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**Front Cover:** Guy Rose (1867-1925), The Leading Lady (ca. 1915), 70 x 60 in. Collector William C. Foxley recently donated this painting to the San Diego History Center. It won the gold medal at San Diego’s Panama-California Exposition in 1916. Courtesy of the San Diego History Center.

**Back Cover:** Maurice Braun (1877-1941), Ranch, Riders Mounted, color pencil on paper, 18½ x 14½ in. Private Collection.

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The Joining of Historical Pageantry and the Spanish Fantasy Past: The Meeting of Señora Josefa Yorba and Lucretia del Valle

By Chelsea K. Vaughn

When Lucretia del Valle took on the role of Señora Josefa Yorba in The Mission Play in late 1912, she brought to the role what one reviewer described as “the atmosphere of the people who first settled in California.”¹ Though the reviewer credited del Valle’s past accomplishments on the Southern California stage for some of her success in portraying the Señora, del Valle’s particular ability to perform a character from California’s Spanish colonial days rested in her own family’s connections to the settlement of New Spain and the subsequent romanticization of this period in Helen Hunt Jackson’s 1884 novel Ramona.²

These factors created an air of authenticity around del Valle’s rendering of the Señora, while her decision to wear family heirlooms—something she had done previously in other roles—created a connection to the area’s past that promoters of the play exploited in an effort to emphasize the show’s attention to historic accuracy. Clad in a silk dress and flowered scarf with roses and a large comb decorating her dark hair, del Valle appeared every bit the Spanish lady to audience members embracing the romanticized notion of the area’s past popular at the time, and which was celebrated from San Diego to Santa Barbara.³ Her appearance in the play amid scenery representing the then ruined arches of Mission San Juan Capistrano completed an image later immortalized by painter Guy Rose in his 1915 work “The Leading Lady.”⁴

While del Valle did not originate the role—two other actresses had portrayed the Señora before her—she appeared as Yorba more than 800 times, including on an ill-fated national tour, and came to embody the part for local audiences.

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more than any other performer. The popular association between the actress and her role was so ingrained in the minds of Angelinos for a time that newspaper descriptions of del Valle’s activities written decades after she left the role continued to mention her turn as Josefa Yorba. Her success within the role depended upon a meeting of two popular trends—the Spanish past promoted by Charles Lummis and others and historical pageantry—that took a form particular to Southern California. These movements simultaneously celebrated California history under first Spanish then Mexican rule while seeing an importance in these eras’ decline and the subsequent acquisition of California by the United States. Beyond her participation in The Mission Play, del Valle personified these competing impulses of looking backward while moving forward. Despite her early fame as Señora Yorba, del Valle embraced her connection to the romanticization of the area’s past only to a point, choosing instead a life of political involvement dedicated, among other things, to the plight of women worldwide. This paper examines the role that made Lucretia del Valle famous and her life beyond the confines of the Mission Play itself. It also demonstrates the collective nostalgia for California’s Spanish past through the life of Father Serra as well as through three well-remembered Spanish families—Yorba, del Valle, and Domínguez.

“The Colored Sweep of Franciscan History”

When Lucretia del Valle joined the cast of The Mission Play, the show was already on its way to becoming a local institution. The popularity the show enjoyed during its initial ten-week run in the spring of 1912, led to its more than doubling its run the following season to twenty-three weeks with two shows daily Monday through Saturday and a Sunday matinee. The show would continue to grow in popularity into the 1920s before its eventual wane and demise in the early 1930s. Still the show enjoyed occasional revivals into the 1940s and 1950s. Written by area journalist and poet John Steven McGroarty at the behest of Mission Inn owner Frank Miller, the creation of the play itself took on mythical proportions. As well documented by William Deverell in Whitewashed Adobe, the idea for The Mission Play supposedly followed Miller’s viewing of the Oberammergau Passion Play in Germany and his assertion that such a show might similarly serve the Southland reproducing its past upon the local stage. The ease of this inspiration, however, ignores both the recreating of California’s Spanish colonial and Mexican pasts to the service of incoming Anglos—a project of which Miller was very much a part—and the larger national trend of historical pageantry to which The Mission Play belongs.

The “Spanish fantasy past,” a phrase first coined by journalist Carey
McWilliams, describes the trend in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries during which the Anglo population of California romanticized the state’s Spanish colonial and Mexican periods. Proponents of this fantasy past imagined a regional history populated by lovely señoritas and regular fiestas. Beyond an idealization of these periods of California, this rendering of area history also served the purpose of justifying the U.S. takeover of California in the minds of area residents, first by championing the Spanish colonists as early purveyors of European civilization in the region, while understanding the Mexican period as one of decadence and degradation. Within this configuration of history, Father Junípero Serra, with his role in establishing the Alta California Franciscan missions, became a revered West Coast founding father. This idea found expression within promotional materials for *The Mission Play* describing Serra as “patriotic.” Though presumably referencing his allegiance to Spain, this description also resonated with Californians eager to tie the history of the Golden State to a larger national narrative. Simultaneous to this celebration of the Franciscan mission system, employments of the Spanish fantasy past vilified Mexican California as a period marked by laziness and an underuse of California’s rich resources—a justification used repeatedly against Native Americans in the United States’ westward movement across the continent. This stereotyped
understanding of the Mexican period worked so that even events that seemed to celebrate the culture, such as the early-twentieth century phenomenon of Anglo sponsored fiestas, reinforced an idea of Mexican Californians devoting greater time to parties than working the lush lands of California.  

This dual narrative that championed Spanish settlers while denigrating the subsequent Mexican residents (without seeing a continuation between the two) appeared readily in The Mission Play. Taking as its theme “the colored sweep of Franciscan history from the early days of 1769, when Don Gaspar de Portolá founded his little garrison of Catalonian soldiers and padres on the shore of False Bay, San Diego, until the later invasion of the ‘Gringo’ in 1847,” McGroarty’s Mission Play contained this sweep of history within a prologue and three acts. Described within a later program as a “prelude in pantomime” planned by “a master mind,” the prologue recreated pre-contact California and the “inevitable approach of the white man—spelling [the Native Californian’s] doom and extinction.”

