
Frank Vandiver noted in The Southwest: South or West? (1975) that “a haunting feel of home, or place,” suffused southern life. “Place is a vital touchstone to the understanding of Southerners” (pp. 12–13). Historian Dan Flores is the foremost writer on sense of place for the Plains region, an expanse of land that stretches hundreds of miles into the states bordering the Texas Panhandle, an area he calls the “Near Southwest.” Horizontal Yellow takes its name from the Navajo term for the sea of yellow grass that stretches to the horizon in all directions. The book’s essays on the past and present and on the personal meaning of the area tackle “myth, wilderness, wolves, horses, deserts, mountains, rivers, and human endeavor from Cabeza de Vaca to Georgia O’Keeffe” (jacket).

Lively, vivid, and intensely personal, Horizontal Yellow fills a gap in American environmental historiography, which has largely bypassed the plains of Texas and New Mexico. Horizontal Yellow is one of the best and most evocative books in the burgeoning literature about place. Flores shares his love of a land that most see through car windows on their way to someplace else, expressing his passion through his desire “to go native,” “to develop a sense of place centered in the fundamental world,” “to imagine [himself] a part of the natural community of plants and animals and the regional forces around” him (p. 141). The book in part constitutes an elegy for the lost beauty of the landscape the Indians knew before whites arrived to divide it up and wring a profit from it, a landscape Flores wants to restore and protect.

Something of a sequel to Caprock Canyonlands: Journeys into the Heart of the Southern Plains (1990), Horizontal Yellow revisits many of the same subjects. Flores is at his best in chapters that weave together history, natural
history, and personal history around subjects like the annihilation of wild horses or wolves. Few authors come to mind who could handle these topics as successfully. Those readers who like their history straight will balk at his most ambitious chapter, a fictional report from an imagined 1806 exploration up the Red River that Flores creates from later accounts. If its Jefferson-era tone proves difficult to sustain, and the changing ecology of the Plains casts doubt on his use of sources from fifty and seventy years later, the essay remains nevertheless an interesting attempt to imagine the Plains inhabitants and wildlife before White settlement.

*Horizontal Yellow* both succeeds and raises questions as a first-rate contribution to the literature of place, and few know the region as well as Flores, who has traveled it and explored much of it on foot. But in a surprising, ironic twist, alienated by Texans' unshakable conservatism, the author, in the end, lights out for the mountains of Montana. Flores's westward-looking sense of place collides head-on with Vandiver's southern feel of place. One hopes that the deep love of the land and vision for its restored ecological health that pervade *Horizontal Yellow* and *Caprock Canyonlands* will one day bridge the two views. The author has much to teach and wisdom to share, if we will listen.

*Mark Stoll*
*Texas Tech University*


Law professor Debra Donahue has contributed a multifaceted and well-documented argument against livestock grazing on public lands in the arid West. Like a prosecuting attorney, she indicts ranchers for using taxpayer subsidies to prop up a lifestyle that is otherwise economically unsustainable. She tracks the roots of this dependency to the willingness of the government and general public to support the myth of cowboy culture as developed in literature and film. Building upon her university training and professional experience in wildlife biology, range ecology, and the law, Donahue consults an impressive array of sources to support her arguments.
Professor Donahue’s book makes a convincing economic and social case that public-land livestock grazing as historically practiced often was (and is) a mistake. Livestock grazing frequently degrades the quality of western lands for other public uses such as recreation, and soil and water conservation. In the more arid parts of the West, grazing usually requires an economic subsidy to survive. Ranching contributes little to world or U.S. food production, and benefits only a select few—the permittees—at the expense of many who value public lands for alternative uses.

The book’s argument that grazing reduces biodiversity proves less compelling. The sections supporting this argument suffer from heavy reliance on secondary sources compounded by selective referencing of research that supports the author’s views. Although heavy, continuous grazing, evenly distributed across the landscapes, admittedly may reduce biodiversity, numerous scientific studies (largely unreferenced in the book) have shown that grazing in many cases elevates rather than reduces biodiversity. Biodiversity often increases with spatially patchy grazing, with woody-plant proliferation caused by grazing, and with grazing-induced increases in prairie dogs and some other rodent populations. The truth lies in the details.

