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Journey into the Land of Trials: The Story of Davy  
Crockett's Expedition to the Alamo (review)

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reports. Artists well known to the general public, such as Frederic Remington, are represented but lesser-known (although no less important for purpose of this study) artists such as Paul Frenzeny and Jules Tavernier also are discussed at length. Included, too, are amusing nuggets such as that Julian Onderdonk, renowned for serene paintings of misty fields of bluebonnets, illustrated the autobiography of one of Texas's most notorious killers, John Wesley Hardin.

Readers should be aware that, since this volume focuses on engravings, it does not attempt to trace the lineage of each work (such as *Storming of the Alamo*, which originated as a painting by Theodore Gentilz) back to original medium and artist. Also, some readers may disagree with the inclusion of several illustrations not specifically related to Texas, even though the authors do address this question in the preface. These caveats notwithstanding, this volume will prove to be a valuable resource for collectors and scholars of the history of Texas and of illustration.

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SAM RATCLIFFE

*Journey into the Land of Trials: The Story of Davy Crockett's Expedition to the Alamo.* By Manley F. Cobia Jr. (Franklin, Tenn.: Hillsboro Press, 2003. Pp. xiv+274. Acknowledgments, illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. ISBN 1-57736-268-3. \$27.95, cloth.)

No event in Texas history has experienced as much analysis as the tragic fate of the defenders of the Alamo in 1836. Of the main trio of martyrs for Texan independence, perhaps the most popular in the generations since was Davy Crockett. The final days of the Tennessee congressman have been played out again and again on stage, screen, and in the written word. With *Journey into the Land of Trials*, Manley F. Cobia has masterfully put together what may well become the definitive account of Crockett's trek from Tennessee politician to Texan hero.

Cobia points out early on that there is a reason why so little has been said of Crockett's last journey: there is very little from which to work. Working primarily from personal accounts of individuals who claimed at one time or another to have witnessed Crockett at various stages on his trip from the Tennessee frontier, through the Comanche-filled wilds of northeast Texas, and finally to Bexar, the author attempts to separate fact from fiction. Throughout, Cobia does a magnificent job of interweaving more than a century-and-a-half of historiography. Where documentary evidence is scant, he uses contemporary accounts of the territories through which Crockett is known to have traveled to paint a portrait of the wilderness and bring the reader alongside Crockett on his way to destiny.

The author brings late Mexican Texas to life with his narrative, continuously returning to a major theme of the book: what was Crockett's motive for his Texas adventure? Cobia examines the multitude of theories, from political ambition to a desire to escape politics altogether, to a mission to assist in Texan independence. The other heroes of the time—Houston, Bowie, and Travis—are present throughout the work, but attention never wanders far from Crockett and his journey.

The book does fall short in some ways. Cobia depends heavily on speculation to connect the dots of what is known to have happened, and where the evidence leaves off. While speculation is inevitable in this instance, many historians may have trouble accepting the degree to which the author puts this into practice in his work. Also, Cobia often does not make his own opinions clear. He frequently quotes postmodern historians and historical theories concerning Crockett, yet it is often unclear as to whether he agrees or disagrees with their ideas.

Those criticisms aside, Cobia has produced a first-rate analysis and synthesis of the subject that will doubtless become one of the major works on the subject. He uses a vast array of both primary and secondary literature and works each equally into his own analysis. *Journey into the Land of Trials*, then, emerges as a remarkably well-organized study of a man and his times. The early days of the war for Texan independence come alive. Ever cognizant of the broader picture of what is going on throughout Texas and the United States, Cobia's account of the last great adventure of Davy Crockett is a significant addition to Crockett literature.

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*True Women and Westward Expansion*. By Adrienne Caughfield. (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2005. Pp. 190. Preface, acknowledgments, notes, bibliography, index. ISBN 158544409X. \$32.95, cloth.)

*True Women and Westward Expansion* is a welcome addition to the small but growing collection of scholarly monographs that address the history of Texas women. With this study, Adrienne Caughfield places the experiences of Texas women during the nineteenth century within the context of national social paradigms. Specifically, Caughfield examines the ways in which Texas women participated in westward expansion and uses gender to add nuance to our understanding of the concept of Manifest Destiny. Here Texas women are viewed as contributors to the national expansionist impulse and participants in the American "cult of true womanhood."

As the topic demands and as sources dictate, this study is primarily limited to literate white women who migrated to Texas from the United States. And, as the author freely acknowledges, the ideal of domesticity was largely associated with the white middle class. Within the limits of the subject group, Caughfield has ferreted out some interesting conclusions about the intersection of domesticity and manifest destiny in the lives of Texas women. However, it should be noted that the degree to which most Texas women adhered to such concepts is debatable, particularly given the prevalence of southern, agricultural backgrounds among Texas settlers.

The author argues that nineteenth-century women participated in the public arena of politics more often than we might expect and that this statement is true especially when it comes to expansionism. She uses examples of the ways frontier women participated in the Texas Revolution and promoted patriotic fervor as evidence of their belief in the appropriateness of expansion and their desire to spread civilization and American republicanism. Caughfield also points to women