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Legacies of Camelot: Stewart and Lee Udall, American Culture, and the Arts (review)

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tion. The Spanish settlement of Revilla (now Guerrero Viejo) founded in 1750, which became a bustling late nineteenth-century entrepôt, was for a long time almost totally underwater. As a result of droughts, a second dam built upriver, and greater demands on the water, the lake level receded to such a degree that by the 1980s, the central plaza and several blocks of the town were once again visible. But as if the water had not been enough, scavengers removed architectural elements from the exposed *villa* for personal use and gain.

George is sensitive to the persistence of memory and of the families who have been bereft of their ancestral hometown. In the introduction, Ricardo Paz-Treviño, one of these descendants, writes poignantly, "Just as surely as the water crept up the sides of homes, church, school, and shops, just as certainly as the few possessions left behind floated away and were swept down the Rio Grande's winding course to the Gulf of Mexico, the soul of Revilla/Guerrero Viejo was relegated to the memories of those who had known it" (xi). In 1953, when I was a youngster, I recall visiting cousins who had fled the old county seat of Zapata, which had flooded unexpectedly due to extraordinary rains. With the naiveté of youth, we happily went wading along a new shoreline at the end of an old paved highway. Even though we had to be careful not to cut ourselves on broken bottles, rusty bottle caps, and barbed wire, we enjoyed the outing. Only much later would we realize the bruises that we and our families would endure, since we had been cut off from our ancestral home.

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ADÁN BENAVIDES

Legacies of Camelot: Stewart and Lee Udall, American Culture, and the Arts. By L. Boyd Finch. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2008. Pp. 208. Illustrations, notes, index. ISBN: 9780806138794, \$24.95 cloth.)

From poet Robert Frost's recitation at the inauguration to Jacqueline Kennedy's wistful evocation of Camelot in the weeks following her husband's assassination, a public focus on the arts reached its zenith during the presidency of John F. Kennedy. Yet unknown to the general public, much of the impetus for the promotion of the arts during those years came not from the East Coast intellectuals in the Kennedys near orbit but from a blunt-spoken Arizona Mormon named Stewart Udall. Udall's contributions to American arts and letters during the 1960s in the subject of *Legacies of Camelot*.

The Udalls came to Washington in 1955 upon Stewart's election to the House of Representatives; their home in McLean, Virginia, quickly became known for its stunning collection of southwestern art and sculpture. An avid reader and amateur poet, Udall used his stature as a congressman to introduce himself to some of the living legends of American literature—among them Robert Frost, whom he suggested as a speaker for Kennedy's inauguration in 1960.

Udall was tagged by Kennedy to run the sprawling Department of the Interior, a position Udall dubbed "Secretary of Things in General." Diving in with his customary gusto, in nine years in office he established four new national parks, six national monuments, eight seashores and lakeshores, nine recreational sites,

twenty historic sites, and fifty-eight wildlife refuges. An early convert to the environmental movement, Udall published *The Quiet Crisis* in 1963. Both a history of American attitudes towards the environment and a plea for future preservation, the book was one of the first of its kind and the first ever from an "official" government source. Finch (who was Udall's personal aide during his time in office) details the writing of *The Quiet Crisis*, including the input of Udall's in-house writing team, including his "literary aide-de-camp," Wallace Stegner. His experience in writing this book acted as a writing apprenticeship that served him well in his post-Cabinet writing career.

Udall also used his position to further his promotion of the arts. Quite apart from the marquee events like the performance of Pablo Casals in 1961, his Cabinet Artists Series highlighted luminaries like Carl Sandburg, Robert Frost, Marion Anderson, Hal Holbrook, and Thornton Wilder. He took the eighty-eight-year-old Frost with him on an official trip to Russia in 1962, with the poet traveling the country on poetry readings and receptions, even meeting with Premier Nikita Khrushchev.

Meanwhile, Lee Udall was using her position to promote the arts of her native Southwest. She commandeered an empty gallery at the Department of the Interior for an ongoing exhibit of works from Native American artists, including students of the Institute of American Indian Arts in Santa Fe. Determined to raise the profile of Native American artists across the country, she incorporated the Center for the Arts of Indian America to provide financial support to young Native artists and sponsored the First American Indian Performing Arts Festival. She accomplished all this while raising six children and fulfilling her duties as a Cabinet wife.

During his tenure under Lyndon Johnson, Udall provided support and planning for the establishment of the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, Wolf Trap Farm, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the National Endowment for the Humanities. He also aided in the restoration of Ford's Theater National Historic Site as a working theater, and helped save one of Frank Lloyd Wright's rare "Usonian" homes from demolition. Finch is careful not to give the Udalls too much credit, but clearly illustrates how the couple was often a catalyst in events.

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Católicos: Resistance and Affirmation in Chicano Catholic History. By Mario T. García. (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2008. Pp. 378. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. ISBN 9780292718401, \$60.00 cloth.)

During the Chicano Movement, some leaders accused the Catholic Church of siding with the oppressors or standing by in silence. By contrast, many leaders in the African-American Civil Rights Movement came from black churches, and protests included the themes and language of sacred scripture. The absence of a similar public religious component in the Chicano revolt and the accusations mentioned above led observers and historians to overlook the vital faith-based activism in the *movimiento*.

Among the recent attempts to change this view, Mario T. García's *Católicos*: