village in southeastern Colorado in 1864. Finally, his history of the massacre itself has been published. Kraft's book is easily the most thorough and best written account of a repulsive act that still hurts and sickens Americans of all races more than 150 years later. Kraft chronicles the events leading up to the massacre, the horrific attack, and the aftermath. "I stand by Sand Creek," the leader of the massacre, John Chivington, once said. Few stand by it today.

— Johnny D. Boggs

DJ LEE

Remote: Finding Home in the Bitterroots

Oregon State University Press
Paperback, 200 pages, \$18.95
OUPress.oregonstate.edu

A university professor who teaches creative writing, DJ Lee renders an example of the craft with this engaging memoir. She skillfully weaves history, outdoor adventure, and mystery into a neat package that pulls the reader into her world. She wastes no time at the outset when her father phones, "Did you hear Connie is missing?" Rooted in the Bitterroot mountain wilderness of Montana and Idaho, she is repeatedly drawn to the area to search for answers to this and other pieces of her life while skillfully blending past, present and future into her narrative.

— Lynn Bueling



JOE LIMA

Ghost Town Holdout

Wildcakes Records
\$15.98
JoeLima.com

All I know about Joe Lima I learned from this 10-track CD. He wrote five of the songs, the disc was recorded in a North Hollywood studio and, while the cuts are mostly Western in theme, Lima's singing style is jazzy, bluesy, addicting and, well, different. His unbridled delivery spurred me right out of a coronavirus-induced funk.

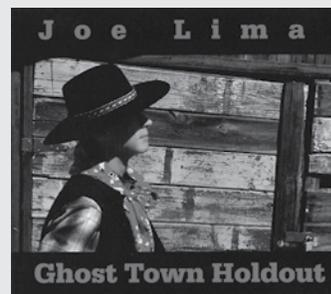
Lima is ably abetted in his bold, fresh approach by Gary Allegretto on harmonica, Greg Leisz on dobro and Darren Edwards on brushes (see what I mean by different).

The CD starts and ends with trail songs, both written by Lima — "Ride This Trail With Me" (*Hoofbeats making music as they crush the fallen leaves*) and "The Trail Back to You" (*I'm in this saddle because I know you're worth the battle*).

Both songs, like Lima's other originals, pay homage to the West, its landscape and its history, but in a far-out, infectious fashion that won't let listeners get Lima mixed up with the silver-screen serenaders of the past.

Which is interesting because two of the cover songs are from Western movies — "My Rifle, My Pony and Me," from 1959's *Rio Bravo*, and Johnny Marvin's "Dust," which Roy Rogers sang in 1938's *Under Western Stars*, Roy's first film as the star.

"Dust" suits Lima perfectly. Probably the only B-Western song ever nominated for an Academy Award, it's, well, different.



KEVIN AHART

Cowboy's Revenge

Texanna Records
\$8.99 (MP3 album through
Amazon Music)
KevinAhart.com

Here's another album that tells Western stories in a different way, via blues and soul-infused melancholy in this case.

Which is not to say it's a downer, even though 10 of the 11 cuts are about murder, suicide, vengeance killings or displaced people. It is instead seductive in the way that shadowy places sometimes are.

Ahart co-wrote each of the songs. His cool, crisp vocals, supported by impressive supporting musicians, especially on harmonica, dobro and fiddle, wring the best out of each piece — including the surprising bonus track, "Tomorrow I Ride to You," a love letter from the night-shrouded Utah plains.



R. ALTON LEE and STEVEN COX
When Sunflowers Bloomed Red: Kansas and the Rise of Socialism in America

University of Nebraska Press
Hardcover, 324 pages, \$29.95
NebraskaPress.unl.edu

R. Alton Lee and Steven Cox state “in the 1890s it is likely that no state in the Union was more radical than Kansas.” Extensive research supports the authors’ statement. Years ago, beloved WWA member and best-selling novelist Don Coldsmith said that movements of any importance (good or bad) in the United States began first in Kansas. He cited the Border Wars, desegregation of schools and Creationism in schools as a few examples. But who would have thought that Kansas was also at one time a hotbed of Socialist activity? The term “Socialist” includes a broad spectrum of activity in this book. *Sunflowers* traces the evolution of the movement from Populism to a flirtation with the Communist Party of America. Chapters contain detailed analysis of successful socialism versus movements that failed. There is a delightful subtle conclusion that explains why the movement died. The state is ornery. Socialism was based

on class awareness and Kansans would have none of that!