Consider the variety of large grazers such as the prehistoric bison, horses, camels, and mammoths that roamed the West to the end of the Pleistocene ten thousand years ago. They grazed the same grass species that exist today. Since the Pleistocene’s end, bison grazed many western ranges, often heavily, until their demise in the late 1800s. Donahue’s vision of the “natural” seems to fall in that anomalous interlude between the fall of large native grazers and the rise of domestic ones.

The value of Donahue’s book lies not in its scientific rigor but in its wide-ranging assembly of information on a controversial topic. On the one hand, it is clear that her analysis is biased against livestock grazing on public lands, and this hinders the science. But this bias does not make her case against the economic and social costs of public-lands ranching any less valid. It seems enough for her to show that the majority of Americans gain little and lose much when privately owned cattle intrude upon public landscapes at taxpayers’ expense, but she weakens her case by suggesting that grazing as an ecological phenomenon has no place on the western range.

Joe Truett
Turner Endangered Species Fund
Glenwood, New Mexico

The cattle industry is widely written about by historians, particularly because of its central role in the American West. It is not as frequent, however, that we hear from participants in more than a passing manner. Retired Canadian rancher and now Montana resident Sherm Ewing provides one of these opportunities in The Ranch, taking the reader through an organized account of major issues in cattle management and breeding in the United States, Canada, and Mexico. The book begins by discussing “The Way Things Were” in the early twentieth century. Ewing then shifts his analysis to an “Age of Growth” when innovators and scientists begin to improve cattle genetics and performance. A third section moves the focus from western Canada and the United States to Mexico to discuss the diseases inherent to Mexican cattle breeds and the positive attributes of these breeds. Ewing also describes the Mexican cattle breeds' slow diffusion northward into the United States. The last portion of the text examines recent breeding issues and the presence of exotic animals on North American ranches since the 1960s.

The Ranch is based on the same format of his first book, The Range (1990). That work, a concise overview of grasses and range management issues, has become a widely accepted text for range managers and students. In similar fashion, The Ranch introduces a new text on the development of cattle breeds in the United States during the twentieth century. This specific area has not been previously written about, except in the rarely found American Cattle Breeders Hall of Fame: Some of the Men Who Contributed the Most, and Produced Some of America’s Finest in Each Cattle Breed (1978).

The strongest feature of Ewing’s book lies in its compilation and narrative of the experiences of seventy-five ranchers and scientists to construct the story. This “Register of Characters” is briefly profiled at the end of the book. Copies of the interviews he conducted (over one hundred) are archived in both Montana and Alberta for future researchers to consult. One weakness of the book is the lack of references to other secondary works, particularly historical studies, and the absence of citations from other texts the reader might consult. There is a small bibliography, but many of the works are very specific primary works or dated secondary histories. To place the stories from The Ranch in a larger context, one should consult Terry Jordan’s North

Historians of New Mexico, the West, and the Borderlands will find limited value in this book, although it can serve as an additional resource for specific breeds or issues, such as the aftosa (foot-and-mouth disease) crisis in Mexico during the 1950s. The Ranch will be of greater interest to general readers and those in the cattle industry as a wonderful collection of homespun remembrances and history of cattle breeding and ranching.

Cameron L. Saffell
New Mexico Farm & Ranch Heritage Museum
Las Cruces, New Mexico


A short review cannot do justice to the breadth and depth of the scholarship that comprises Writing the Range, a title that plays smartly on the goals and accomplishments of the collection. With it, Jameson and Armitage have crafted a volume that is exemplary in many ways. Their thoughtful and clear introductions to the book, its topical sections, and its individual articles lead the reader, whether scholar or student, through the complicated yet intellectually critical terrain created when issues of race, class, and gender are incorporated into the history of the American West. In doing so, they construct their own powerful argument for what they call “inclusive history” while inviting the reader to invest the time to read each of the twenty-nine individual contributions.