Act I opens onto San Diego Bay in 1769 and chronicles the difficulties of establishing the first Franciscan mission in Alta California, a scene in which Father Serra’s dedication perseveres over everyone else’s readiness to abandon the mission. Act II skips ahead to 1784 and the already established Mission San Carlos in Carmel. Here the major action centers around a dispute between Father Serra and fellow historical figure Captain Fernando de Rivera, the Comandante (Governor) of California, over the marriage of the fictional “half-blood Indian Girl” Anita—a conflict in which Serra and the mission system prevail. The final act
occurs over sixty years later in 1847 in the ruins of Mission San Juan Capistrano. The character Señora Yorba appears within this scene lamenting the passing of the Spanish colonial period and marveling at the continued faith of those Indians converted to Catholicism by the Franciscan Missions.16

Though ostensibly documenting the “Gringo” takeover of the state, the ruining of the mission within the play occurred during the Mexican period of California history, thereby promoting the aspect of the Spanish fantasy past that vilifies Mexican rule of the Golden State. The Mission Play originally included a different ending that indicted the United States in the decline of Spanish California along with contributing to the poor fate of Native Californians. Here, a Señora Domínguez instead of Señora Yorba encounters a group of Mission Indians hoping to bury their deceased Franciscan leader within the ruins of Mission San Juan Capistrano.17 Confronted by an “American” who is then in ownership of the property and planning to remove the mission ruins, gunfire ensues from the Native American characters and from which a stray shot kills the Señora. The Americano, out of long held feelings of love for Señora Domínguez, vows to protect the mission and the legacy of Spanish California.18

Though this ending supported efforts by area boosters to preserve the missions, it perhaps ran contrary to how the Domínguez family hoped for their ancestry to be portrayed upon the stage. McGroarty utilized historical events in the writing of the play, yet he often altered them in significant ways. The major conflict in Act II, for example, was based upon Captain Rivera’s demanding to take custody of an Indian who had rebelled against the Franciscans rather than centering upon a young woman that Rivera wanted as his bride. In creating the original Act III, McGroarty was possibly inspired by the 1846 American occupation of the rancho belonging to Manuel Domínguez, but the transformation of this event into one in which Señora Domínguez attracted the affections of an Americano before being violently shot may have been unpopular with her descendants who were still able to remember the actual person.19

By the time del Valle came into the role at the start of the second season the character had been changed to Señora Josefa Yorba and the play ended on a significantly different note. While the Señora (now Yorba) still meets a group of Native Americans hoping to bury their deceased padre on the grounds of Mission San Juan Capistrano, the action unfurled differently from there. The Americano notably disappears from the scene with the drama coming instead from Yorba’s discovery of a golden chalice that the Mission Indians had hoped to bury along with the Franciscan. Upon finding the chalice Yorba declares, “Oh, spirit of Father Junípero look down from the star-spangled pavements of heaven on the glory of your work. Your dusky neophytes whom you loved so well have kept the faith.”
Promising to take the chalice to Mission Santa Barbara to prevent its falling to grave robbers, Yorba continues, “Farewell, San Juan, I shall never look upon your broken walls again,” before turning her attention to those now in possession of the state. To Ubaldo, the caretaker at Mission San Juan Capistrano, she states:

Surely when the Americanos are building their great cities and their tireless hands are making California the wonder of the world, so also will they think, sometime of these holy places where the padres toiled and builded too—so well. Though we shall not see it, Ubaldo—neither you nor I—maybe, in God's good time, the Mission bells will ring again their old sweet music...Maybe so, Ubaldo—maybe so. Oh! The Missions restored—and again a cross on every hill on the green road to Monterey!²⁰

Putting her faith into the “Americanos” and their ability to recognize the significance of the Spanish mission system amid their rapid embrace of area progress, Yorba offers her final goodbyes to an entire culture now relegated to the past—a common treatment of Native American cultures with the U.S. conquest of the West. Here she states, “Farewell, my countrymen, brown priests and all. Farewell, San Juan—farewell, farewell.”²¹ This scene offers an idea common within constructions of the Spanish fantasy past, the idea that the Anglo rather than the Mexican residents of California were the rightful inheritors of the area's Spanish legacy, and that this legacy persisted in the form of ruined buildings rather than through actual living persons.

The use of the historical person Señora Josefa Yorba within The Mission Play also held significance within the idea of the Spanish fantasy past—as would Señora Domínguez—through her clear connections to the Spanish colonial rather than Mexican era of California history. Though born in Sonora, Mexico in 1767, Josefa Grijalva Yorba traced her lineage back to Spain through her father Juan Pablo Grijalva. As a soldier stationed in New Spain, Grijalva moved his family to Alta California as members of the Anza Expedition in 1776 that placed a Spanish presence in San Francisco.²² Grijalva played a significant role in establishing San Francisco, serving as a high-ranking officer at the presidio. Josefa Grijalva’s marriage in 1782 to José Antonio Yorba further cemented her importance in the founding of Spanish California. José Antonio had served as one of Lt. Pedro Fages’ Catalanian Volunteers in the venture to establish Mission San Diego in 1769, recreated in the first act of The Mission Play in settling San Diego.²³ From there Yorba served as a soldier throughout Alta California before claiming a land grant in 1810 in the region of modern day Orange County and becoming one of
The Meeting of Josefa Yorba and Lucretia del Valle

Lucretia del Valle’s family descended from early Spanish settlers in California, causing some people to view her as a “modern Ramona,” referring to the title character of Helen Hunt Jackson’s popular bestseller. Courtesy of David “Bodie” Bailey Family Archives.

Important to her appearance as a character within The Mission Play, Señora Josefa Yorba died in 1830, seventeen years before the setting of Act III in which she prominently appears.25 Whereas Señora Domínguez may have actually appeared on the grounds of Mission San Juan Capistrano in 1847, some thirty-plus years before her death, Josefa Yorba could only be there as a specter. This allowed McGroarty to take certain liberties in creating the character of Señora Yorba to suit his needs as a storyteller separate from the actual historic person of Josefa Yorba.
As will be discussed in the following section, McGroarty’s employment of artistic license followed patterns established by historic pageantry—a performance type popular in the early twentieth century throughout the United States and Britain.

“California—the Land of the Outdoor Drama! In a Few Years this Fulfillment will be Seen!”

Though not technically a pageant—its staging within a theatre rather than outdoors being the most obvious variation from the form—*The Mission Play* borrowed heavily from this performance type and, according to one writer who enthusiastically touted California as an important site for outdoor drama, conformed to the conventions of historical pageantry “in spirit.”26 When del Valle and others portrayed Señora Yorba within *The Mission Play*, then, they did so as part of a longer tradition of historical pageantry that began in Great Britain in the late nineteenth century. As an outgrowth of British arts and crafts groups’ interest in Medieval and Renaissance revivalism, these early productions referenced historical revels and allegorical masques.27 Coming from these practices, historical pageantry had its origins in the perceived conflict between industrialization and pre-industrial ways. This duality continued as this performative type moved west. Historian David Glassberg discusses the phenomenon of historical pageantry, in his work *American Historical Pageantry*, as it appeared in the early twentieth century in the eastern United States. Here, Glassberg argues, historical pageantry frequently served the purposes of Progressive-era reformers. Show producers attempted to provide “wholesome” entertainment that could provide solutions to such societal ills as the perceived isolation caused by increased urbanization and industrialization through the liberal use of allegory and pantomime. These productions further sought to address inter-ethnic conflict by honoring past traditions while emphasizing progress through a shared national identity.28 When historical pageantry finally appeared on the West Coast, in the 1910s and 20s, pageant makers continued to draw upon the traditions established in Britain and the eastern United States while adjusting the form to adopt a regional specificity.

