

BOOK REVIEWS

O, My Ancestor: Recognition and Renewal for the Gabrielino-Tongva People of the Los Angeles Area. Edited by Claudia K. Jurmain and William McCawley. Berkeley, CA: Heyday Books and Rancho Los Alamitos Foundation, Long Beach, 2009. Bibliography, maps, and photographs. 316 pp. \$21.95 paper.

Reviewed by Richard L. Carrico, Lecturer, Department of American Indian Studies, San Diego State University.

One of the battles for patrimony and cultural identity raging in California goes largely unnoticed by the general populace. A large percentage of the nearly quarter of a million California Indians who inhabit the lands that were once the territory of their ancestors are not federally recognized and are not enrolled on any of the state's more than one hundred reservations. These people, who strive to be acknowledged, not for the purpose of building a casino but as part of a cultural renewal, are not alone in their efforts. There are currently more than forty non-recognized Indian groups in various stages of seeking federal recognition.

The large format book *O, My Ancestor*, is an up close and personal view of a vibrant urban Indian group in the throes of a protracted effort to be recognized locally, at the state level, and by the federal government. Known historically and generally as the Gabrielino after Mission San Gabriel, most of these people self-identify as Tongva or Tongva/Gabrielino. The 1,500 square miles of ancestral lands of these people comprise much of what is now Orange and Los Angeles Counties as well as the offshore islands.

This work is part of the Heyday Books series on California Indians and stakes out a proud place on the growing bookshelf of studies written by Native Americans or in which tribal members play a major role. The two authors, or more correctly, editors and compilers, of the book are Claudia K. Jurmain, Director of Special Projects and Publications at Rancho Los Alamitos Historic Ranch and Gardens and William McCawley, author of *The First Angelinos: The Gabrielino Indians of Los Angeles*. The professionalism and skill of these two collaborators in weaving an intricate yet approachable story while utilizing interviews and photographs of tribe members make this book remarkable.

The historical and modern photographs of Tongva/Gabrielino people form a visual continuity with the past, while providing images of the future. Through the photographs, the reader sees the evolution of native families as they are woven into the ethnic tapestry that is contemporary California. Within the narrative the interviewees offer their personal thoughts on what it is to be Indian, to be Tongva, and to be the descendants of California's first people. A common thread to the stories is what the on-going battle to save the sacred site of *Povuu'ngna* on the grounds of California State University, Long Beach means to those involved in the struggle and to the greater people identified as Tongva. In the 1990s the once populous vil-

lage became a rallying point for dispersed urban Indians and for many their first true emergence from the shadows of history. For others, it was a continuation of a decades-old struggle to be seen and heard as a viable, thriving ethnic group with cultural patrimony in the region.

While there are many similarities in the stories, there is also a variety of life experiences, of reawakening, and also at least one example of a family that finds it more important to be recognized as a smaller unit rather than as a politicized tribe or nation. Similarly, some Tongva/Gabrielino strongly embrace the Catholic Church as part of their rich heritage and others see the church as a historically oppressive institution. That this book offers such a variety of voices and insights is one of its major contributions. The "one size fits all" approach to California Indian history and oral narrative is, and should be, largely a historical relic in itself.

Readers interested in further research will find the references cited and bibliography helpful and up to date. Although *O, My Ancestor* is perhaps most pertinent to scholars, educators, and readers interested in the cultural history of the Los Angeles Basin, the book should appeal to anyone seeking to understand indigenous revitalization and renewal. Often obscured in the shadow of the more well-known "gaming tribes," the landless, non-recognized tribes such as the Tongva deserve to tell their stories and this book does a fine job of giving us that narrative.

From Serra to Sancho: Music and Pageantry in the California Missions. By Craig H. Russell. New York: Oxford University Press, 2009. Illustrations, index, and end notes. Companion web site includes facsimiles, editions, full bibliography, and images. 480 pp. \$65.00 cloth.

Reviewed by Marianne Richert Pfau, Ph.D., Professor, Music Department, University of San Diego.

This book offers an exhaustive study of the music heard and created in the California missions during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. It focuses on the eight decades from the founding of the first Spanish mission at San Diego in 1769 to the end of the Mexican-American War in 1848. Craig Russell, professor of music at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, pulls together two strands of inquiry: in the "musical journey" he scours the extant musical manuscripts, while in the "biographical journey" he highlights, as representative example, the life of one of the most important padre-musicians, Juan Bautista Sancho (1772-1830). The overarching aim of the study is to rediscover a lively and rich artistic tradition in California that was performed in large part by Native American artists. The repertoire itself is offered as a measure of the musical worth of this tradition. A veritable gold mine of information, this book is testament to Russell's ardent energy, musicological probing, and intense artistic fascination with this music and offers sharp insight as well as an enormous amount of new material for performance.

While by any standards a meticulous musicological study, the book aims not just at a scholarly or academic readership. It expressly appeals to musicians and listeners alike whose curiosity it wants to excite for the enormous riches of California's sacred musical tradition. Moreover, by placing the repertoire in historical and

cultural context, the book extends its relevance to students and scholars of Latin American culture and history, Mexican history and culture, California history, mission studies, Native American studies, and American studies.

The book is clearly structured, outlining both scope and purpose in an engaging introduction that acknowledges earlier work on the subject and clarifies the contextual approach taken here. It proceeds with a discussion of performance practice issues and mission performance styles in the Americas, bringing to light many novel aspects and correcting earlier views. The chapter on "Notation and Music Theory" is a lucid study of notational idiosyncrasies in the sources and of the church modes. Their depth and emotive power is of main concern, for the padres viewed them not just as "pleasant patterns to entertain the ear," but as "part and parcel of cosmic law" (p. 105).

A discussion follows of Junipero Serra's founding of the Baja California San Fernando de Velicatá Mission as well as the San Carlos Borromeo Mission (near Monterey) and the introduction of sacred song there, distinguishing *canto llana* (Plain Chant) and *canto figurado* (Polyphony) in a "modern style." Next, the author turns to Sacred Celebration with Song, Sequence, Dance and Pageantry on special feast days such as Corpus Christi, ending with two "prominent gems" of California liturgy (the sequences *Dies Irae* and *Veni Sancte Spiritus*).

Russell brings into focus music by many important mission padres who compiled or composed music for special celebrations such as Holy Week. These include Narciso Durán, compiler of Mass Ordinaries, and Martín de Cruzelaegui, possible composer of the beautiful *Misa de Cataluña*. The portrait of Juan Bautista Sancho as the musical friar who introduced the modern "galant" style in California is fascinating. The *Credo Artanense* and the *Misa en sol* are testimony to the level of musical expertise, breadth of repertoire, and adroit craftsmanship which this padre brought to mission music.

The last chapter discusses the imposing concerted Classical Masses of Ignacio de Jerusalem, an Italian composer working at Mexico City Cathedral, and of García Fajer, an Aragonian who after a Roman sojourn became chapel master at the See of Zaragoza. Their ambitious, elaborate concerted Mass music would have been heard at the San Antonio, Santa Barbara, and Santa Clara Missions which had available the impressive instrument inventories required for performance of these magnificent large-scale works.

As a whole, the book makes a compelling argument for a new appreciation of the high level of artistry achieved in the missions of Alta California by the Native American artists who performed under the guidance of the padres. While this is a wonderful achievement, the feature that makes this book powerful beyond all expectations is the on-line companion web site. In five appendices of enormous extent, the author offers a full critical apparatus and comprehensive descriptions of his sources (App. A), including their current location, physical features, detailed listing of content, annotations and reconstructions, and critical commentary on pieces copied in several manuscripts. Perhaps most valuable are the transcriptions (App. D), fully critical editions with orchestral accompaniments. This tool makes further engagement with this repertoire easy and enticing. Lastly, an exhaustive bibliography (App. E) includes a list of all manuscripts as well as a discography.

I have no doubt that Russell's hope that this book will jump from library shelves will materialize. He offers a story of great musical creativity in California,

detailing in most palatable fashion a rich artistic history whose sound can now be rediscovered in performance and experienced once again in the restored resonating spaces whence it emanated. Performance of this music, guided by Craig Russell's deft musical insights and rich historical explanations, should be a most rewarding and illuminating journey of discovery for musicians and audiences alike. This work is sure to ignite curiosity about the sounds of Alta California while also providing the tools needed for rediscovery.

