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Tejano West Texas by Arnolfo De León (review)

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of the Southwest by failing to account for the fact that, “white men began migrating as members of families . . . but no longer primarily [as] bachelors” (93). After Acosta separates white immigrants into the categories of married (thereby precluded from any type of legal union) and marriageable, he finds that intermarriage rates rose from 39 percent to 51 percent in 1880 and 23 percent to 34 percent in 1900, consequently revealing the perseverance of interethnic coupling.

While Acosta emphasizes gender inequalities among working-class interethnic marriages and argues that the men in these unions, “sought to exert power over women they viewed and treated as their inferiors” (156), his focus on the correlation between socioeconomic status and geographic proximity leads him to conclude that “no evidence suggests that these men viewed the race or culture of their wives as inferior” (158), thereby leaving it to others to extricate race from class in studies of Tucson.

In chapter five, Acosta intriguingly reveals the agency of working-class Mexican women in Arizona. He shows that despite the legal and social disadvantages they faced in the region such as an English-language legal system, Mexican women, due to their local networks and kinship ties, successfully called on friends and relatives to testify on their behalf and, failing that, harnessed the porosity of the political border between the U.S. and Mexico to relocate permanently when circumstances in the United States conspired against them. Hence, Acosta’s captivating read highlights the social mobility of the working class in Arizona and provides ample thought for scholars researching gender and ethnicity in the Southwest.

Duke University

ANDERSON HAGLER

Tejano West Texas. By Arnolde De León. (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2015. Pp. 192. Maps, tables, notes, bibliography, index.)

With *Tejano West Texas*, Arnolde De León—known among scholars as the unofficial “dean” of Tejano history—points his readers toward the woefully understudied histories of Mexicans and Mexican Americans in Texas west of the one-hundredth meridian. These eleven chapters represent a host of essays that De León published over the course of his career as a historian at Angelo State University. As a collection, De León’s writings on these oft-overlooked people stand to prompt younger historians to investigate the histories of West Texas Tejanos, much as his earlier works inspired a torrent of studies on Mexicans and Mexican Americans in South Texas and other parts of the state.

De León begins with the early settlement of the region by Spanish and Mexican *pobladores*, eventually chronicling their interactions with Anglo American settlers in the late-nineteenth century and the resulting con-

flicts and adaptations that Tejanos faced during that time period (similar to the better-known challenges that Tejanos and Mexican immigrants faced in the borderlands regions further to the south and southeast). In chapter three, De León provides raw data concerning education, literacy and labor in the region, providing valuable statistics for future researchers to utilize. The larger sweep of Tejano West Texas history along with statistical data continue in the middle chapters of the book: chapter four covers the larger dynamics of town life, migrant farm and ranch labor, and community issues; chapter five provides raw data on Tejano demographics in the Trans-Pecos region in the southern portions of West Texas; and turning north, chapter six covers the interesting phenomenon of Tejanos in the Texas Panhandle transitioning from living in largely rural settings to cities and towns as the twentieth century wore on. One of the most interesting chapters is “Blowout 1910 Style,” in which the author briefly chronicles a 1910 public-school boycott by ethnic Mexicans in San Angelo who sought to overturn racial segregation in schools—over *half a century* before the famous Chicano school walkouts in Los Angeles in 1968. Chapter eight brings West Texas Tejanos into the story of Depression-era labor unionism in Texas by briefly relating a strike among sheepshearers in 1934, while chapter nine transitions into an overview of West Texas Tejanos’s patriotic contributions to World War II and the Korean War. Finally, De León shifts to biography in the book’s last two chapters, highlighting the lives of philanthropist Eva Camúñez Tucker and Chicano activist and politician María Cárdenas, respectively.

Tejano West Texas serves as a nice capstone to one of the lesser-known aspects of De León’s storied career as an historian. The book is more a conversation-starter than the final word on the subjects and phenomena contained therein; it undoubtedly serves its purpose as a clarion call for other historians to follow the author’s lead in further investigating the interesting histories of Tejanos living in the so-called “giant side of the state.” One hopes that future generations of historians will heed that call.

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TIM BOWMAN

Bitter Waters: The Struggles of the Pecos River. By Patrick Dearen. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2016. Pp. 256. Notes, illustrations, bibliography, index.)

Patrick Dearen’s *Bitter Waters* is a comparatively short but important history of the Pecos River, which flows through New Mexico and Texas before emptying into the Rio Grande. The book differs from most histories in that it has largely been written for the benefit of the Pecos River Resolution Corporation, a non-profit organization that is documenting