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Mexicans in the Making of America by Neil Foley (review)

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outlast, and outthink his opposition” (61) when organizing California’s Mexican Americans within the National Community Service Organization and farmworkers with the UFW. While Pawel delves deeply into Chavez’s successes, she also exhaustively recites his flaws: his anti-immigrant stance that included allowing union organizers to commit violent acts against unauthorized immigrants, undermining other unions like the Texas Farm Workers Union, wielding autocratic power over the UFW, and his seeming inability to manage the UFW after its initial strike and boycott successes. Yet, the author concludes that “Chavez’s lessons about dignity outlived his union” (474). In the words of Consuelo Nuño, a Delano farmworker Pawel interviewed, Chavez “taught us how to defend ourselves” (474). In sum, despite faults, Chavez continues to inspire individuals, especially Mexican Americans, to fight for social justice within and outside the nation’s agricultural fields.

While Pawel’s attention to factual detail, including substantial discussions of those close to Chavez such as Dolores Huerta and Fred Ross, and her accessible prose are noteworthy, this book suffers from several serious flaws. First, the author fails to adequately contextualize how Chavez’s views of immigrants related to the U.S. labor movement’s historical xenophobia or how his worries over security and infiltrators within the UFW emerged during a time when social justice advocates, such as Martin Luther King Jr., faced wiretaps, harassment, and assassination. Moreover, Pawel’s analysis of patriarchy and oppressive gender norms within Chavez’s life and the UFW is simplistic at best, if not apologetic. At times Pawel also uses slang, writing, “Growers brought in students, housewives, and even *winos* [emphasis added] in a desperate attempt to salvage the crops” (404). Nevertheless, because of its thorough, factual coverage of Chavez’s complex life, this book should be of interest to a wide range of the reading public, students, and scholars.

Southern Methodist University

JOEL ZAPATA

Mexicans in the Making of America. By Neil Foley. (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2014. Pp. 356. Illustrations, notes, index.)

The history of people from Mexico people who came to reside in the United States either through conquest or immigration continues to be a victim of American amnesia. Neil Foley’s *Mexicans in the Making of America* is the latest attempt to redress this blind spot. Understanding the contributions of Mexican origin people to the development of the United States, he points out, could help shift the current xenophobic “fortress” mind-set to one that accepts diversity and its benefits to society. The reality, he argues, is that even if the larger ethnic white population fails to

embrace America's historic diversity, the United States will nonetheless be a diverse nation in the future.

Foley's work is a political overview relying on a synthesis of secondary and primary sources. He ably weaves domestic political history and foreign relations into a narrative that covers the many years from Spanish colonial settlement to the current anti-immigrant efforts and the DREAMer movement. Foley argues that the United States sealed its fate when it signed the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (1848), and that continued immigration and trade with Mexico interlocks both nations. While some coverage of New Mexico is provided, the work centers on Texas and California. This geographic limitation represents the only weakness in his work.

The primary thread that holds Foley's narrative together is the struggle of Mexican-origin people be accepted as equals in American society. As a result, issues related to discrimination and immigration dominate his work, particularly legal cases and legislation. For readers of this journal, he highlights important topics in Texas history, such as the Ricardo Rodríguez immigration case of 1883, League of Latin American Citizens, American G.I. Forum, Mexican American Youth Organization, and the development of the Raza Unida Party. In an original contribution, Foley includes how the Mexican government addressed issues of civil rights related to its citizens residing in the United States. Unlike other Chicana/o historical overviews, his use of Mexican national archives adds an important dimension to how the United States relations with Mexico and Latin American in general shaped its responses to civil rights and immigration issues. For instance, the Timoteo Andrade immigration case of 1935, and the *Mendez v. Westminster* (1946) are linked because of foreign policy concerns about how Mexicans are perceived and treated. He brings his work to a close with anti-immigration efforts by state and federal legislative bodies.

Foley's work will hopefully remind readers of the complex political history of Mexican origin people. While he fails to present any new arguments or insights in general, this book nonetheless is an important addition to redressing the continued American amnesia when it comes to Latina/o history.

South Texas College

TRINIDAD GONZALES

Texas People, Texas Places: More Musings of the Rambling Boy. By Lonnn Taylor. (Fort Worth: TCU Press, 2014. Pp. 240. Illustrations.)

Lonnn Taylor is a familiar name to most Texas historians, or at least he should be. He has been involved in studying, preserving, and writing history for more than five decades, and most of that effort has been focused on the Lone Star State. Although he claims to be retired, he still publishes