The Sounding: The Saga of a Merchant in the Gold and Silver Rush Mining Camps of California and Early Nevada Territory, 1830-1911. By David M. Klauber. Julian, CA: Coulter Ridge Press, 2009. Illustrations, photographs, maps, index, and notes. xv + 526 pp. \$45.00 cloth.

Reviewed by Dave Bush, Adjunct History Instructor, Shasta College.

In *The Sounding*, David Klauber offers a portrait of his great-great-grandfather, a nineteenth-century European immigrant who came to California during the gold rush and enjoyed remarkable success as a merchant in mining districts before relocating to San Diego. This accessible book provides an enjoyable and detailed narrative, but some readers may desire a more critical analysis of the historical significance of Abraham Klauber's life.

Abraham Klauber was born in Bohemia in 1831. When his father died thirteen years later, Abraham started supporting the family by working in a small store owned by the Mandlebaum family. Here Abe began a profitable relationship that lasted over twenty-five years. After migrating to the United States in 1850, Abe located Francis Mandlebaum, Abe's former employer's son, in Illinois, and the two soon became business partners.

In 1852, Abe and Francis left New York City where the men lived with the Epstein family--also recent immigrants from Bohemia whose daughters wed Francis and Abe. Abe followed Francis to California, and the journey included a harrowing thirty-one day Nicaragua crossing. After Abe's ship docked in San Francisco, he joined Francis in Sacramento.

While Mandlebaum remained a buyer in Sacramento, Abe peddled goods in the Sierra Nevada Mountains. He built a store in the town of Volcano. Abe sold goods at comparatively low prices because he led his own mule trains, and later wagons, from the valley into the mountains, and he built his business by offering free delivery to outlying mining camps and selling on credit. He soon expanded and diversified his business by opening stores in what would become Nevada Territory and by engaging in cattle ranching.

Abraham Klauber was active in the region's civic life. He joined the Volcano Volunteer Fire Department and helped the company raise money for the town's first fire engine. In 1859, he became a naturalized citizen, and a few months later, joined the Masons. By the late-1860s, Abe was involved in a tax dispute that worked its way up to the United States Supreme Court, he supported a Nevada territorial delegate to Congress, and he was appointed to Nevada's Board of Capitol Building Commissioners who oversaw the construction of the new statehouse.

From 1869 until his death in 1911, Abe spent most of his time in San Diego. He opened a store in the city, participated in land speculation, opened several more stores east of the city, invested in a toll road to Yuma, and was elected to the County Board of Supervisors. In the mid-1880s, Abe returned to San Francisco, acting as a buyer for the San Diego store he left in the hands of his eldest son, Melvin. Seven years later, Abe returned to southern California where he spent the last nineteen years of his life surrounded by his large family.

The Sounding is a romantic history and would benefit from a more analytical approach to the subject. For instance, the author at times notes important factors in Abraham's success, such as when he states that Abe learned the importance of building fire-resistant stores through his experience with the 1852 Sacramento fire (p. 83). But when explaining Abe's ability to rise from poverty, he credits the less tangible factor of "divine intervention" (p. 17). When detailing a letter in which Abe instructs Melvin to hire one of his younger brothers in the San Diego store—even if Melvin must terminate a current employee—the author provides no significant scrutiny of this anti-labor position (pp. 433-4). While there are 534 end-notes, some information is not fully cited, and the use of citations is inconsistent. The book is filled with pictures; some, such as photos of Abe and his family and pictures of Abe's properties, add depth to the book, but others are superfluous like the picture of the author and his daughter standing where James Marshall discovered gold.

While the writing is accessible, in many places it is repetitive and in others embellished. When discussing Abe's involvement with the fire department, the author muses, "We will never know if Abraham scaled trees like Spiderman to save a frightened or stranded kitten, or stood under the window of a burning building ready to catch a baby" (p. 128).

David Klauber offers a rather uncritical profile of his ancestor, but the book does present a readable story of an interesting figure. There is no doubt that Abe was a skilled businessman who had excellent timing and possessed a keen understanding of how best to cater to clients and cultivate important social and business connections. To his credit, the author does present detailed descriptions of Abe's travel to California, mining-town life, the joys and tribulations of ranch ownership, life in late-nineteenth-century San Diego, and the impact of Abe's businesses in the communities where he worked.

Little Italy: The Way It Was. By Peter Corona. Bloomington, IN: Trafford, 2010. Photographs. xi + 398 pp. \$30.99 paper.

Reviewed by Kimber M. Quinney, Adjunct Faculty in the History Department, California State University, San Marcos; Chair of the Board of Directors for the Convivio Society for Italian Humanities and its affiliate the Italian Historical Society of San Diego.

In *Rethinking Home: A Case for Writing Local History* (2002), Joseph A. Amato reminds us that "Local history satisfies an innate human desire to be connected to a place. It feeds our hunger to experience life directly and on intimate terms.

It serves nostalgia, which (especially when one concedes nostalgia's political and literary cultivation and exploitation) is arguably as compelling a force as the quest for progress" (p. 4). Peter Corona's *Little Italy: The Way It Was* fits precisely Amato's portrayal of effective local history: Corona's story is indeed a nostalgic journey into what a local community once was but, in traveling through time, the reader is reconnected with a place that continues to exist, albeit in a very different form. Thus Corona's book fulfills Amato's contention that nostalgia and progress, equally compelling forces of the human experience, are revealed in local history.

Far too few local histories have been written about San Diego's Little Italy. Corona refers to an early fictional account of Little Italy titled *A Confetti for Gino*, written in 1959. For those of us who share a commitment to preserving the history of San Diego's Little Italy, Corona's work thankfully joins a few more recent histories in helping to fill this gap, including *Frenchie's Memories* (2003) by long-time resident of San Diego's Little Italy, Fran Marline Stephenson, and *San Diego's Little Italy*, a pictorial history published in 2007 by the Convivio Society / Italian Historical Society of San Diego.

Change is at the heart of Corona's book. His intimate descriptions and photographs of what was San Diego's Little Italy bring into stark contrast the hip, chic community of today, especially since its renovation beginning in the early 1990s. But he is careful to remind us that the culture of Little Italy's past is not necessarily better than the thriving, present culture; rather, they are both part of the larger whole (or, as he asserts, akin to the molecules of hydrogen and oxygen in water – you cannot have water without the both). And so, we are invited to follow Corona in his journey back in time, but we are not misled into dismissing progress for the sake of nostalgia: "We should cherish the past," he explains, "but not have the past hold us back" (p. 5).

Effective local histories find ways to celebrate the unique character of a given community but also bring a comparative light to reveal distinctions between our own and other communities. Again, Corona's story succeeds in doing just this: He celebrates his neighborhood as one of the "best kept secrets" of the early 20th century, noting that in his travels across the nation, few people were aware of San Diego's Little Italy. San Diego's community was different for one reason, in particular: it was an enclave unto itself. In contrast to other Little Italys, Corona explains, "The residents in the San Diego neighborhood lived in a more confined geographical area, stayed mostly within that area, and rarely associated with people who were non-Italian" (p. 10).

Little Italy: The Way It Was is organized into slices or "glimpses" of life in Little Italy, which serve to invite the reader to walk alongside the author in a guided tour of the neighborhood as it once was. Included are brief but highly detailed descriptions of activities (such as "Hauling Fishing Nets," "Making Wine," and "Becoming American Citizens"); landmarks (such as "The Star and Crescent Oil Company," "The Fire House," and "The Pool Hall"); and even sounds and odors, all of which contribute to the sense of place evoked by the author.

The most rewarding aspect of Corona's local history is the way his story is intimately and inextricably connected to the lives and livelihoods of neighborhood families and friends. This, it seems, is the essence of the human side of local history to which Amato refers. Peter Corona's own experience cannot be separated from that of others in the community, and this point is made explicitly clear by

the author himself. He provides meticulous descriptions of individual families (including, for example, a graph that depicts various family names, Italian origins, and professions of the family members). The book also includes seventy pages of photographs, lending a visual richness to the sense of community described in such detail by Corona.

The author concludes with a reference to a Sicilian phrase he heard often when growing up in Little Italy – “*cammina solo*,” which he translates to mean “walk alone, and don’t let anyone know your business” (p. 7). Reflecting on his life experience in the Italian neighborhood, Corona acknowledges that he was “alone but not lonely,” owing to a lesson implicit in his book: “I learned that I am a product of all those whom I came in contact with throughout my lifetime” (p. 325). This is indeed the value of local history for both the writer and its readers: to be reminded of one’s personal connection to a place but, most important, to be reminded of the people who made that place the way it was.

Gay L.A.: A History of Sexual Outlaws, Power Politics, and Lipstick Lesbians. By Lillian Faderman and Stuart Timmons. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2006. Bibliography, illustrations, index, and notes. vii + 413 pp. \$19.95 paper.

Reviewed by Deborah Lou, independent scholar.

Lillian Faderman and Stuart Timmons’s meticulously detailed account of the social, cultural, and political history of gay and lesbian Los Angeles is an excellent contribution to the growing interest in LGBT historiography over the last three decades. While previous works have documented narrow slices of gay L.A., this work ambitiously covers a lot of territory, ranging from the history of early homosexual activity and gender-bending behavior in the early 20th century to the activism of recent years. The authors “discovered that, historically, more lesbian and gay institutions started in Los Angeles than anywhere else on the planet, and that L.A.’s multifaceted, multiracial, and multicultural lesbian and gay activism continues to have tremendous impact worldwide” (p.3). Indeed, the book succeeds in positioning L.A. at the center of the modern gay and lesbian movement in the United States with exhaustive and illuminating detail. *Gay L.A.* brims with stories about ordinary people, Hollywood icons, political pioneers, disco impresarios, and gay business leaders, among others.

There were several factors behind L.A.’s centrality in shaping twentieth-century gay and lesbian life, one of the most important of which was Hollywood. Many of the creative and artistic types who flocked to Hollywood in the early 1900s “were fluid both in sexuality and in gender presentation, and their daring was encouraged” within the film industry (p.40). The chapter on Hollywood includes a compelling discussion of how Hollywood’s promotion of an androgynous female sexuality (but not necessarily of lesbianism per se) had both intended and unintended consequences. On the one hand, the image was a conscious marketing strategy designed to attract both male and female fans. On the other hand, the image also resonated with “unstraight” women across America who found some degree of validation and inspiration in the gender-bending and sexual ambiguity

of Hollywood stars like Marlene Dietrich and Greta Garbo.

A chapter on the 1940s and '50s exemplifies the authors' success throughout the book at striking a balance between men's and women's experiences, and providing a broad, inclusive view of the racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic diversity of L.A.'s gay history. During these "noir years" the city's gay and lesbian population flourished yet faced an increasingly suspicious and oppressive atmosphere. Post-war L.A. gained a reputation for being a paradise for gays and lesbians migrating from all over the country; however, gays and lesbians suffered from routine police harassment, brutality, and false charges. In spite of such obstacles, this period was also a time when gay men and women found creative and daring strategies to socialize, build community, and have fun while successfully negotiating their private and public personas. This period led to community building, political organizing, and institutional formation among gays and lesbians.

Chapter 4 convincingly shows how L.A. was instrumental in the nation's gay and lesbian political and institutional development. For example, Harry Hay's creation of the Mattachine Society in the early 1950s signaled the birth of the national homophile movement. Some of the Mattachine Society's original members established what would become one of the country's most influential and far-reaching gay organizations, ONE, Incorporated. This organization produced both the country's first homosexual magazine and first gay studies program, and it essentially became the first gay center in America, spawning gay churches and social services, among other things.

However, as influential as Mattachine and ONE were, these organizations reflected tensions between gay men and lesbians that would challenge the community for decades. For example, lesbians for the most part felt alienated from and/or fearful of joining such homophile groups. The authors do well to cite factors for both working and middle-class lesbians' lack of explicit political organizing in the middle of the century. Middle-class lesbians did not face constant police harassment, a big impetus in forming gay male political consciousness. And while working-class lesbians did experience more danger from the police, they had larger class-based concerns beyond those related to sexual orientation. These factors also made it difficult for lesbians to find a common political struggle across class lines.

The book's tour through ensuing decades includes many other outstanding examples of the city's significance to gay and lesbian history. For instance, PRIDE, (Personal Rights in Defense and Education) was founded in 1966 and was a marked contrast to the earlier homophile groups because it brazenly embraced its sexuality and welcomed gays of all classes. Notably, PRIDE was responsible for one of the first demonstrations against police harassment – preceding Stonewall by more than two years.

Chapter 10 documents the experiences of gay and lesbian ethnic minorities, including the many immigrants who found refuge in a city rich in both ethnic and sexual diversity. The chapter includes moving accounts of L.A. as a promised land for these minorities. Still, Faderman and Timmons are careful not to romanticize the gay L.A. experience, incisively outlining the discrimination many minorities encountered within the larger gay community. Fittingly, the book closes by showing how this global city generated a myriad of organizations, movements, and institutions focused on gay and lesbian immigrants and people of color.

While this book builds on several smaller works on LGBT history in L.A., it also breaks new ground by drawing from previously overlooked archival materials and over two hundred new oral histories to show effectively how L.A. was uniquely positioned to become a highly influential center of gay and lesbian life in the United States. In so doing, the book makes a significant contribution to LGBT historiography.

A Dolores Huerta Reader. Edited by Mario T. García. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2008. Bibliography, illustrations, and notes. vii + 350pp. \$27.95 paper.

Reviewed by Arnolde De León, Professor, Department of History, Angelo State University.

Professor Mario T. García pursues several goals in *A Dolores Huerta Reader*. First, he wishes to have this collection of articles, interviews, and Huerta's own writings substitute for a biography until such a time as a more complete profile appears on this important figure, a fixture in the farm workers' movement in California since the 1960s. Second, he endeavors to bring deserved attention to a bona fide leader perpetually consigned to a secondary capacity. García wisely seeks to highlight gender, as almost universally labor organizers have been male.

Dolores Huerta rose to prominence in 1965 during the famous farm workers' *huelga* in California. She appeared destined for leadership early in life, though she did not recognize her calling until reaching her mid-twenties. Born in New Mexico in 1930, she grew up as part of a comfortable middle class environment, attended college, and for some time took up teaching. By then she had married but found household chores, motherhood, and school instruction unappealing. She preferred working on behalf of social justice, and in due time joined César Chávez's farm workers' crusade. From 1962 until the present day, she acted as spokesperson for farm laborers and for other causes dear to her as well.

While those within the farm workers' movement fully recognize and appreciate Huerta's role as a champion, others outside it do not. Thus, García attempts to chronicle her life commitments. In the decade of the 1960s, Huerta acted as a morale builder for the strikers, led grape boycott drives nationally (spending some time in New York City), and became Chávez's chief negotiator with California growers. During the first half of the 1970s, when agribusiness resisted renewing old contracts, Huerta resumed grape and lettuce boycott efforts. Upon Chávez's death in 1993, Huerta became the public voice for the farm workers.

García has examined numerous publications and researched various archives in compiling this most welcomed addition to labor history. The essays thus come from scholarly journals, news reports, speeches by Huerta, letters she wrote (most of them to César Chávez), testimony before government committees, and interviews. The various chapters touch on Huerta's life, her religion, her politics, her work with migrant workers, feminism, homosexuality, the environment, and many other subjects.

The book indeed functions as per García's intent to see his collection fill the

scholarly void that exists on Dolores Huerta. For one thing, it acts simultaneously as a biography and autobiography of the subject; Huerta reveals much of her personal life in several interviews conducted with her over the years. Many of the chapters in the reader further disclose Huerta's multi-dimensional character; Huerta, we find out, is a complex personality. Further, the book is an amalgam of secondary and primary sources – a feature that makes it useful for classroom teaching. Most important, the work succeeds in illuminating Huerta's place in history. One comes to understand why she has emerged as a role model for women, farm workers, and the many who have associated with her, as well as why she became such a successful advocate for field hands and a passionate spokesperson for civil rights issues.

From the Barrio to Washington: An Educator's Journey. By Armando Rodriguez, as told to Keith Taylor. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2007. xi + 196 pp. \$24.95 cloth.

Reviewed by Paul Kahan, Assistant Professor of History, Slippery Rock University.

From the Barrio to Washington chronicles Armando Rodriguez's improbable journey from Mexican immigrant to college president and high-ranking official in four presidential administrations. The story is recounted in the sort of informal style that one would expect from a book whose front cover proclaims "...as told to Keith Taylor." Rodriguez's story is unambiguously and unapologetically an "only in America, up-by-the-bootstraps" tale, and there is little here that will appeal to readers interested in San Diego, California, or American political history. Worse, the "as told to" style of the book makes it very difficult to read because the text contains numerous redundancies and digressions.

The book is divided into eighteen chapters, spanning Rodriguez's life from his birth in 1921 to the book's publication in 2007. At age six, Rodriguez migrated with his family from Mexico to San Diego where (except for a brief period) he lived until he entered military service during the Second World War. During the war he became a citizen in order to satisfy the requirements of his security clearance. After the war, he attended college on the G.I. Bill and, after graduation, became a teacher and then a school administrator. Rodriguez also became involved in local and then national Democratic politics, which brought him to the attention of the Johnson administration. The White House offered Rodriguez a high level position at the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, where Rodriguez served until the mid-1970s. Rodriguez left HEW to become president of East Los Angeles College in 1973 and remained there until 1978, when he joined the Carter administration in the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. Rodriguez stayed through most of Reagan's first term, serving under future Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas. After retiring from government service in 1983, Rodriguez continued his public service through a variety of endeavors, including sitting on the school board of Fairfax County, Virginia.

Three themes consistently appear throughout Rodriguez's narrative. The first theme is that hard work and determination have been the cornerstones of his

success. Throughout his life, Rodriguez has overcome challenges (usually involving being the first Hispanic American in a particular field or office) by dint of determination and hard work, values that he learned from his father. The second theme that frames the narrative is the importance of education, which has obviously played a central role in Rodriguez's life. The third and final theme that runs throughout the book is Rodriguez's determination to facilitate cross-cultural communication while acting as an advocate for the Hispanic American community. These themes, though never explicitly enunciated, appear throughout dozens of anecdotes that make up the bulk of *From the Barrio to Washington*, giving the book a Horatio Alger style that seems slightly optimistic given the tone of recent debates over immigration.

Moreover, while Rodriguez has clearly enjoyed a very eventful life punctuated by a number of amusing anecdotes, there is almost no attempt to put the events of his life in context or to provide any sort of analysis. I can point to nothing uniquely Californian about Rodriguez's story; his childhood could as easily have been spent in New Mexico or Arizona as in Southern California. In addition, Rodriguez offers little insight into the many interesting and historically important people—Lyndon Johnson, Richard Nixon, Jimmy Carter, Ronald Reagan, Clarence Thomas, Hugo Chavez, Armand Hammer, Randolph Hearst, etc.—with whom he interacted throughout his life. For someone as committed to advocating for cross-cultural communication, Rodriguez provides incredibly little in the way of information about how policies are developed and implemented or how those policies affect people “on the ground.” Unfortunately, Rodriguez missed a wonderful opportunity to speak about the changing position of Hispanics in American society, an ironic omission given the fact that he was often at the forefront of those changes. In sum, the book is a middling autobiography, albeit an often amusing one, that misses a number of opportunities to provide crucial insight and perspective on issues of critical importance for Californians.

BOOK NOTES

Alien Neighbors, Foreign Friends: Asian Americans, Housing, and the Transformation of Urban California. By Charlotte Brooks. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009. xv + 329 pp. Illustrations, maps, tables, notes, and index. \$40.00 cloth. Brooks's examination of California's urban housing markets in the first half of the nineteenth century shows the transformation of white Californians' attitudes toward Asian Americans and reveals the complexity of racialized housing in a multiracial society.