To proponents of historical pageantry, the climate of California seemed ideally suited for holding these outdoor productions year-round. That productions could be produced throughout the year rather than being confined to the period of late spring through early fall that limited pageantry elsewhere caused one journalist to excitedly proclaim “California—the land of the outdoor drama! In a few years this fulfillment will be seen!”29 This prediction, made in the late 1920s, appreciated the constant sunshine of the Golden State but failed to foresee the Great Depression that temporarily halted widespread civic celebrations and generally ended the
practice of historical pageantry. Significantly, pageant promoters made similar claims about Seattle, Washington, declaring that “Seattle has established a reputation as ‘The Pageant City’.” 30 For a city whose weather did not lend itself to the staging of all-year outdoor dramas to assert itself as an important site for such productions signaled the prevalence and popularity of historical pageantry throughout the West in the early twentieth century.

Within this burgeoning form, The Mission Play was the first among a number of productions in Southern California that similarly romanticized the Spanish colonial and Mexican periods of California history before assigning them comfortably to the past. Other important works of this genre include Garnet Holme’s interpretation of Ramona, based upon Jackson’s novel, first staged in Hemet, California, in 1923 and still in production today, and another work also by Holme, The Mission Pageant of San Juan Capistrano, which ran in 1924 and 1925 on the mission grounds of the same name.

Within shows that took Spanish colonial California as its subject matter, the meeting of tradition and progress prevalent in historical pageantry in the East and Midwest was met by an additional concern about proper entitlement to
land. *The Mission Play*, the *Ramona Pageant*, and the *Mission Pageant of San Juan Capistrano* all communicated a mythologized notion of area history—as discussed above through an engagement of the so-called Spanish fantasy past—while expressing contemporary tensions between Mexican and Anglo residents of

Lucretia del Valle signed her portrait, “To little Ida Bailey, May her life be one rose path without a thorn, Lucretia del Valle.” Ida Bailey played the role of a Spanish dancer in the 1912 production and continued to act in the play until 1917. Courtesy of David “Bodie” Bailey Family Archives.
Southern California. McGroarty wrote *The Mission Play* amid unease over the rapid increase of foreign-born Mexicans in the American Southwest—a population that roughly doubled between 1900 and 1910. Further, the height of the show’s popularity—from its premier in 1912 and into the early 1920s—approximately coincided with the Mexican Revolution that pushed numerous Mexican citizens north, and nearly doubled the population again between 1910 and 1920. By the premieres of both the *Ramona Pageant* and the *Mission Pageant of San Juan Capistrano* in the early 1920s, these inter-ethnic tensions had contributed to the appearance of the second Ku Klux Klan in the Southland. While the popularity of these shows, with their narratives celebrating U.S. victory over Mexico in the region, anticipated the Great Repatriation that removed an estimated 350,000-600,000 U.S. and foreign-born persons to Mexico between 1931 and 1934.31

As an expression of the anxieties created through these demographic realities, *The Mission Play* ends with Señora Yorba relinquishing control of California to the incoming Anglos before she and other Californios disappear from the region. Similarly, the *Ramona Pageant* ends with all the Californio characters moving south across the new national border into Mexico—a noted change from the source material in which only the title character and her second husband leave California. Within the *Mission Pageant of San Juan Capistrano* all the major characters stay in Southern California, but the storyline introduced an American soldier into the region in the early nineteenth century who fends off the 1818 attack of Argentine privateer Hippolyte de Bouchard before marrying a señorita named Margarita. This last detail reflected an idea prevalent later in the nineteenth century of colonizing the American Southwest through marriages between U.S. men—gringos—and Mexican women. Besides such obvious appeals to Anglo audiences’ desires to see Southern California as a space devoid of Mexicans and Mexican-Americans, both McGroarty and Holme utilized the narrative tool of allegory to address these tensions.

Historical pageantry, as it appeared first in Great Britain and later in the United States, relied upon easily understandable allegory and familiar tropes to communicate to audience members a particular rendering of area history. These efforts further attempted to influence how viewers understood their place within this history. In the American Southwest such shows often contended with a population makeup that contradicted Anglo expectations and desires for the region and in which the allegory employed within a particular production depicted a regional ideal. *The Mission Play* was rich with such allegory. McGroarty employed this narrative device as a means of explaining the rise and fall of the Spanish Empire in the Southland that simultaneously reiterated Anglo, rather than Mexican, ownership of California.
Throughout Acts I and II, McGroarty positioned the character of Father Junípero Serra as a representation of Colonial Spain. In the first act, Serra demonstrates the promise of civilization brought by the Spanish colonial project to California, while in the following section he symbolized the continued strength of the Spanish Empire despite increasing challenges to this venture. Extending McGroarty's use of allegory in the second act, the character of Anita served as a stand-in for the contested territory of California and Captain Rivera as the threat of secularization of the missions—an event that occurred with Mexican independence from Spain and which proponents of the Spanish fantasy past understood as the beginning of colonial California's demise, leading inevitably to the U.S. conquest of the area. This construction of Mexico's negative influence upon the region found an expression within the final Act, as the character of Anita (still representing California) appears old and degraded. Read within the context of early twentieth-century conflicts, the storyline of The Mission Play also served to remind audience members of the supposed failure of Mexican rule to maintain the civilizing mission of the Franciscans—a legacy transferred instead to Anglo residents of the area through the preservation of mission ruins.

Importantly within The Mission Play, the character of Serra continued to have a commanding presence in Act II even as an old man, yet by Act III he has passed on, leaving Señora Yorba to take his place. Interpreted as an allegory for the Spanish colonial process in California, Serra's strength and determination early in the show demonstrated the assumed importance of New Spain—that it brought European ideals of civilization to the western United States prior to the actual American interest in the area—while in the second act this same strength was appreciated but understood as eventually falling to secular interests. It is here that the character of Josefa Yorba emerges in the ruins of the mission system representing the previous position of New Spain. The shift in personification of the Spanish Colonial Period from masculine to feminine between Acts II and III demonstrated for audiences the weakening of Spain and the allowance of Mexican rule. Similar characterizations appear in both the novel and dramatization of Ramona as well as in the Mission Pageant of San Juan Capistrano. Within Ramona this character appears in the fictional Señora Moreno, who some fans of Ramona interpreted as an unfavorable portrayal of Lucretia del Valle's grandmother Isabel del Valle, while for the Mission Pageant of San Juan Capistrano Holme resurrected an actual person Apolinaria Lorenzana—a Mexican born woman with close ties to the Franciscan missions. Yet, while Moreno and Lorenzana were portrayed as old women within their respective shows, Yorba, as performed by del Valle and her predecessors, was a young woman. Del Valle was only twenty years old when she began her run as Señora Yorba—a fact that her stage makeup
attempted to emphasize rather than conceal. Playing a woman seventeen years deceased as though she were alive and in her early twenties, demonstrated the liberties McGroarty undertook in his dramatization of the local past. At the same time, for audience members familiar with the history being portrayed, Señora Yorba’s presence in the ruins of Mission San Juan Capistrano in 1847 was that of a ghost—an analogy that could similarly be made for the Spanish Empire in California in the mid-nineteenth century. Though its presence could still be felt, it no longer had a vital existence.