– Charlotte Hinger

ROBERT S. McPHERSON
Traders, Agents and Weavers: Developing the Northern Navajo Region

University of Oklahoma Press
Hardcover, 368 pages, \$39.95
OUPress.com

Few things offer readers as much joy as a well-researched, well-written slice of history. Robert S. McPherson, a specialist in the complicated history of the Navajo and their interaction with non-natives, returns to familiar and beloved territory in this newest book. Using the historical record and quotes from people directly involved, he tells the fascinating story of the way traders, trading posts and the government shaped the development of Navajo weaving. The book spans a swath of time, beginning before the construction of the beautiful stone buildings at Chaco Canyon and ending in 2017 with an interview with the owners of the famous Two Grey Hills post. The book documents the collaborative work between traders and Navajo weavers, partnerships that worked well

for mutual benefit. Filled with valuable insights and, best of all, the voices of people for whom these posts were a lifeline, this book is a welcome addition to Navajo studies.

– Anne Hillerman

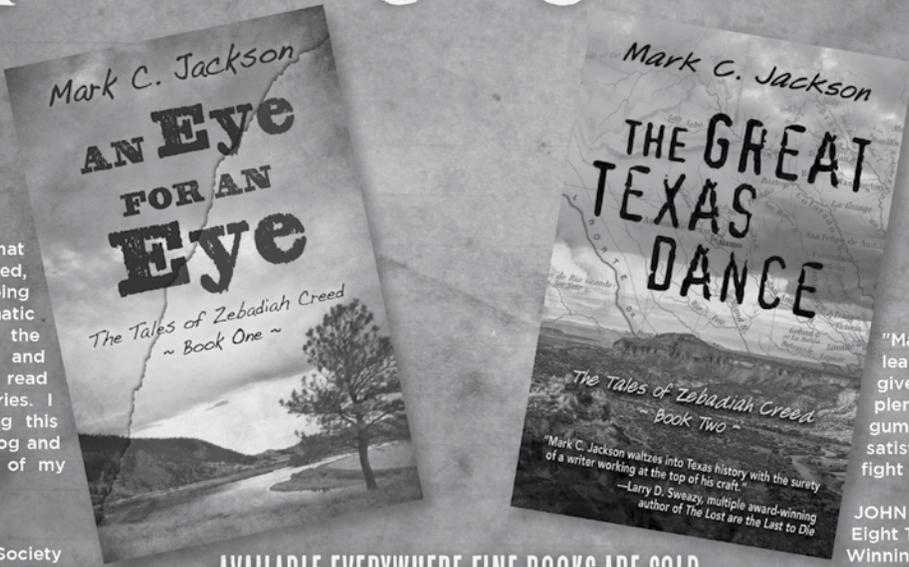
CHAR MILLER and CLAY S. JENKINSON (editors)
Theodore Roosevelt: Naturalist in the Arena

University of Nebraska Press
Trade paperback, 264 pages, \$24.95
NebraskaPress.unl.edu

The editors gather 11 essays on Theodore Roosevelt the conservationist, rather than the president or war hero. Darrin Lunde describes Roosevelt’s youthful experiments with taxidermy, in the process giving a tutorial on how collecting and preserving specimens is foundational to conservation. Barb Rosenstock affectionately describes the ebullient Roosevelt’s unlikely friendship with an older, reserved John Muir, forged on a camping trip to Yosemite that ran into a bitter snowstorm. John F. Reiger portrays an important mentor of Roosevelt’s, George Bird Grinnell, who founded the Audubon Society.

FROM AWARD WINNING, CRITICALLY ACCLAIMED AUTHOR, SINGER-SONGWRITER

MARK C. JACKSON



AN EYE FOR AN EYE
The Tales of Zebadiah Creed ~ Book One ~

THE GREAT TEXAS DANCE
The Tales of Zebadiah Creed ~ Book Two ~

“I loved this book. What an exciting, fast-paced, action-packed, gripping story with a dramatic conclusion! This is the author’s first novel, and I will be anxious to read the next in the series. I had difficulty putting this book down. The dialog and drama make it one of my favorites this year.”

JEFF WESTERHOFF,
The Historical Novel Society

“Mark C. Jackson writes lean, leathery prose, gives his characters plenty of grit and gumption, and tells a satisfying story of Texas’s fight for independence.”

JOHNNY D. BOGGS,
Eight Time Spur Award
Winning Author

“Mark C. Jackson waltzes into Texas history with the surety of a writer working at the top of his craft.”
—Larry D. Sweazy, multiple award-winning author of *The Lost are the Last to Die*

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With Grinnell, Roosevelt founded the Boone and Crockett Club, which moved actively to protect the remaining buffalo herds, particularly in Yellowstone. These are lively essays that describe Roosevelt as a likable, vigorous human being, rather than an icon.