The Blue Tattoo: The Life of Olive Oatman. By Margot Miffin. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009. xii + 263 pp. \$24.95 cloth. Illustrations, maps, notes, bibliography, and index. This biography tells the story of Olive Oatman, a thirteen-year-old girl taken captive and raised by the Mohave tribe in 1851. Miffin argues that despite popular myths to the contrary, Oatman resisted rescue and had become assimilated among the Mohave.

Call Me Lucky: A Texan in Hollywood. By Robert Hinkle with Mike Farris. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2009. 273 pp. Illustrations. \$24.95 cloth. Robert Hinkle, a former rodeo cowboy who enjoyed a fifty-year career in Hollywood as a speech-coach, director, producer, and actor, recounts his working relationships with various celebrities in the film and entertainment industry. This memoir includes Hinkle's reflections on such stars as Paul Newman, Rock Hudson, and Natalie Wood.

Electrifying the Rural American West: Stories of Power, People, and Place. By Leah S. Glaser. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009. Illustrations and maps. \$55 cloth. Leah Glaser uses three case studies from Arizona to provide a social and cultural history of Western electrification, showing the implications of technology on people, culture, and economies in the American West.

Encinitas Insight: A Photographer's Journey. By Karla M. Ogilvie. San Diego: Sunbelt Publications, 2009. 126 pp. Photographs. \$40 cloth. Photographer and independent scholar Karla Ogilvie presents images of each of the five communities that comprise Encinitas.

Faces of the Frontier: Photographic Portraits from the American West, 1845-1924. By Frank H. Goodyear III with an essay by Richard White. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2009. Photographs. \$45 cloth. This collection of over 120 photographs, mostly from the National Portrait Gallery, highlights famous western figures as well as unknown workers, soldiers, and settlers. An introduction and essays examine how such photographs contributed to Americans' conceptualizations of the West.

The Mojave Desert: Ecosystem Processes and Sustainability. Edited by Robert H. Webb, Lynn F. Fenstermaker, Jill S. Heaton, Debra L. Hughson, Eric V. McDonald, and David M. Miller. Reno: University of Nevada Press, 2009. xxx + 481 pp. Preface, index, photographs, maps, charts, and illustrations. \$65 cloth. Thirty-eight scientists discuss the current state of the Mojave Desert and evaluate potential threats to its ecosystem. The volume also explores how resource managers can cope with pressures like road construction, the intrusion of non-native flora, and increasing human populations.

Race and the War on Poverty: From Watts to East L.A. By Robert Bauman. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2008. xiii + 189 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, and index. \$34.95 cloth. Bauman analyzes the African American and Mexican American community organizations that emerged to implement President Lyndon B. Johnson's War on Poverty programs. While the War on Poverty provided assistance to needy Americans, it also sparked both racial conflict and cooperation.

Reopening the Frontier: Homesteading in the Modern West. By Brian Q. Cannon. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2009. x + 307 pp. Photographs, map, notes, bibliography, and index. \$39.95 cloth. Historian Brian Cannon brings to light a post-Second World War homesteading program in which the Bureau of Reclamation offered irrigated farms to returning veterans. The author connects this relatively small-scale experiment to the longer history of homesteading and investigates the fate of the communities and individuals involved.

Sacramento and the Catholic Church: Shaping a Capital City. By Steven M. Avella. Reno, University of Nevada Press, 2008. xvii + 368 pp. \$39.95 cloth. Illustrations, notes, maps, chart, tables, bibliography, and index. Avella's monograph examines the interaction of the Catholic Church and the city of Sacramento as they developed from the Gold Rush to the present day, considering how religious institutions affect urban communities, and vice-versa.

Winning Their Place: Arizona Women in Politics, 1883-1950. By Heidi J. Osselaer. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2009. 240 pp. Photographs, illustrations, table, map, notes, and index. \$45 cloth. This book examines the efforts of Arizona women to influence politics from the territorial period to the years immediately following the Second World War. Osselaer contends that the suffrage movement in Arizona drew great strength from working women who saw the vote as a way to counteract discrimination in the workplace, and she connects this legacy of activism to women's later success in gaining election to state and local office.