The farewell speech delivered by Yorba in the closing scene of The Mission Play reiterated the ethereal nature of New Spain’s continued presence in California, with the Señora as an allegorical representation of the Spanish Empire, departing, never to return. Yorba’s gracious farewell further allowed a space for the United States to enter and to flourish, something that the original ending did not do.
There, the Señora’s violent end signified the United States’ obligation to preserving Spanish Colonial California out of a sense of guilt from the country’s forceful entry into the region—a much less pleasant interpretation for area audiences to encounter and one that ran counter to most iterations of the Spanish fantasy past and employments of historical pageantry. Rather, the second ending written by McGroarty which allowed the Señora to live, if in a temporal form, exemplified a feature common to both romanticizations of Spanish California and the historical dramas popular at the time; a celebration of past traditions that assisted rather than contradicted ideas of progress and modernization. Del Valle’s public persona cultivated a similar dichotomy that positioned her as simultaneously representing California’s past and working toward a more equalitarian future, a subject I explore in the following section.

“Sparkling and Vivacious Modern American Girl that She is”

In writing on del Valle’s interpretation of Señora Josefa Yorba, journalists seemingly could not help but comment on her perceived appropriateness in the role, at times even conflating del Valle with the character that she played. One article went so far as to claim del Valle “arrived among us a century behind her time,” that she belonged in the pastoral days associated with Spanish California. “But,” the author added quickly, del Valle’s temporal displacement occurred “for a reason,” that she might, through the character of Señora Yorba, provide “a living link between the past and the present.”33 To this author del Valle so thoroughly embodied Señora Yorba that it went beyond that of an actress playing a part, rather del Valle became a living representative of a bygone era. This assessment of del Valle depended upon the particular blending of the Spanish fantasy past and the conventions of historical pageantry found within The Mission Play and similar productions. The qualities associated with persons from New Spain and later Mexican California were understood as an issue of genetic heritage. While Anglos might embrace this lifestyle and recreate its customs, only a person with del Valle’s lineage could be seen to truly embody it. At the same time that del Valle’s portrayal of Yorba convinced onlookers of her proper existence in another era, her family connection to Spanish California lent authority to her turn at the role and to The Mission Play generally through the employment of objects from the del Valle family home.

Promotional materials emphasizing del Valle’s family and the use within The Mission Play of items belonging to them reflected both the traditions associated with historical pageantry and a regional sense of ethnic identity. A common practice within such performances had descendants of significant historical persons portraying their ancestors, often utilizing family heirlooms upon the
stage for an added sense of authenticity. Del Valle could substitute for a member of the Yorba family through a local understanding of ethnicity that privileged those of Spanish ancestry. Though not a direct descendant of Señora Yorba, del Valle’s family lineage mirrored that of the Yorbas in its easy linking to Spain, while holding an additional appeal to promoters of The Mission Play though her family’s connection to a foundational text of the Spanish fantasy past, Helen Hunt Jackson’s Ramona.
Ostensibly written as an indictment against the United States’ treatment of California Indians, Jackson’s novel instead became a sort of guidebook to the romanticized rendering of California pursued by tourists and exploited by boosters of the Golden State. In creating *Ramona*, Jackson pulled from her own experiences travelling through California, including her stay at the del Valle family home, Rancho Camulos. At the opening of the novel, the title character Ramona lives under the guardianship of Señora Moreno on a property architecturally similar to that of Rancho Camulos in both its main house and its out buildings. Fans of *Ramona* seized upon this connection, transforming Rancho Camulos into a tourist destination.34 If the family felt burdened by this association or angered by the popular correlation between Jackson’s Señora Moreno—noted for her poor treatment of Ramona in the novel—and family matriarch Ysabel del Valle as some writers suggest, they also embraced Anglo interest in California’s Spanish colonial past, hosting fiestas and investing in ventures such as *The Mission Play*.35

For her part, del Valle provided reporters hoping to bill her a “modern Ramona,” with stories of witnessing sheep shearing (a scene reminiscent of one in *Ramona*) during her childhood spent at Camulos and posed for pictures that blurred the distinction between del Valle and the character that she portrayed. Promotional photos taken of del Valle at Rancho Camulos early in her turn as Josefa Yorba exemplify this point. Dressed in the costume of the Señora—including petticoated skirts, an over-sized fringed shawl, and flowers framing her face—del Valle posed in amidst the scenic Camulos gardens and graveyard made famous in the pages of *Ramona*. These images collapse del Valle, her portrayal of Yorba, and the fictional Ramona into one. The accompanying text reiterated this confusion. While it mentioned del Valle’s association with *The Mission Play* (and the property’s connection to *Ramona*) it, along with the feature’s title, “At the Hacienda of Her Ancestors,” implied that del Valle posed for the images as herself rather than as her character. A mention of the use of objects originally from the Rancho within *The Mission Play* completed the blurring of lines between historic place and fictional story.36 Del Valle’s participation in cultivating such images made her an active participant in placing herself within the “past” portion of the Spanish fantasy idea.

At the same time, del Valle maintained a public image that defied her relegation to a previous period of California history. Throughout her tenure as Señora Yorba, del Valle maintained an active presence in Los Angeles through both her work in women’s clubs and her frequent mention in society pages that contradicted the idea of del Valle as a person existing in another era. The same writer that placed her a century behind her time also stressed del Valle’s apparent modernity and her thoroughly American pedigree, noting that, “on her mother’s side [she] is a descendant from those original Americans who came over on the Mayflower.”37
By the author’s estimation, del Valle contained the perfect mix of Spanish and Anglo-Saxon, of faded empire and burgeoning civilization. As with the goals of historical pageantry—and as the character Josefa Yorba called upon her audience to do—del Valle simultaneously embodied a celebration of past traditions and the ideas of progress championed in the early twentieth century.

A newspaper caption beneath a photo of del Valle dressed and posed similar to “The Leading Lady” by Guy Rose summarized these competing portrayals by declaring, “Lucretia del Valle, bright genius of Mission Play, who seems to be living in two incarnations a century apart. Sparkling and vivacious modern American girl that she is, she finds her second self in quaint character of pageant drama.”