– John Mort

CLYDE A. MILNER II and BRIAN Q. CANNON
(editors)

Reconstruction and Mormon America

University of Oklahoma Press
Hardcover, 296 pages, \$34.95
OUPress.com

Twelve contributors provide 12 dense and heavy essays about the Americanization of the Mormons in this book. The editors have structured their exploration with four essays each in background issues, context and aftermath. You will find plenty to like in each of them, though I admit I bear a fondness for those exploring violence and federal power. The aftermaths were much dominated by an exploration of Lost Causes. This is not a book for the faint of heart. Passive construction and disregard for the reader abide, but the major issue is the subject. Whether in the South, in our treatment of the Indians or in the reality of how it was lived by the Mormons and my Mormon ancestors, reconstruction is difficult to understand intellectually and morally. It is fraught with pain.

– Edward Massey

BENJAMIN C. MONTROYA

Risking Immeasurable Harm: Immigration Restriction and U.S.-Mexican Diplomatic Relations, 1924-1932

University of Nebraska Press
Hardcover, 326 pages, \$55
NebraskaPress.unl.edu

This deeply researched study assesses the efforts to restrict Mexican immigration to the United States during the 1920s. With Western Hemisphere immigration exempt from the 1924 Quota Act, restrictionists argued against Mexican migrants as racially inferior. Several attempts were made to enact restrictive legislation, but the State Department viewed such efforts as inimical to U.S.-Mexico diplomatic relations. State Department officials presented the compromise of administrative restriction that the Mexican government could accept, a policy that succeeded in reducing the number of Mexican migrants. During the early years of the Great Depression, thousands of Mexicans repatriated to Mexico, finding employment in the U.S. too difficult to obtain. This is a book for specialists; the general reader may be confused over the author's conflation of "immigration" (going to a country) and "emigration" (leaving a country). The bibliography mistitles Lawrence Cardoso's *Mexican Emigration to the United States* as "Immigration."

– Abraham Hoffman

ERIN MURRAH-MANDRIL

In the Mean Time: Temporal Colonization and the Mexican American Literary Tradition

University of Nebraska Press
Hardcover, 173 pages, \$50
NebraskaPress.unl.edu

Destry Rides Again

Criterion
Blu-ray, DVD, \$39.95, \$25.95
Criterion.com

It's only fitting that the production of 1939's *Destry Rides Again* seemed like a Western gambler's long shot. Producer Joe Pasternak was known for musicals, and the Max Brand story he chose had already been made with Tom Mix. Pasternak hired a comedy specialist for the adaptation, then proposed James Stewart, in his first Western, and Marlene Dietrich



C. COURTNEY JOYNER

as the leads. For economy-minded Universal, borrowing Stewart from MGM was a leap, but to use Dietrich, who had been labeled "box-office poison," seemed like suicide. Pasternak's only ace was silent-film veteran George Marshall as director.

Of course, the gamble paid off, and *Destry Rides Again* was a hit that revived Dietrich's career and firmly established Stewart's pre-World War II image. Stewart's Tom

Destry wasn't a comedic tenderfoot, but a sly fellow who knows what he's doing when facing scofflaws and uses humor instead of a six-shooter. The problem is Dietrich's "Frenchy" who, along with beau Brian Donlevy, controls everything in town from saloons to the local courts. Donlevy won't be stopped by Stewart's homespun solutions, forcing the deputy to pick up a gun, which he does damn well.

Destry Rides Again effortlessly combined music, comedy, Western tradition and tragic drama, and Criterion's new Blu-ray allows us to lose ourselves in this piece of Classic-Hollywood history. Pasternak had no idea that when Dietrich belted out "See What the Boys in the Back Room Will Have" it would become a scene to be imitated for decades. Dietrich is bawdy and wonderful in her musical moments, but when she falls for Stewart their personal chemistry is scorching and, ultimately, heartbreaking.

Marshall freed Billy Gilbert, Mischa Auer and Una Merkel to do their comedic best, while letting Donlevy supply the true villainy. Stewart wryly observes the characters around him, not acting like a traditional Western hero until he's pushed too far. It's a remarkable balancing act guided by a director who later tried, and failed, to repeat it when he remade *Destry* in 1954 with Audie Murphy.

The extras on this beautiful release include analysis by film historian Imogen Sara Smith and an audio interview with Marshall about his early days at Universal. *Destry Rides Again* broke traditions, sent up clichés and laid the groundwork for a different kind of Western that took its violence seriously as its characters showed their humanity through humor. This release does it justice.

This book deconstructs writings of four Hispanic authors: Maria Amparo Ruiz de Burton's *The Squatter and the Don* (1872); Miguel Antonio Otero's three-volume autobiography *My Life on the Frontier* (1935-39); Adina De Zavala's *History and Legends of the Alamo* (1917); and Jovita Gonzalez's *Caballero: A Historical Novel*, with co-author Margaret Eimer (1930s). Long neglected, these works were reprinted in the 1990s by the Recovering the U.S.-Hispanic Literary Heritage project. Erin Murrah-Mandril uses these writings to deal with the period from the U.S.-Mexico War in 1848 to the early 20th Century, a time when Mexican Americans were erased from the historical record and lost property and civil rights. "In the Mean Time" refers to the temporal delay when these books were written, when racism was a factor in delaying citizenship and, in the case of New Mexico, statehood. College students will find this dense reading, and a dictionary may not define some multisyllabic words. As such, this book is intended for specialists who explore Mexican American literature.

— Abraham Hoffman

AMANDA L. PAIGE, FULLER L. BUMPERS and DANIEL F. LITTLEFIELD JR.

Chickasaw Removal

Chickasaw Press
Hardcover, 341 pages, \$34.95
ChickasawPress.com

The 400-mile journey from the Chickasaw's homeland, primarily Mississippi, to the territory set aside for them in present-day Oklahoma was fraught with intertribal dissension. Like other Southeastern Indian tribes forcibly removed from their homelands, the Chickasaws were besieged by governmental pressure and devious politics. Their removal is described in careful detail by the authors, writing in a novelistic style. Readers are captured by the personal story of many key Chickasaw figures whose descendants remain essential in Chickasaw leadership. A fine addition to the historical record of the tragic removal era.

— Vernon Schmid

BETSY GAINES QUAMMEN
American Zion: Cliven Bundy, God & Public Lands in the West

Torrey House Press
Trade Paperback, \$18.95, 250 pages
TorreyHouse.org

It's hard, maybe impossible, to love Western lands and see the abuse we inflict upon it. "Public lands are precious and beloved places to westerners and non-westerners alike," Betsy Gaines Quammen writes. "They are finite and fragile and have very real thresholds of tolerance to ruination." Mormons have been overgrazing the Great Basin and have not liked the government ever since Brigham Young declared during the Sagebrush Rebellion in July 1847, that if any "officer of the United States should ever dictate to him," he would "hang them on a gibbet." Cliven Bundy's clown car "Y'all Qaeda" clan, which seized and trashed an Oregon wildlife preserve in 2016, claim their holy mission is to sanctify public lands for sacred cows. Bundy has been overgrazing and freeloading on our public range since 1993, and therefore owes the American people close to a million bucks. Those who believe the public land "was made for you and me" and not a band of crackpots who want to sell our birthright to their powerful pals,

TWO MEN—A WILD STALLION—A PHOTOGRAPH THAT CHANGED THEIR LIVES FOREVER

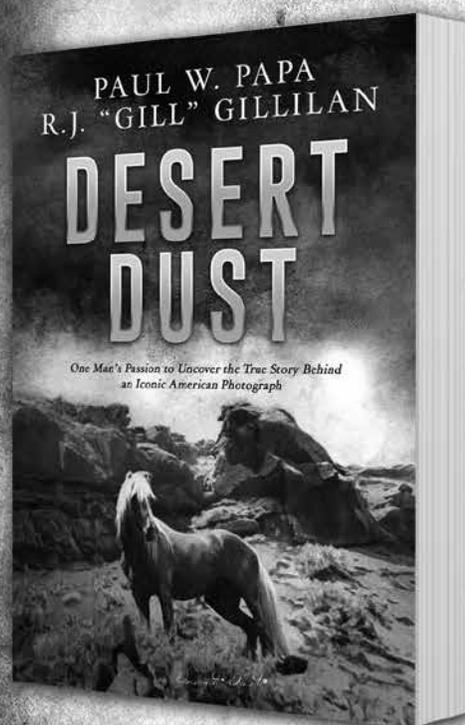
On the morning of July 12, 1945, as residents of Rawlins, Wyoming were waking up to an article in their local newspaper about rounding up wild horses in the Red Desert, in that very place, a palomino stallion was losing his fight for freedom. The horse would come to inspire paintings, wood carvings, and sculptures and would become the star of an Academy Award-nominated film. All while the two men battled for ownership of his image and his copyrighted name, resulting in one of the most unique rulings ever handed down by a court.



"Richly researched and with firsthand knowledge of the subject matter, the authors have spun a tale of intrigue, jealousy, conflict and personal pride."

—Author T.R. Harris

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will love *American Zion*. Western writers who make a living raising cattle probably won't.

– Will Bagley

TOBY SMITH

Crazy Fourth

University of New Mexico Press
Paperback, 200 pages, \$24.95
UNMPress.com

Former *Albuquerque Journal* sportswriter Toby Smith takes us on a trip to Las Vegas – no, not that one, but the one in New Mexico – where Jack Johnson will do battle with Jim Flynn for the heavyweight championship. Most fans of the *sweet science* know the outcome of the bout before reading the book. But really, the boxing match is not the story. The beauty of this publication is the retelling of how the fight came about, how Las Vegas became the improbable site, and the squirrely characters who helped make this New Mexico town the center of the sporting world for one day – July 4, 1912.

– John Neely Davis

ADAM M. SOWARDS

An Open Pit Visible from the Moon: The Wilderness Act and the Fight to Protect Miners Ridge and the Public Interest

University of Oklahoma Press
Hardcover, 236 pages, \$34.95
OUPress.com

This is an important case study of the attempt by Kennecott Copper Corporation to open a mine at Miners Ridge in the northern Cascade Range in Washington in the 1960s. Adam Sowards effectively demonstrates that this controversy involved much more than corporation against environmentalists. Considerable turf rivalry existed between the Department of Agriculture and the Department of the Interior, preservationists against utilitarian conservationists, plus issues of enforcing an 1872 federal mining law and its exemption from mining from the 1964 Wilderness Act. The cast of characters ranges from Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas to Kennecott CEO Frank R. Milliken, to Sierra Club leader David Brower, to college student Benjamin A. Shaine. These and other public officials, environmentalist groups and people concerned about the violation of a remote but beautiful wilderness area help make this a fascinating account of the struggle and complexities of envi-

ronmental preservation.

– Abraham Hoffman

NICOLE DAWN STRATHMAN

Through Native Lens

University of Oklahoma Press
Hardcover, 227 pages, \$48.55
OUPress.com

This story of American Indian contact with Euro-American photographers and its evolution into the development of American Indian professional photography is an excellent piece of historical work. In a large format filled with photographs by white and Indian photographers, *Through Native Lens* is eye-catching as well as revealing of the individual photographers and their subjects. Among the stories are ones like famed Edward Curtis convincing Navajos to let him film their Nightway ceremony. They agreed. But Curtis had to design their costumes and masks so the dancers would not violate their religious beliefs. Then, as he filmed, they danced backward with rattles in the opposite hands so the spells would not be violated. Curtis never knew. A fascinating historical record in word and graphics.

– Vernon Schmid

ROBERT M. UTLEY

The Last Sovereigns: Sitting Bull and the Resistance of the Free Lakotas

University of Nebraska Press
Hardcover, 200 pages, \$24.95
NebraskaPress.unl.edu

Robert M. Utley reminds us why he is the dean of Western historians with this artfully crafted story of the consequential friendship between the great Lakota chief and a flamboyant North-West Mounted Police officer. Drawing on archival materials in Canada and the United States, Utley describes Sitting Bull's determined, but ultimately futile, effort to maintain his freedom during the Lakotas' four-year Canadian exile after their defeat of Lieutenant Colonel George Armstrong Custer at the Little Big Horn. While diplomats in Ottawa and Washington maneuvered to compel Sitting Bull's return to the United States, NWMP Major James M. Walsh, whom Utley describes as "the only white man Sitting Bull ever trusted," worked to protect and advise the Indians. Post trader Jean Louis Legaré stepped forward after the Canadian government sidelined the troublesome

Walsh, feeding the starving Lakotas at his own expense and ultimately convincing Sitting Bull to give himself up at Fort Buford, Dakota. Nothing turned out well for any of the principals. Walsh ended his career in obscurity, Legaré was nearly bankrupted, and Sitting Bull died in a scuffle with Indian Police sent to arrest him during the Ghost Dance unrest. Utley revisits ground he covered in *The Lance and the Shield*, his acclaimed biography of Sitting Bull, but with deeper and more nuanced attention to the human drama behind the Lakota leader's agonizing decision to surrender along with the last free Great Plains native people. An engrossing read from a master storyteller.

– Bruce J. Dinges

R.G. YOHO

The Nine Lives of Charles E. Lively: The Deadliest Man in the West Virginia-Colorado Coal Mine Wars

Fox Run Publishing
Paperback, 168 pages, \$19.95
FoxRunPub.com

R.G. Yoho's study brings to light the violent disputes between coal companies and miners in the Appalachia Mountains and Colorado in the early 20th Century. Dismal working conditions coupled with poor wages compelled the unionized workers to challenge the mine owners' refusal to negotiate. Charles E. Lively, seemingly a union member, entered the story as an undercover detective working for an agency hired by the mine owners and became a central actor in the violent front engineered by the mine owners. Yoho presents a well-researched, scholarly work heavily footnoted and indexed.

– Lynn Bueling

POETRY

RED SHUTTLEWORTH

Wolf Moon: Poems

Blue Horse Press
Trade paperback, 50 pages, \$15
BlueHorsePress.com

With *Wolf Moon*, Red Shuttleworth adds to his growing body of work. Highly creative verse inhabits the pages; it is helpful to know he's personally survived a health crisis. Lazarus-like, he is "Restored after a dozen days dead," but he remembers a blunt doctor ask, "You

still drink? Might as well at this dice roll." Poems reminisce past experiences, maybe his, or maybe from the depths of coma-dreams and rendered to the page with his colorful rough-edged imagination. In recovery and finding his voice again, he is "speaking from slender books." Shuttleworth's work is singular.