The articles, a combination of previously published and additional new pieces, indeed write the range across time, race, national origin, and sexual preference, providing the reader with constantly changing and intellectually challenging vistas. While Sucheng Chan transports her reader to Korea, Alicia I. Rodriguez-Estrada places hers behind the silver screens of Hollywood in the 1920s and 1930s. Using sources as diverse as advice columns (Valerie Matsumoto), Japanese tanka (Gail M. Nomura), and court records (Coll-Peter Thrush and Robert H. Keller Jr.), the authors provide imagina-
tive new insights into women’s lives in the American West. They raise the possibilities offered by theoretical approaches to race, class, and gender (Marian Perales) as well as their limitations (Ramona Ford). Most importantly, the entire collection demonstrates convincingly the editors’ argument that inclusive history is necessarily collaborative history.

The notion of collaborative history, like much of this volume, reaches well beyond traditional understandings. What Writing the Range presents is not just a successful effort on the part of two editors and multiple authors. Taken as a whole the collection shows that history cannot be fully understood without both the historical collaboration that took place then and historiographical collaboration that reveals it now. That lesson emerges as clearly from the collection as the powerful messages of individual essays. For both reasons, this book will be useful equally to scholars and students who will learn a great deal about researching and writing history. Everyone who reads the book will come away with new insights into the entire range it writes: the meaning of race, class, culture, gender, and the West.

Janice L. Reiff
University of California, Los Angeles


In 1979 the Museum of International Folk Art in Santa Fe published the first major study of Spanish American weaving to accompany an exhibition, The Spanish Textile Tradition in New Mexico and Colorado (1994). This major work was the result of many years of research in archives and national museum collections. Previously, Hispanic weaving had been little appreciated. Navajo weaving had been the main interest of collectors, dealers, scholars, and museums. Led by the Museum of International Folk Art, contemporary weavers in northern New Mexico were given a new respect for the work of their forbearers. Among other demonstrations, the museum gave workshops on dyeing with traditional and often forgotten plants. This recognition of traditional Hispanic weaving in turn led to an expansion of weaving not only for utilitarian floor or bed covering, but as a truly creative art form. Weavers composed highly indi-
visualized textiles that were more like paintings, and in turn these works of art were sought out by collectors and museums.

*Chimayó Weaving*, the first major book on Hispanic weaving since 1979, is devoted to the period from 1870 to the present but also includes a lucid description of the history and culture of the Southwest. Chimayó is the largest of the traditional Hispanic villages in the valley between Española and Taos. With its miraculous healing clay, the Santuario de Chimayó has been a center of pilgrimage for centuries. Hispanic weaving from the late nineteenth century onward has been known as "Chimayó," even if it is made at one of the smaller neighboring villages and brought into the larger center for sale to pilgrims and tourists.

Perhaps the most fascinating section historically is the extensive discussion of the work and importance of the two Santa Fe traders, Jake Gold and J. S. Candelario. Both were instrumental in marketing Hispanic and Indian arts at the end of the nineteenth century. In an effort to popularize Hispanic weaving they deliberately confused it with Navajo weaving in the minds of buyers. This confusion has continued among most Americans to this day.

The history of weaving in the early to mid-twentieth century has not often been explored, but this book fills in this long neglected gap. The book ends with the stories of three important weaving families: the Ortegas, who were major brokers of local weaving in Chimayó, the Trujillos of Chimayó, and the Martínez of Mendanales. Their stories are illustrated with historic family photographs and illustrations of their work. In fact all illustrations in this book are superb, especially the color plates. At last Chimayó weaving, which had stood second place to Indian weaving, has achieved a place of honor with a book that is both history and art.

Marian E. Rodee
Santa Fe, New Mexico


Sixty years ago, Angie Debo first established the land swindle as a central and tragic theme in the history of American Indian–White relations. Although American Indian history has blossomed in quantity and quality since
then, the legal turpitude involved has not faded. *The Dispossessed* provides a detailed account of the duplicitous mismanagement of the American Indian estate at the local level during the late twentieth century. Unlike the several important studies published so far about the federal Indian-policy era known as “Termination,” Nielson cogently argues that the government’s attempt to release the Ute tribes from their status as legal wards resulted not only in the loss of property but also in the loss of an inimitable cultural world. A narrative that interweaves the politics and processes initiated by the Ute Termination Act of 1954, the voices of Uintah Ute mixed-bloods who were adversely affected, and the author’s own legal and personal familiarity with the problems resulting from the policy, lends credibility to this argument.