This text acknowledged that, while del Valle seemingly embodied the part of Señora Yorba, she also cultivated a persona of herself as separate from the character she portrayed in The Mission Play.

To argue that del Valle only partially embraced the public perception of her as a señorita from another era does not mean that she did not herself express interest and pride in her family legacy or contribute to the generation of a romanticized interpretation of area history beyond her participation in The Mission Play. Indeed, del Valle participated in efforts to restore the missions through events such as Candle Day in 1916 which helped raise funds toward the restoration of Mission San Gabriel. Further, when what was supposed to be a two-year national tour of The Mission Play met with financial ruin and a lack of audience beyond the Golden State, del Valle famously declined a salary and paid her own expenses in an effort to keep the production salient, demonstrating her interest in the project beyond that of a hired actress. Even considering her financial interest in the play—that she along with other members of her family had invested in the work—del Valle’s decision to forgo an immediate income and to actually go into debt for the project showed her dedication to McGroarty’s vision.

Further, the choice to appear as the character of Señora Yorba within the painting by Guy Rose—a decision presumably reached between the artist and the model—demonstrated the importance to del Valle of the connection between the character she played within The Mission Play and her own family history. That del Valle could explore this connection through a cause and a play popular among the Los Angeles elite of the period created a space in which her interest in both the area’s future and its past did not contradict one another or her position within Angelino society.

Del Valle’s portrayal of Señora Josefa Yorba ended with her marriage in 1917 to Harry F. Grady, a professor of Political Economy at Columbia University in New York where del Valle was enrolled as a student. Besides attending classes, del Valle had co-founded a New York based group working toward women’s
The Journal of San Diego History

Lucretia del Valle played an active social role in early Los Angeles. She appears here (center, smiling with a feathered hat) flanked by John Steven McGroarty, poet laureate of California and author of The Mission Play (left) and railroad magnate Henry E. Huntington (right). Fellow actress Ida Bailey stands at left. Courtesy of David “Bodie” Bailey Family Archives.

suffrage in the state. Comprised of other recent transplants to New York, the group challenged the state’s failure to extend the vote to women based upon the various members’ loss of the franchise upon their move from a state that granted them suffrage (such as California) to New York. This followed similar work she had done in her home state of California. Del Valle maintained her activism under the title Mrs. Grady (while finishing her studies at Columbia) though she ceased her residency in Southern California, instead becoming an honored guest of various women’s clubs upon her frequent visits to the region.

As Harry Grady moved from professor at Columbia, to professor at the University of California, to U.S. Ambassador abroad, del Valle accompanied him, often acquiring prominent positions of her own. Del Valle served as a California delegate during the Democratic National conventions in 1932 and 1936 and maintained a significant role in the party throughout her life. She additionally worked toward the establishment of the United Nations, creating and heading the United Nations forum. Traveling with her husband to Iran during his ambassadorship in the country in the late 1940s and early 1950s, del Valle joined the women’s suffrage movement there. The Iran that the Gradys moved into as ambassador and wife was one in the midst of tumult and transition. Long the patsy of Britain, Iran in the late 1940s was among many nations participating in anti-colonial movements and attempting a move toward self-rule. Henry
Grady notably supported Iranian nationalism—a stance ultimately opposed by the United States and Great Britain and which led to the first coup undertaken by the CIA.42 Within this context, del Valle pushed for women’s rights against opposition in the United States and Iran that argued she was asking for too much by supporting those who included women’s rights as important to establishing Iran as a country free from imperial demands.

In describing this seeming transition between señorita stationed at Rancho Camulos and political activist concerned with the status of women internationally, Wallace Smith, an acquaintance of del Valle, wrote after her death in 1972 that she had “all but divorced herself from her Latin heritage.”43 Yet the period in which Smith understood del Valle as embracing a “Latin heritage”—her early life through her marriage in 1917—corresponded with a celebration of California’s Spanish colonial past alongside rapid development of the region, and in which the contradiction between these two ideas of area history disappeared. Consequently, del Valle’s embodiment of what became known as the Spanish fantasy past was also marked by ideas of progress and nation building by the United States. This construction of past and present positioned del Valle well within both the Spanish fantasy past and the popular form of historical pageantry—the first as a woman with a lineage tied both to Spain and to the novel *Ramona* who celebrated this past in high style among other prominent Angelinos, the latter as a meeting point for the ideas of tradition and progress and how one might serve the other. The character portrayed by del Valle further served these dual ends as both a representation of the once powerful Spanish Empire and as one speaking of California’s future. There is no apparent contradiction between these two ideas as Yorba described them, rather the problem that arises is about who has access to this future and who does not—a distinction made upon racial-ethnic lines in the Southern California of the early twentieth century.44 Del Valle did not confine herself to either of these constructions—as one either of the past or looking ahead—but instead, at least publicly, existed comfortably in both.

NOTES

1. “Religion Note of Drama,” *Los Angeles Times*, December 19, 1912. The two families—Yorba and del Valle—had both descended from pioneers of Spanish California. José Antonio Yorba arrived in 1769 as a corporal in the Catalonian Volunteers who accompanied Father Junípero Serra. His heirs received grants of Santiago de Santa Ana and Lomas de Santiago in Orange County; Antonio del Valle arrived in 1819 from Mexico as administrator of Mission San Fernando Rey de España. His son Ignacio del Valle was granted Rancho Camulos in the Santa Clara River Valley.
2. Jackson's novel, originally meant to call attention to the plight of the former mission Indians, instead was transformed into a pageant celebrating California's romantic Spanish past (see pages 15 and 16 herein).

3. Promoted by San Diego's 1915 Panama-California Exposition in Balboa Park and carried on in parades and pageants throughout Southern California as a result of the writings of Charles Lummis and others at the time, the actual history of California during the Spanish and Mexican periods was little known at the time.

4. This remarkable life size 70-inch by 60-inch portrait of Lucretia del Valle as Josefa Yorba has been recently acquired by the San Diego History Center through the generous donation of well-known collector William Foxley. The painting won a gold medal at the 1915-1916 Exposition in Balboa Park and now occupies a place of honor in the museum's gallery. The artist, Guy Rose, a well-recognized American Impressionist painter, was born March 3, 1867, in San Gabriel, California. His father, Leonard Rose, was a prominent California senator. The town of Rosemead bears the family name. (See cover photo)


7. Señora Domínguez was descended from a family equally as important as the Yorbas and del Valles. They were grantees of Rancho San Pedro. See page 9 herein.


9. Frank Miller, a power in the Republican establishment of Riverside, was one of the greatest of the Spanish California boosters. President Theodore Roosevelt stayed at his Mission Inn accompanied by fellow Harvard student Charles Lummis as early as 1903.