— Lynn Bueling

JUVENILE

CAMI CARLSON (author) and
GREG WHITE (illustrator)
Run, Cow, Run!

Independently published
Paperback, 36 pages, \$6.95

Cows are not known for their running ability, but Gladdy the Cow is a cow with big dreams. She knows from birth that she wants to run, and she works hard to accomplish her goal. Gladdy's owner, Old Farmer Jim, knows his cow is special and enters her in the county fair race, where of course she is the only entrant of the *bovine* nature. Written in rhyming format, *Run, Cow, Run!* teaches children the importance of dreaming big and then working hard to accom-

plish their dreams. The author is a high school English and history teacher and an advocate against bullying.

— Rocky Gibbons

FICTION

DANIEL BOYD
The Devil & Streak Wilson

Montag Press
Trade paperback, 202 pages, \$15.95
MontagPress.com

Making a deal with the Devil is never a good idea. Teenager Streak Wilson, known for his unflawed shooting, hates being called "Kid" because he's young with light "peach fuzz" on his chin, has no money, no girl and no home other than the ranch he works on. Life is totally unfulfilling. And then the Devil comes along. He offers Streak the ability to live his dream without losing his soul. Except, there's a price. Framed as a horse thief, chased by bounty hunters, hounded by the Devil who wants "the makings" of a cigarette, Streak confronts the deadliest killer in the territory — a man who looks an awful lot like him. This terrific crossover Western

will keep readers turning pages, shaking heads and thoroughly enjoying a wild tale.

— Melody Groves

LOUISE ERDRICH
The Night Watchman

Harper Collins
Hardcover, 451 pages, \$28.99
HarperCollins.com

The 2017 Owen Wister Award recipient draws from the life of her grandfather in this evocative novel of dispossession and survival, set during the terrible times of the "termination" movement of the mid-1950s. Louise Erdrich employs multiple narrators (including those of troubled roving spirits and even a couple of randy horses) to tell the parallel stories of a tribal chairman's efforts to save the Turtle Mountain Reservation in North Dakota from dissolution and a young woman's coming-of-age as she searches for her missing sister. Issues of American Indian identity and the scourge of murdered and missing indigenous women are given moving voice through a strongly realized cast of characters. As always with Erdrich, the female characters are beautifully drawn, and her gift

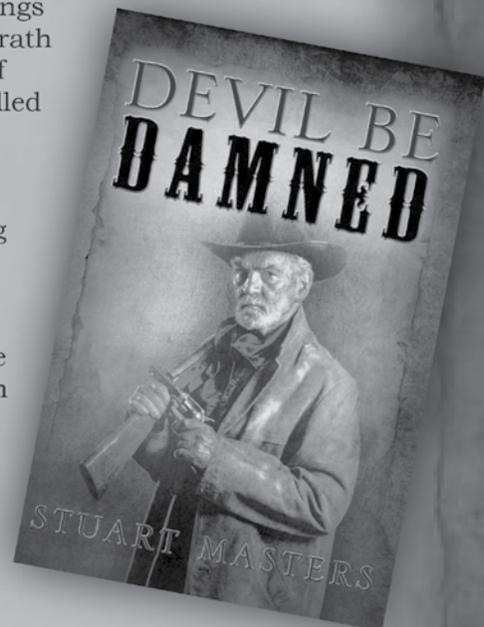
DEVIL BE DAMNED

YOUNG TOBY GRIMES is aware that vengeance belongs to the Lord. But he grows impatient waiting for the wrath of God to appear and sets out to seek the only kind of judgment he knows is appropriate for the one who killed his mother. DEATH!

Determination to **DELIVER HIS OWN BRAND OF JUSTICE** and to keep a promise he made to his dying mother sends him onward into the path of a murderous gunslinger.

In this epic drama set in the old West, anger and hate drives our young hero to decisions that will affect him for the rest of his life . . . if he can live through it all.

Books can be purchased directly from his webpage at <https://outskirtspress.com/devilbedamned> or by visiting amazon.com and barnesandnoble.com.



for conveying the land and people she knows so intimately is on rich display.
– Kirk Ellis

E. ALAN FLEISCHAUER
Rescued: A JT Thomas Novel
Blue Ox Books
Paperback, 256 pages, \$9.99

John Thurgood Thomas wasn't looking for trouble, treasure or love. But when JT comes across a wagon carrying kidnapped women, his Sharps rifle puts him on a path to all of those, along with murder and mayhem. The characters are well thought out, and it's an interesting and unusual story, set first on the Colorado plains then moving to the gilded hotels and restaurants of New York City. The dialogue was a bit stilted for what I thought folks would have talked like on the frontier, and at the conclusion of the book there were lots of unanswered questions and loose ends (the author's plan is to entice you to read the sequel, but this particular reader prefers more closure), but all in all this is a solid debut novel. This first installment in the "JT Thomas" series was a Laramie Award finalist.