*The Dispossessed* begins with a cursory overview of how the Uncompahgre, White River, and Uintah bands came to live on the Uintah and Ouray Reservation in the nineteenth century. The termination era then became a nebula of cultural misunderstandings and purposeful acts that duplicated the failings of earlier settlements and events for the mixed-blood Utes. The book’s middle chapters explore the dynamics of political life and personal struggles with the restrictions newly created by the 1954 law. The explicit termination of 490 mixed-bloods as federally recognized members of the tribe instigated a nascent factionalism within the Affiliated Ute Citizens of Utah (AUCU) as well as intense political discord with the larger Ute tribe. The AUCU’s federally appointed attorney and an assortment of Indian agents, full-bloods, and even non-Indian used-car salesmen played varying yet prominent roles in the disintegration of mixed-bloods’ legal entitlements as Indians. The last two chapters then build on this political morass with the author’s survey of the courts’ bungled judicial rulings as the AUCU attorney attempted to recover AUCU members’ rights after the policy of termination had been repudiated by the federal government.

Nielson capably illustrates how the conundrum of legalisms created by the Ute Termination Act intentionally fostered the mixed-blood community’s dissolution. A strict racial designation of Indianness—a conscious legal construction—severed mixed-bloods’ cultural ties to the Ute community. Thus, the implicit argument—an important one—is that the blood quantum requirement, imposed by congressmen rather than by the reservation community, determined the mixed-bloods’ bleak economic and cultural prospects. Nielson integrates individuals’ experiences into the larger legal framework to emphasize how mixed-bloods were bereft not only of land but of safe cultural space as well. The termination policy left them between disparate rural-urban and
Indian-White social environments. To the author, the entire process resulted in cultural genocide. This fairly compelling argument would be enhanced by a more precise explanation of how a distinct mixed-blood identity and culture emerged before termination.

The Dispossessed is recommended to students and scholars of twentieth-century American Indian law and policy and Utah state history. Although the book needs a map of the reservation and an appendix of central figures to clarify the many places and people it discusses, its insider perspectives and compassionate arguments about the workings of termination outweigh these flaws.

Luke C. Ryan
University of Arizona


The National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) is one of the leading pan-Indian organizations in the United States. Founded during the closing years of World War II, the NCAI remains active in Indian affairs today. Despite its prominence and historical importance, the NCAI has not received the scholarly attention it deserves until now. With the publication of The National Congress of American Indians: The Founding Years, Thomas W. Cowger has remedied this scholarly neglect. His monograph is a welcome addition to the growing literature on American Indians during the post-World War II era.

Cowger used the NCAI papers and other archival sources to complete his study. He also had the good fortune to participate in a 1993 seminar at which NCAI founders, including John Ranier and Helen Peterson, reflected on the organization’s history. Using these sources, Cowger provides an overview of the NCAI’s first twenty years, beginning with its founding in 1944. He ends the period of his study in 1964 for several reasons, not the least of which being the unavailability of post-1964 NCAI records while he conducted his research.

Cowger focuses on the political activities of the NCAI. As World War II drew to a close, politically able American Indians such as Charles E. J. Heacock, D’Arcy McNickle, and Archie Phinney recognized the need for a pan-Indian organization dedicated to securing the gains American Indians
had made during the war. Those benefits included an improved standard of living and wider acceptance by non-Indians, many of whom were impressed by Indian contributions to the war effort. Among the concerns of the NCAI was the establishment of an Indian Claims Commission to adjudicate Indian land claims. During the 1950s the NCAI took part in the battles to allow Indian communities the right to hire their own attorneys. The NCAI also played an important role in opposing the termination policy that framed federal Indian policy during those years. Cowger explores these issues in detail, providing insight into the internal activities of the NCAI and an overview of a turbulent period in federal Indian affairs.