11. McWilliams first coined the phrase “fantasy heritage” during the 1940s as a criticism of such literature as Jackson's *Ramona* and the writings of Charles Lummis (*Land of Sunshine* and *Out West*) and other boosters who refused to deal with the unpleasant parts of racial discrimination, poor treatment of Indians, and other ills of the Spanish period. For an extended discussion of the Spanish fantasy past and its multiple permutations throughout California see Deverell, *Whitewashed Adobe* and Phoebe S. Kropp, *California Vieja: Culture and Memory in a Modern American Place*. McWilliams was particularly concerned about the treatment of Mexicans and Mexican Americans in Los Angeles during World War II.


13. Days of the Verdugos (Glendale); Old Spanish Days (Santa Barbara); Days of the Dons (various); Rose Parade performers and floats (Pasadena).


17. There were six surviving daughters of Manuel Domínguez, nieces of Juan José Domínguez, grantee of Rancho San Pedro. These plus others could have been the Sra. Domínguez of The Mission Play.


19. California Pioneer Register and Index, 1542-1848, 123.


23. Pioneer Register and Index, 390.

24. Much of this land became a part of the Irvine Ranch of Orange County.


28. Ibid., 71.

29. “California Creates Age of Outdoor Drama.”


32. Apolinario Lorenzana was quite well known in San Diego as the woman who brought a number of orphans from Mexico City to populate the Villa de Branciforte. She worked with the mission Indians and later received a grant of Rancho de los Coches in the El Cajon Valley area.


34. Dydia DeLyser discusses the connection between the novel Ramona, Rancho Camulos, and the ensuing tourism in her book Ramona Memories: Tourism and the Shaping of Southern California (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005), chapter 3.


38. Ibid.


43. Smith, “The Last of the Señoritas,” 42.

44. Señora Yorba, at the end of The Mission Play laments that “the dream is done . . . gone to return no more. The dear and lovely dream that was so bright and fair.’ What lives is the Cross and the Faith. The missions have gone, but God’s Mission remains.” And in the same way, descendents of the Yorba family, as well as those of the del Valle and Domínguez families, live on in present-day Southern California. Deverell, Whitewashed Adobe, 222.

The Meeting of Josefa Yorba and Lucretia del Valle


Maurice Braun (1877-1941), a founding member of the La Jolla Art Association, enjoyed a national reputation for his impressionist landscapes of Southern California. He is seen here painting on the Mesa Grande Indian Reservation, 1920. ©SDHC #86:15900-960-1.
The Little-Known Drawings of California Impressionist Artist Maurice Braun

By Nicole M. Holland

The legacy of Southern California Impressionist painter Maurice Braun (1877-1941) is enriched by the publication of a massive trove of drawings of varying dimensions and media made by the artist and kept by him throughout his life.1 Few drawings by Braun have been exhibited or published, and the existence of such a sizable family archive of more than three hundred works on paper was first revealed to the public in 2007, in an exhibition at Mandeville Special Collections Library, University of California, San Diego.

Braun’s leadership in the cultural life and artistic development of San Diego is well known through his association with the Universal Brotherhood and Theosophical Society in Point Loma; the founding of the San Diego Fine Arts Gallery, which would become the San Diego Museum of Art (Fig. 1); his extensive teaching practice; and, in general, the promotion of the young city as a mecca for a good life in mind and body. Less well known is the role of drawing in the career of this Hungarian-born and New York-trained painter. Braun was a double-immigrant and cultural denizen, bridging

(Fig. 1) The Prado [House of Hospitality] at Balboa Park, “The Prado Group” (named for a group of drawings which are similar in technique), charcoal on paper, 5 x 8 in. Private collection.

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Washington, color pencil on paper, 17½ x 20 in. Private collection.

Mountain Lilac, 18½ x 20 in. Private Collection.
The Little-Known Drawings of Maurice Braun

Harbor Scene, color pencil on paper, 20 x 18½ in. Private collection.

Beach Scene, color pencil on paper, 18½ x 20 in. Private Collection.
the Old and New Worlds of Europe and America, and the U.S. East Coast and rising West Coast. Indeed, he was “known as the painter of the East and of the West,” according to Reginald Poland, director of the San Diego Fine Arts Gallery, writing in 1928. This short article proposes, first, to describe this remarkable corpus with regard to media, size, subject matter and chronology; second, to offer some preliminary observations on the meaning and purpose of the drawings, including the significance of Theosophical practice; and, third, to consider the relationship of the drawings to the large corpus of oil on canvas paintings for which the artist is best known.

The family archive of drawings consists of nearly 350 works on paper that were made by Maurice Braun over a thirty-year career in San Diego. None of the drawings suggests—either in style or subject matter—that they were made before his move to the West Coast. The artist worked in a variety of drawing techniques and formats throughout his life, from the small pencil notations (Fig. 2) or quick pen-and-ink sketches (Fig. 3), and a few watercolors, to the several dozen, larger finished color pencil compositions (Fig. 4). It is easy to see that drawing provided a constant and crucial vehicle for Braun’s consumption—spontaneous or contemplative—of the rural, urban, or marine landscape motif. Braun sketched in the San Diego back country (Figs. 5, 10, 16) or Balboa Park (Fig. 1), at the beach (Fig. 6) or while traveling on family automobile trips through
the California mountain ranges (Fig. 7). He worked tirelessly while taking railroad company-provided gratis cross-country train trips, with the obligation to draw or paint beckoning landscape views as a marketing component of the burgeoning railroad tourist culture (Fig. 9), or while seeking respite in the art colonies of the East Coast (Fig. 19).³ Braun was clearly never without a leaf or two of paper tucked into the pocket of the elegant suit in which he worked indoors or en plein-air (outdoors), often working frugally from sheets folded from larger leaves into surfaces no more than two inches in height (Fig.2). The backs of gallery exhibition invitations (Kanst Art Gallery, Los Angeles, and Babcock Gallery, New York), hotel stationery or train handbills, all provided handy supports for quick notations. This poet of landscape visuality also worked comfortably within the format of the finished
color pencil drawing, using tools purchased from H.G. Daniels Art Supply, San Diego.

Braun could not function without drawing, evidently with medium always at hand, grabbing what he could to record the silhouette. More, he clearly never tired of the intense company he kept throughout his life with the natural scene. His imagination fused motifs from different locales: contours drawn from the California landscape combined with abstractions of Spanish missions to produce fanciful renderings of castles on hills (Fig. 11), while automobiles on San Diego streets passed towering cliffs more familiar in Yosemite (Fig. 18). His eye was fresh and scrupulous, even anthropomorphizing the view, as Reginald Poland, director of the San Diego Art Institute and colleague of Braun, commented in writing about the artist in The Theosophical Path, the regular journal of The Theosophical Society: “He loved to draw the distinct personalities among the many trees.”

