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*Reel Rangers: Texas Rangers in Movies, TV, Radio, & Other  
Forms of Popular Culture* (review)

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declined following the Civil Rights Era when the Emancipationist Cause rose to become the dominant lens through which Hollywood portrayed the war.

From his study of film, Gallagher moves on to a study of Civil War popular art, much of which is advertised in various Civil War magazines and journals. In this exploration, Gallagher finds that the Lost Cause lives on to a much greater degree in commercial art than in popular film. Images of a romanticized Confederacy dominate the sales of Civil War paintings. Gallagher explains this divergence from film by noting that, while many in American society have challenged the Lost Cause view of the war and made it less palatable to lift up this position in public, those who cling to this position often turn to private expressions of the ideology like displaying Confederate images in their homes.

Gallagher's book is a useful entry in the burgeoning literature that deals with the way in which the Civil War is remembered by Americans. It is particularly revelatory in its consideration of the Lost Cause view of the war. While the legitimacy of the Lost Cause has been increasingly contested in the public arena, as Gallagher shows in his analysis of Hollywood movies, the persistence of the theme in commercial art reveals that the influence of such a view cannot be measured by public depictions alone. This is an important lesson for those examining American public opinion on any issue, for in the private realm—as Gallagher shows—the Lost Cause lives on.

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ANGELA F. MURPHY

*Reel Rangers: Texas Rangers in Movies, TV, Radio, & Other Forms of Popular Culture.*

By Bill O'Neal. (Waco: Eakin Press, 2008. Pp. 206. Illustrations, bibliography, index. ISBN 1571688404, \$22.95, paper.)

By the early twentieth century, motion picture technology had developed into a rapidly growing source of entertainment and news around the globe, and early producers were anxious to find suitable content to feed the public's seemingly insatiable appetite for film. In *Reel Rangers*, Bill O'Neal documents the plethora of films, and later radio and television shows, based on the Texas Rangers. According to O'Neal, the Texas Rangers almost immediately became a prime source for stories of action and intrigue that translated well into the modern media. It was 1910 when the first popular film, "The Ranger's Bride," appeared on the silver screen. He also identifies and provides some insight on the various actors who played Texas Rangers (often many times each), from superstars to the relatively obscure. O'Neal found no less than forty-eight Ranger films that were produced during the silent movie era, including many multi-episode serials. The trend continued in the 1930s and 1940s, when at least ninety-nine "talkies" based on the Texas Rangers were made, not including the *Lone Ranger* movie serial. During World War II, O'Neal notes, there was a new Texas Ranger movie released every six weeks.

The 1950s introduced the age of television, with two successful series based on the Rangers dominating the period. Two hundred and twenty-one episodes of *The Lone Ranger* were created between 1950 and 1955, and it continued to play

in syndication for decades. (The series so pervaded public consciousness that an article in *Boy's Life* commented that the definition of a "highbrow" was someone who could listen to the William Tell Overture and not think of *The Lone Ranger*.) Another series named *Tales of the Texas Rangers* ran in the latter half of the decade for five full seasons. The Rangers were also not forgotten on the big screen; at least sixteen feature films on them were produced during the 1950s.

O'Neal accounts for the subsequent decline in the popularity of the Texas Rangers (and Westerns generally) as film subjects in the 1960s and 70s as a byproduct of the times, affected by changing societal attitudes in the wake of the Vietnam War and the Civil Rights struggle. The early 1980s appear to have been equally sparse in regard to new feature productions based on the Texas Rangers, but the numbers are deceiving. Although there were only five such productions, the fame, acclaim, and cultural impact of the television miniseries *Lonesome Dove* must be noted. The success of *Lonesome Dove* led to a resurgence in the use of the Texas Rangers as a topic for popular media in the 1990s. There were at least fourteen feature films and television miniseries, in addition to the wildly popular *Walker, Texas Ranger* television series, which ran for eight seasons and still airs in syndication today. The first decade of the twenty-first century has already seen more than half a dozen films and television programs featuring Texas Rangers as central characters, and countless others that either make passing references to Rangers or include them as minor characters or in subplots.

O'Neal notes that most of these nearly two hundred popular media productions were purely fictional (despite claims to the contrary by some in the opening credits) but that the image of the Texas Rangers depicted therein created "a formidable portrait that audiences sensed was close to reality." (48) A discussion of the effect of entertainment on public memory is clearly outside the scope of *Reel Rangers*. However, O'Neal's acknowledgement of the issues surrounding historical fact versus fiction, combined with the sheer volume of fictional Ranger television and film material O'Neal has documented here (particularly in comparison to the relatively paltry amount of non-fiction historical programming on the topic) certainly sets up such a discourse.

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*Branding Texas: Performing Culture in the Lone Star State.* By Leigh Clemons. (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2008. Pp. 186. Illustrations, notes, index. ISBN 9780292718074, \$40.00 cloth.)

Leigh Clemons of the theatre faculty at Louisiana State University has written an interesting book, parts of which have been presented earlier in a different format. "Texan cultural identity," a form of national identity, is the core concept used to show the origin and evolution of the Texan, and many of his characteristics including attitudes, values, influences, and consequences as portrayed in a wide variety of mostly theatrical performances. According to Clemons, the Texan cultural identity was initially formed in Texas revolutionary history, specifically by events at the Alamo, Gonzales, Goliad, and San Jacinto. These events and the