Cowger also examines some ethnohistorical issues involving the NCAI, including the group’s role in the ongoing development of a pan-Indian identity. He points the way to future studies such as the nature of factionalism within the organization and the important role that women played in NCAI activities. Instructors can use Cowger’s study to introduce students to post-World War II American Indian concerns, especially issues such as pan-tribalism and the termination policy.

Thomas Clarkin
San Antonio College


This book is the definition of an academic monograph: limited in scope, precise in its methodology, and, though it lacks a startling argument, a contribution to knowledge. American Indian Population Recovery in the Twentieth Century skirts the great pre-Columbian population debate. Repeatedly asked what the Indian population amounted to in 1492, Shoemaker formulated a stock reply: “I don’t know, but today there are about two million Indians in the United States” (p. 99). That figure, set against a 1900 estimate of approximately 250,000 Indians in the area of the United States, sums up her argument and her own demographic investigation. At the same time, it skirts another issue. In his influential monograph, American Indian Holocaust and Survival: A Population History Since 1492 (1987), Russell Thornton concluded that Indian population recovery in the twentieth century was unargu-
able but also that Indians as a distinct population might disappear since their numerical recovery was based on increasing intermarriage with other racial groups. What are we counting when we count North American Indians?

Shoemaker acknowledges the “ambiguity” (p. 5) at the heart of any demographic study of American Indians, noting that today a one-quarter Indian blood quantum is commonly required for tribal enrollment, though the federal government beginning with the 1960 Census has accepted self-definition as its sole criterion. Noting that any population increase must be the result of fertility, mortality, and migration, Shoemaker points out that migration, save in the sense of a shift to the melting pot of urban centers, does not apply to an indigenous population. But there has been a decided blurring of racial lines, which necessarily affects fertility and mortality data. Since recent discussion of Indian population decline has been predicated on a catastrophic increase in native mortality after contact with Europeans, it follows that enhanced life expectancy accompanied by some upswing in fertility have together “fueled the population recovery in the twentieth century” (p. 13).

The bulk of Shoemaker’s book consists of five case studies that underline the fluid nature of tribal definitions. Between 1890 and 1980 (Shoemaker does not use the unreliable 1990 data) national census counts show the Cherokees increasing from 25,015 to 232,080, and the Navajos from 17,204 to 158,633—totals that may be inflated judging from a limited local study of the Red Lake Ojibwas and the comparisons between census figures and reservation counts provided for the Senecas and the Yakamas. Shoemaker examines variables in mortality and fertility and notes economic and cultural factors particular to each group. Intermarriage, for example, was more common among the Cherokees than the Navajos and thus cannot explain both population increases. Indeed, “particularities” undercut demographic generalization: “There is no single explanation for why these Indian tribes had different mortality, fertility, and rates of population increase” (p. 73).

That statement leaves the reader with a fact—rapid Indian population increase after World War II—but no simple way of accounting for it. Still, Shoemaker’s table showing “Indian Intermarriage with Other Races, 1940–1980” (p. 87) is compelling. In 1940, 87.8% of Indian men and 84.8% of Indian women were married to other Indians; however, in 1980, the rates had fallen to 47.3% and 45.9%. Almost this entire differential is accounted for by marriage to White women and men. While Shoemaker, like Thornton before her, believes that identity politics can still carve out a distinctive place for American Indians in the face of “rising homogeneity” (p. 98), the 2000
Census will almost certainly confirm the ongoing difficulty in counting such
phantom constructs as race.

Brian W. Dippie
University of Victoria, British Columbia

Contemporary American Indian Literatures and the Oral Tradition. By Susan
Berry Brill de Ramírez. (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1999. x + 259
pp. Appendixes, notes, bibliography, index. $40.00 cloth, ISBN 0-8165-1921-8,

This book will not have an audience beyond literary scholars, Native
American specialists, and university graduate students trying to remain on the
so-called “cutting edge” of their discipline. The volume contains some heady
ideas, but the author’s dense prose style, jargon-filled language, and tendency
to obfuscate rather than clarify leave little room for the uninitiated to com­
prehend what should be a popular and interesting topic—how to see, inter­
pret, and judge the oral storytelling qualities (“orality”) of contemporary
American Indian literature.