Drawing was language for Braun; even the content of letters to his young daughter Charlotte consists of images of birds or animals in pen-and-ink (Fig. 12), with a loving salutation and closing signature. The family archive, then, may be viewed as a corpus of personal responses across a variety of media—from the quick note to the finished composition—to the subject that became the focus of his near exclusive preoccupation. While there are three extraordinary portraits of his wife Hazel, two close-up in pencil or pen-and-ink (Fig. 13), and one view of

(Fig. 6) Beach Scene, color pencil on paper, 18\(\frac{1}{2}\) x 20 in. Private collection.
her in a garden, the landscape throughout the changing seasons is the principal subject of these works made over a lifetime.

The practice of drawing dominated the instruction of the nineteenth-century European academies and the American schools influenced by them: drawing was synonymous with design. An émigré in the waning days of the Dual Monarchy of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, the young Braun studied at the New York Academy of Design with professors who had trained in the rigorous practice of the fundamentals of drawing. Following sustained study and drawing after plaster casts of antique statues, students were judged ready to progress to the next level of drawing, the life model. It was only in the early twentieth century that courses in painting or printmaking began to be offered at the National Academy of Design. In New York, Braun won a medal for his work in portraiture, and was highly regarded as a figure painter. Thus, Braun’s habitual response to the

(Fig. 7) Paradise Park, pen and ink on paper, 5 7/8 x 8 7/8 in. Private collection.
landscape through the lens of drawing is rooted in his early academic training. What was not taught in the academy, however, was the subject matter of landscape, considered a lower tier of subject matter, and for that Braun spent a year working with the renowned American Impressionist painter William Merritt Chase before moving to join with The Theosophical Society in San Diego in 1909. Chase had studied at the Munich Academy, a bastion of European academicism. In Chase’s studio, Braun was also exposed to the French-Impressionist-influenced plein-air landscape that the master practiced during his summers on Long Island. Braun carefully learned how to construct a solid framework: specifically, he learned to distinguish receding planes as well as raise important staffage framing devices of brush or tree at right and/or left of the composition. Most significantly, he took away from Chase a unifying device that I choose to call the “gangway”: a central path in the composition leading from foreground to middle ground that analogizes the viewer’s entry into the landscape (Fig. 14). Works by Chase that feature this device include Near the Beach, Shinnecock, The Toledo Museum of Art, c. 1895; and The Homestead, San Diego Museum of Art, c. 1893.

In his landscapes, Braun adhered to academic practice, producing pencil, charcoal or pen-and-ink sketches, as well as the more complete color pencil
sketches, which economically captured the silhouettes of foreground, middle and distant planes. Methodically recording the scaffolding of the many views he encountered, he consumed craggy outcroppings contoured against curtains of gently sloping mountains, mountain valleys, farms and ranches silhouetted against luminous scallops of hills and peaks, or the compelling close-up detail (Figs. 15, 16). The repetitive nature of his engagement in drawing and in paint tantalizes the viewer with one key question: why did landscape become the central focus of his art following his early success in New York as a figurative painter?

Poland notes the importance of California’s natural beauty for Braun, and its role in the development of art practice in San Diego: “Southern California will rise to a place of decided leadership as an American center of art. There is no doubt of this in his mind; the beauty of the country in time must dominate and develop a demand for beauty, in man-made creations.” According to Esther Megan Brush, Braun reveled in the freshness and optimism of California as captured in its art. He wrote, “for here we are in a country in the freshness of early youth… it smiles upon the world, happy in its sunny optimism. Its scenery is majestic.” The gently sloping silhouettes of landscape, in general, can suggest the contours of the reclining nude, and indeed in the imaginary of Braun’s virgin landscape of the
(Fig. 10) Mountain Lilac, 18½ x 20 in. Private collection.

(Fig. 11) Castle on Hill, “Hotel Alexandria” Group, named for a group of drawings that are similar in technique one of which appears on a piece of Hotel Alexandria stationery, pen and ink on paper, 5½ x 8½ in. Private collection.
young country of California. This similarity may be relevant for this late Victorian academy-trained artist who produced no painted reclining nudes. Indeed, Braun dressed formally as he worked en plein air, addressing the view as he would a portrait sitter.

But we must search for a richer significance for the deeply spiritual Braun, and for this we turn to consideration of the Theosophical movement and Braun’s own comments on the spiritual practice and its meaning for him. Founded by Madame Helena Blavatsky in the 1870s, the hybrid religion of theosophy found a wide audience in Europe and in the United States, engaging leading avant-garde artists including Wassily Kandinsky, the Russian painter who wrote Concerning the Spiritual in Art in 1911, as well as the Dutch Neo-Plastic artist Piet Mondrian. Fusing western and eastern religious traditions, Blavatsky also experimented in the paranormal, a widespread practice in late nineteenth-century Europe and America. According to the artist’s daughter, Braun, too, believed in and may have participated in paranormal experiences at times, “to explain what isn’t seen, what is beyond our sensibilities.” Katherine Tingley moved the International Theosophical Society to Lomaland in Point Loma in 1900.

Maurice Braun equated the experience of landscape with philosophical encounter, comparing the artist’s discovery of “a view” of such compelling beauty and character to experiencing for the first time the principles of Madame Blavatsky. He believed that the practice of art and the spiritual path of Theosophy both led to a central truth: “that all things share divinity and immortality…the art student finds in Theosophy a clear, bright light by which, with true vision, fully alive to the real issues, his best efforts may come to their proper maturity.” Braun further attributed great powers to theosophy: “One’s outlook upon life generally, its effect even upon one’s professional or vocational activities, is enhanced and
glorified...After all, what greater joy can there be than the consciousness that we are being trained for service." His philosophy reflected an American tradition reaching back to famed landscape artist George Inness (1825-1894) whose work he passionately admired. A devotee of Swedish eighteenth-century mystic Emmanuel Swedenborg, Inness had also sought correspondences between nature and the divine.