– Rocky Gibbons

JAMES J. GRIFFIN
Murder Most Fowl – Texas Style: A Texas Ranger James C. Blawcyzk Novel
Fire Star Press
Trade paperback, 223 pages, \$14.99
PrairieRosePublications.com

Texas Ranger James Blawcyzk is called upon the scene of a multiple murder in a small Texas town. Blawcyzk discovers the hanging victims are one-half of a marijuana-growing, middle-aged lesbian couple and an unknown chicken. After that, the murders pile up, becoming more gruesome and always including a fowl killed in an identical way as its human counterpart. The author has created a likable protagonist in Blawcyzk and carries us along in his day-to-day life. He fondly explains "Texanisms" while he barbecues with friends, goes river tubing, and enters a rodeo contest. The killer is uncovered in the end, but the mystery takes second place in this "life of a Ranger" book.

– Vicky J. Rose

MARK C. JACKSON
The Great Texas Dance: The Tales of Zebadiah Creed: Book Two

Five Star Publishing
Hardcover, 297 pages, \$25.95
Gale.Cengage.com/FiveStar

Mark C. Jackson whisks readers along on a fast-paced adventure set against the backdrop of the Texas Revolution. Picking up where the last novel ended, *The Great Texas Dance* begins with the final hours of the Alamo, where young Zeb Creed barely avoids becoming a victim of Santa Anna's fatal assault on the old mission when he is asked to deliver an urgent message to General Sam Houston for reinforcements. From there, Zeb witnesses firsthand the sacrifices made by the Texans as he narrowly survives the massacre at Goliad, and ultimately the final conflict – and Houston's victory – at San Jacinto. Despite a storyline that seems to put Zeb at the center of many of the major conflicts, this is not a set-'em-up, knock-'em-down kind of book. Zeb's travels come off as realistic and plausible.

– Michael Zimmer

RICK O'SHEA AND MICHAEL W. SHURGOT

Green River, Wyoming 1866. Sheriff James Talbot, aided by Irish/Cheyenne Civil War veteran and gunslinger Johnny Redfeather, struggles to maintain peace between cattle baron Brent Tompkin and Chief Running Bear's Southern Cheyenne Tribe. Jeremiah Staggart, a Civil War deserter driven nearly mad by the murder of his family in 1863, arrives in Green River seeking solace. In the final battle at Greens Canyon the fate of Running Bear's Tribe, Johnny Redfeather, and Jeremiah's search for redemption and his lost family collide.

"O'Shea and Shurgot illuminate their story with wonderful details of life on the frontier. "On a rickety chair beside the doors sat a tall, thin man wearing a greasy, lop-sided top hat, a dirty, white cotton shirt, a red bandanna and a string of beans around his neck, leather pants and old boots so worn that Staggart wondered what kept them on the man's feet."... The characters are well drawn and embellished with significant backstory. For those looking for a quick read about violence and injustice in the Old West."

– Kirkus Review

"One of the most moving elements of this novel, to me, was the psychological development of Jeremiah Staggart who not only struggles with the kind of God who would allow a horrific Civil War and the slaughter of his wife and son, but also comes to believe that a Cheyenne woman and her son are the embodiments of his murdered family. Jeremiah's struggle moves the work onto a higher level than your normal Western... For a novel that works to reveal history, emotion, and tension, Green River Saga delivers. I seldom read Westerns, but this novel captured my attention and my interest."

– Jack Estes, PhD New York City

GREEN RIVER SAGA A NOVEL



Rick O'Shea AND Michael W. Shurgot

Available in print from bookstores and Amazon.com, and E-book from Amazon.com

CRAIG JOHNSON***Next to Last Stand***

Viking

Hardcover, 336 pages, \$28

PenguinRandomHouse.com

When Korean War veteran Charley Lee dies at the Veterans' Home of Wyoming, neither Sheriff Walt Longmire nor Charley's friends are terribly surprised. The surprise was a shoe box containing \$1 million, plus a painting that seems to be a practice piece for a larger one. It strikes a familiar chord in Walt, sending him on a hunt to identify what he suspects may be a part of the famous *Custer's Last Fight* beer poster. But could it be that Charley has the complete painting, which supposedly burned in a fire in the 1940s? Turns out Walt isn't the only one who wants to know. A Longmire novel is like an old friend. It always makes you happy to visit with the crew, Vic, Ruby and Dog, especially when Walt goes into action.