As with many other recent scholars, the author, who teaches literature at
Bradley University, is seeking to reach beyond postmodern literary theories
to critique American Indian literature, including storytelling. She introduces
what she calls “conversive” strategies to examine literature, again including
Native American oral traditions, and defines the term as conveying “both
senses of conversion and conversation in which literary scholarship becomes
a transformative and intersubjective act of communication” (p. 1). She wants
scholars to pay greater attention to the oral qualities of Native American lit­
erature or, in her words, to become listener-readers.

The book examines the work of such well-known authors as N. Scott
Momaday, Leslie Marmon Silko, Sherman Alexie, and Luci Tapahonso. It also
explores some less well-known but also gifted writers. The study is not as simple
as that might sound, however, for the author uses the ideas and theories of
Ludwig Wittgenstein, an early-twentieth-century Viennese poet-philoso­
pher, to guide her approach. Wittgenstein wanted to avoid externally im­
posed theoretical approaches of knowing; he did not want to use long-familiar
Western traditions of literary criticism. Partly as a result, the author provides
through her conversive strategies a fresh approach to reading and under­
standing poems, novels, and short stories from Native American writers, an
approach she believes comes to grips with the inadequacies in both traditional and postmodern analysis.

The work might serve as a college text for contemporary North American Indian literature courses, but only specialists will find use for it on their bookshelves.

Paul H. Carlson  
Texas Tech University


During the early eleventh century A.D., large masonry pueblos were occupied along the major river drainages in southwestern New Mexico. These large Classic Mimbres communities dominated the arid landscape and were characterized by a naturalistic and geometric black-on-white painted pottery tradition that was distinct from the ceramic wares found in the neighboring Mogollon regions. However, by the mid-twelfth century, most of the people who had occupied these large, aggregated pueblos had left. At the same time, ceramic styles underwent change and, as a consequence, the region was now more stylistically similar to its neighbors.

Traditionally, this twelfth-century settlement and ceramic shift has been viewed as the abandonment or collapse of the Classic Mimbres communities, a decline followed by out-migration and/or cultural discontinuity in the region. These interpretations have been grounded in the simplistic, direct equation of particular ceramic traditions with specific human groups and in a basic insensitivity to the complexities of spatial scale. Consequently, a decline in the size of specific large sites was viewed as representative of a total and “mysterious” regional abandonment or major cultural disjuncture.

In this volume, Margaret C. Nelson brings a fresh perspective, grounded in an exhaustive cross-cultural review, to this indigenous southwestern episode. Drawing primarily on survey and excavation findings from the eastern Mimbres region, Nelson argues that the early-second millennium A.D. shift in the Mimbres region of New Mexico represented neither a major break in cultural affiliation nor even a dramatic subsistence change away from agricultural resources. Rather, she interprets the twelfth-century depopulation
of large sites as having been tied to an episode of demographic dispersion in which small eleventh-century farmsteads increased in size and number at the expense of their more aggregated neighbors. By expanding her analytical time frame both before and after the focal shift of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, Nelson also places that episode of dispersion into a longer sequence of regional mobility. She portrays this episode as part of a long-term strategic acclimation by farmer-gatherer-hunters to an arid landscape.

To her credit, the views advanced by Nelson are richly grounded in architectural, settlement-pattern, and subsistence data. Alternative interpretations are outlined and weighed carefully. I personally might have preferred to see a fuller treatment and evaluation of sociopolitical and macroregional factors in these discussions. Nevertheless, I have the strong feeling that those issues will be tackled more completely by the author at a future date when the empirical underpinnings and the theoretical tools available rise to meet the high standards of care and scholarship demonstrated in this analysis.

Gary M. Feinman
The Field Museum
Chicago, Illinois


*Listening to Salsa* is an ambitious attempt to map the politics of Latin music and make sense of the complex meanings the genre holds for its multiple audiences. Describing her project as simultaneously an "act of love" and a "declaration of war" (p. xi), Aparicio engages in a familiar, post-nationalist ethnic studies project of locating cultural resistance and affirmation in popular culture while critiquing the gender politics that make popular culture a site for the oppression of women. Not only does she analyze the communal role salsa plays in the lives of Latinos/as, she critiques the sexism in its song lyrics and the larger masculine discourse that informs them. Aparicio's fundamental concern, however, is how Latinas listen to salsa, i.e., how, as socially situated subjects, they are active participants in creating meanings around this music.
Aparicio's approach is impressively interdisciplinary, drawing from literary studies, ethnomusicology, cultural studies, feminist theory, and other fields. First, she situates the discursive field surrounding salsa in late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century literary and musicological representations of its musical antecedents, the *danza* and the *plena*. In this instance she is particularly concerned with how commentators racialized and feminized these musical forms (as elite "White lady" and "sensual mulatta") when they contemplated their viability as expressions of Puerto Rican national identity. Keeping in mind these modes of interpretation, Aparicio next examines the role salsa plays in ethnic identity formations in contemporary Puerto Rico, New York, and other places. She pays attention to the working-class, oppositional cultural politics of salsa and shows how its commodification and appropriation by middle-class Latinos/as and non-Latinos/as complicates and, at times, depoliticizes and "whitens" this music. Aparicio then turns her attention to women listening to salsa. She charts the dialogic meanings produced by the representations of women in salsa texts and the active engagement with these texts by female subjects. Aparicio also analyzes the work of female composers and vocalists and the ways they negotiate, transform, and provide alternatives to sexist lyrics. The author concludes her book with a small ethnographic study in which she interprets the ways men and women of different class positions make sense of salsa, with particular attention paid to how Latina listeners "rewrite" patriarchal and misogynistic lyrics.

One of the unique dimensions of Aparicio's book is her use of readings of literary texts as a means of understanding the cultural discourses that inform salsa lyrics. Although valuable to understanding the complex meanings in this music, historically-minded readers and some fans may wish that Aparicio had devoted more attention to the historical development of the music and to a wider range of contemporary salsa texts. Such a discussion most likely would have allowed her to build upon the points she makes through her literary readings and would have simultaneously given her readers more information about the hemispheric and, indeed, global significance of the music itself. Still, *Listening to Salsa* succeeds in its sophisticated take on the politics of salsa, and it remains an indispensable book for those interested in critical assessments of Latin music and the intersection of race, gender, and contemporary popular culture.

*Eric Porter*

*University of California, Santa Cruz*

The collaborative undertaking by Sell and Schwaller of uncovering, transcribing, and translating Bartolomé de Alva’s Confesionario resulted from serendipitous events that led the two scholars to cross paths in their special field, namely Nahautl studies. In the first of three scholarly treatises on Alva’s Confesionario, Schwaller constructs a detailed, informative biography in which he traces Alva’s maternal Spanish and Nahautl heritage. Schwaller then turns to the person of Bartolomé de Alva and describes him as a capable Nahautl linguist and a competent mestizo cleric who successfully supported himself with the profits generated by resources inherited from family and family friends. Schwaller then discusses the rationale of the Confesionario, suggesting that Alva provided queries designed to assist the Nahautl Indian penitent in making an examination of conscience. Knowledgeable of both Nahautl and Old World cultures, Alva used his insights in probing the Christian spiritual life of the Nahautl Indian, identifying vestiges of indigenous religious practices that he considered unacceptable and dangerous. Undoubtedly, he believed that unchecked practices led to backsliding, challenged Spanish religious orthodoxy in the colonies, and ultimately threatened Spanish hegemony. As part of his contribution to the book, Sell appraises Alva’s Nahautl manuscript in relationship to the works of the latter’s contemporaries who also wrote highly acclaimed compositions in Nahautl. Not only was the Confesionario addressed to the penitent, but it was also designed to assist the confessor in systematically bridging the cultural disparity between the Indian penitent and Western Christianity. One might conclude that the clergy surreptitiously used the instructions contained in the Confesionario as a formidable tool to extirpate indigenous religious practices.