– Carol Crigger

DARYNDA JONES***A Bad Day For Sunshine***

St. Martin's Press

Hardcover, 390 pages, \$27.99

us.macmillan.com

Strong characters people the town of Del Sol, New Mexico, in this romantic suspense tale. Most are extremely quirky and as Sunshine Vicram takes over the role of new sheriff, she has to deal with a bunch of them. Challenges on her first day include getting run over by a Mercedes, dealing with the kidnapping of a teenager, looking for an escaped convict and fighting through a blizzard. And her 14-year-old daughter is having just such a day herself, what with making enemies left and right and falling in love. Sharp dialogue and pointed characterization carry the suspenseful plot in a story rife with heartwarming friendships – once you get past the old enemies. My complaint? Way too much giggling.

– Carol Crigger

JANE KIRKPATRICK***Something Worth Doing: A Novel of an Early Suffragist***

Revell

Trade paperback, 314 pages, \$15.99

BakerPublishingGroup.com

Through meticulous research and her lively imagination, Jane Kirkpatrick continues her tradition of bringing

historic characters to life. Kirkpatrick's portrayal of early suffragist Abigail Scott, who fought for women's rights in Oregon in the late 1800s, is another tour de force. Sometimes I dislike the main character early on, when she neglects her husband and children, but as she matures and he supports her in the cause, their relationship is sealed. Jane Kirkpatrick has a stunning ability to make ordinary life fascinating.

– Linda Jacobs

JON LAND***Strong From the Heart***

Forge Books

Hardcover, 368 pages, \$27.99

us.macmillan.com

Strong From the Heart features female Texas Ranger Caitlin Strong and her lover, Cort Wesley Masters. When Masters' teenage son barely survives an opioid overdose, Strong and Masters are made aware of massive amounts of the drug pervading Texas. Then more than 300 residents of a town die in their sleep. Caitlin and the Rangers must deal with the 300, while Masters vows to find who supplied his son. A Jon Land novel is always action-packed and features crime that could be ripped from today's headlines. In this novel, Land sets the corruption out in front as he takes on crooked politicians and Big Pharma. Crime-busting Guillermo Paz is back with quotes and bits of advice gleaned from an array of sages.

– Carol Crigger

KEITH McCAFFERTY***The Bangtail Ghost***

Viking

Hardcover, 320 pages, \$26

PenguinRandomHouse.com

Tension mounts from the first chapter as Sean Stranahan is stalked by a cougar while packing an elk quarter out of the mountains. But when a woman goes missing and the half-eaten remains of her body are found, he realizes he has had a close call with a man-eating cat. After Stranahan joins Sheriff Martha Ettinger in the hunt for the cat, their investigation reveals more people missing in the Montana mountains. One of them is a child, presumed kidnapped by his father. But was he kidnapped or did the cat take him? This is what Sean, Martha, wildlife experts, dog handlers and trackers rush to discover as the body count adds up. And for this, they

enlist the help of cat expert, Frederick "Drick" Blake. As always in this series, you'll learn about the wildlife, as well as the lowlife, that populates the West.

– Carol Crigger

MICHAEL McGARRITY***Head Wounds: A Kevin Kerney Novel***

W.W. Norton & Company

Hardcover, 356 pages, \$26.95

WWNorton.com

The first novel in Michael McGarrity's series about law-enforcement officer Kevin Kerney was *Tularosa* in 1996. *Head Wounds*, the 17th installment (including a historical Western trilogy that focuses on Kerney's ancestors), ends the series with an intense story about a Mexican drug cartel and its murderous effect on the U.S. border region. Unusual for a series, Kerney and related characters aged from novel to novel. Kerney is now 70, and his half-Native-American son, Detective Clayton Istee, is struggling to adjust to traumas similar to what Kerney himself experienced in his law-enforcement career. The Southwest, especially New Mexico, is described dramatically amid numerous impressive action sequences.

– David Morrell

GERRY ROBINSON***The Cheyenne Story: An Interpretation of Courage***

Sweetgrass Books

Trade paperback, 298 pages, \$19.95

SweetgrassBooks.com

The Cheyenne Story, a historical novel that won this year's Western Heritage Wrangler Award from the National Cowboy and Western Heritage Museum in Oklahoma City, is set five months after the Battle of the Little Big Horn. The author, a tribal member and direct descendent of both major characters, delivers a powerful story based on real-life events. The author's great-great-grandfather, Bill Rowland, an interpreter for the Army who was married to a Cheyenne woman, rode into the Cheyenne winter camp with attacking troops. His brother-in-law, Little Wolf, had sensed coming trouble and wanted the tribe to move to safety. Stronger voices prevailed, though, which resulted in the camp suffering a devastating attack and a painful aftermath. A glossary interprets the liberal usage of Cheyenne vocabulary. Readers can look forward to volumes two and three in the promised trilogy.

– Lynn Bueling