In the third treatise preceding Alva’s Confesionario, Lu Ann Homza presents an excessively detailed historical survey of the sacrament of confession. In the course of her presentation, however, she misses a salient opportunity to examine Tridentine influences on the sacrament of penance that reached the Spanish colonies as part of the Counter Reformation, which took place less than seventy-five years before Alva published his Confesionario.

Aside from complementing and advancing the study of Nahautl texts, Alva’s Confesionario renders evidential materials relevant to the dynamic
interior life of the colonial church, a topic beckoning critical exploration and assessment. The parallel, side-by-side Spanish–English and Nahuatl–English format of the Confi­esionario makes for easy and enjoyable reading of the text. Indeed, the editors' scholarly efforts bear much fruit.

Alfred A. Bricta López, O.P.
Dominican University of California


Editor Richard O. Davies has assembled fourteen newly researched and written biographical essays on prominent individuals seen to be representative of the “New Nevada,” a term he uses to refer to post–World War II Nevada. Davies himself contributes a brief historical overview as well as a balanced and thoughtful review of the hotly controversial career of Jerry Tarkanian, former basketball coach at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

Davies acknowledges the assistance of an informal group of scholars and public leaders who put forward an extensive list of prospective subjects from which he made the final selection based upon “substantial impact upon the economic, cultural, social, and political development of the New Nevada” (p. x). The final list is a fairly balanced one geographically, important in a state with pronounced North-South differences.Occupationally, the list is less representative. Three gaming colossi (William Harrah, Moe Dalitz, and Steve Wynn) seem about right, but the five politicians of state and national stature are excessive here however worthy the individuals. The remaining six slots are thinly spread to include men and women noted for literary endeavors, ranching, education, journalism, sports, and leadership in the civil rights movement. For approximately half of the subjects represented in Maverick Spirit, there already exist book-length monographs, biographies, autobiographies, and/or oral histories.

Taken on its own terms, the collection succeeds admirably well. The lives and careers of the subjects are intrinsically interesting, and the writing is never worse than capable. Some of the writings are scintillating, as in Don D. Fowler’s absorbing essay about rancher/writer Molly Flagg Knudtsen and James W. Hulse’s graceful tribute to educator Maude Frazier. Generally, the
articles are thoroughly researched, and the authors have provided extensive and useful commentaries on their sources. They have traced their subjects' lives, at least briefly, from before their appearance on the Nevada stage and explicated the historical context of their appearance. In a noteworthy example, Michael S. Green expertly weaves a great deal of pertinent Las Vegas political and journalistic history into his treatment of crusading newspaper publisher Hank Greenspun.

Do we have a greater understanding of the New Nevada from this collection? Well, yes and no. There is a welcome bit of overlap in the stories of the fourteen subjects, as characters make cameo appearances in other chapters. Given Nevada's small population and very personal politics through much of the era, this is to be expected. On the other hand, it would be a bit of a stretch to say that this creates a coherent view of the last half-century. This is partly due also to one somewhat disturbing element underlying the collection: all of the subjects are consciously "prominent." That characteristic has led to an adulatory, sometimes even fawning tone creeping into many of the essays. None are completely uncritical, but surely there is more than a whiff of sulfur surrounding the lives of the historical figures—the politicians and gamers especially—covered in this book. I eagerly await a follow-up volume on less prominent New Nevadans, one done by the same or an equally talented group of writers.

Frank Wright
Nevada State Museum and Historical Society


Beyond Cloth and Cordage: Archaeological Textile Research in the Americas. Edited by Penelope Ballard Drooker and Laurie D. Webster. (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2000. xi + 339 pp. 60 halftones, maps, charts, tables, appendix, notes, bibliography, index. $60.00 cloth, ISBN 0-87480-662-3.)


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VOLUME 76, NUMBER 4


News of the Plains and Rockies, 1803–1865: Original Narratives of Overland Travel and Adventure Selected from the Wagner-Camp and Becker Biography


Remembering the Presbyterian Mission in the Southwest: Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of the Menaul Historical Library. Edited by Jane Atkins Vásquez and Carolyn Atkins. (Albuquerque: Menaul Historical Library, 1998. 130 pp. 63 halftones, maps, tables, index. $15.00 paper, NO ISBN ASSIGNED.)