Braun first encountered theosophy in New York, where Madame Blavatsky had installed a chapter; he moved to San Diego in 1909 to be near the international headquarters. This is the same time period of Kandinsky and Mondrian’s engagement with the practice in Europe. The former linked colors to emotions and spiritual drives, as did Theosophist Annie Besant in her book *Thought Forms*. It is tempting to assign Braun’s colors some spiritual symbolism. For example, a golden path or valley marks several of the color

(Fig. 14) *Landscape Study*, color pencil on paper, 18 x 21 in. Private collection.
drawings, suggesting a pool of light possibly with special meaning, perhaps the theosophical light that he writes about as the “glance of the divine” (Fig. 17). Braun said, “It only remains for those who have a little more light to hold on to it and to see that it shines more and more brightly in the hope that it may help illuminate the way.”\footnote{19} Indeed, the luminous high key of the drawings, consisting of pinks, yellows, soft greens, lavenders and so forth, temptingly suggests the bright radiance of divine light shining on the natural “view” as he called it. Braun said, “I cannot paint in a low key.”\footnote{20}

The question naturally arises regarding any connecting relationships between drawings and oil canvases and, at this point, only a few links may be convincingly suggested. \textit{Harbor Scene} (Fig. 19), dated approximately 1925-30, is either a finished preparatory drawing or the record of a painting(s) done either in the Bay Area of California or during one of Braun’s summer east coast stays.\footnote{21} \textit{Mountain Lilac} (Fig. 10), with its glorious blue bouquet, may be a preparatory sketch for the c. 1920 canvas \textit{Mountain Lilac-Palomar}.\footnote{22} Finally, the lavender hues and soft radiance of \textit{The Moon, Colorado} (Fig. 20) are seen, as well, in the canvas \textit{Moonlight}.\footnote{23} Pinpricks suggest that this drawing was tacked to the artist’s easel as a guide. Other torn sheets suggest, too, their use in the studio as models for painted motifs. A

(Fig. 15) Ranch, Riders Mounted, color pencil on paper, 18½ x 14½ in. Private collection.
(Fig. 16) Ranch House, charcoal on paper, 17 x 20½ in. Private collection.

(Fig. 17) Yellow Fields, color pencil on paper, 9 x 9 in. Private collection.
tentative chronology for the drawings can be constructed on the basis of these few relationships, though the situation is made much more complicated by the existence of only a few dated canvases. Nonetheless, working with the scant available dates and the evolution of Braun’s signature, it is possible to suggest that three distinct periods emerge.

The earlier works capture the natural motif with a regular and uncomplicated, indeed earnest outline, filled in with colored pencil or shading (Figs. 4, 14, 21). The recession of planes—foreground, middle and background—is informational

(Fig. 18) Downtown San Diego with Automobile, pencil on paper, 5½ x 5 in. Private collection.

(Fig. 19) Harbor Scene, color pencil on paper, 20 x 18½ in. Private collection.
(Fig. 20) Moon, Colorado, color pencil on paper, 17 x 14½ in. Private collection.

(Fig. 21) Eucalyptus, pencil on paper, 10 x 12½ in. Private collection.
rather than persuasive or masterful. The hesitancy, even the uncertainty, of the artist working to subsume his subject is reflected in the early signature, which consists of a tight, Arts and Crafts-style block manuscript.

Works from the middle period evince a surer command of the linear contour, contrasting fine details with broad, sweeping arcs to generate a more unified pictorial space, seamlessly melding foreground and background (Fig. 4). The late works, finally, betray characteristics of many older artists: clearly defined, dense and highly fluid serpentine lines; less subtle and more vivid colors, and a flatness of receding planes, all of which evidence the artist’s “handprint” on the land he has made his own (Fig. 8). There are, no doubt, many more connections to elucidate that must await the publication one day of a catalogue raisonné. For now, students and collectors have the opportunity to assimilate the drawings on their own terms and to reflect on the centrality of drawing to Braun at the crucial conjunction of viewing and appropriation. For Braun, indeed, drawing is the instrument that binds perception and representation.

NOTES

1. The author extends deep appreciation to Jennifer and Jonathan Braun, grandchildren of the artist, for their ongoing support of the research and organization of the exhibition, and for their permission to publish the collection. Warm gratitude is extended to Lynda Claassen, Director of Mandeville Special Collections Library, University of California, San Diego for her tireless support in the research and development of an online catalogue as well as the installation of the exhibition Maurice Braun: The Hidden Treasure, on view in Mandeville Special Collections Library April 14-June 29, 2007. The Braun Cataloguing Team of The Bishop’s School, La Jolla, California—a voluntary group of students led by Nicole Holland and Bridget Wright—prepared the catalogue and research for the descriptive essays accompanying the privately published exhibition brochure, with the gracious support of Michael W. Teitelman, former Headmaster of The Bishop’s School; John C. Welchman, Professor, University of California, San Diego; and Michael A. Bernstein, former Dean of Arts and Humanities, University of California, San Diego, who generously provided funding. I also wish to thank Professor Molly McClain, University of San Diego, for her support of this publication. Finally, tribute is paid to the late Dr. Charlotte Braun White and Ernest Braun, children of the artist, who maintained the archive of drawings over a fifty-year period and who enthusiastically supported all aspects of this project.


6. Chase’s home/studio was a cultural haven, as would be Braun’s Silvergate residence in Point Loma. In fact, Braun’s life and work afford compelling reflections on the social and private histories of the city of San Diego where he and his wife Hazel played so prominent a part. Luminaries in the evolution of San Diego cultural life, the artist and his wife Hazel drew
renowned Swedish art historian Osvald Siren and other erudite international visitors interested in the movement. Missouri-born Hazel was an arts columnist for the San Diego Union. Together, the couple lived a life exceptionally sited at the junction of powerful vectors in the early formation of the region. In very few other locations on the West Coast at this time did the twin threads of an Edenic paradise and refined Eurocentric culture interweave in the performance of the self-renewing and ever-perfecting self. Braun held great belief in the potential of the San Diego region for artistic and spiritual development: “Neither Greece nor Italy surpasses southern California for artistic atmosphere...our sky is bluer, our waters have more colors, and our trees and flowers are brighter. It is indeed an Eden for those who seek the beautiful in Nature.” Cited in Esther Mungan Brush, “A Master-Brush of Point Loma,” The Theosophical Path 14, no. 1 (January, 1918), 16. Reginald Poland, writing in 1928, said: “Southern California will rise to a place of decided leadership as an American center of Art. There is no doubt of this in [Braun’s] mind.” Poland, “The Divinity of Nature,” 474.

8. Brush, “A Master-Brush of Point Loma,” 15. Brush quotes Braun: “I have heard many painters remark that our tree life, shrubbery, and other elements in California, are much like those of certain countries, but to my knowledge no one has yet made an absolute comparison. It is just this peculiarity of atmosphere, hill formation, verdure, quality of soil, which most attracts me... Here the immensity of the open spaces are themselves an inspiration. Here, even a gray day vibrates luminosity.”

13. Ibid.
17. Braun maintained a physical and emotional distance from the headquarters. Though his two children attended boarding school on the campus, which included the Raja-Yoga School and College, the Theosophical University, and the School for the Revival of the Lost Mysteries of Antiquity, Braun was never required to live on Lomaland property and opened a school for artists in downtown San Diego.
Before LA: Cliff May’s Beginnings in San Diego

By Mary A. van Balgooy

In 1931, Cliff May left San Diego State College and returned to his old calling—music. If someone had told him he would become the “father of the ranch house” and build thousands of homes, he would have laughed. “I never ever thought of building houses. Never. Even when I was in college it never occurred to me.” Rather, May seemed destined to play music and only the hot, popular jazz of the time. A promising saxophonist, May led his own band and played in San Diego’s finest hotels, on the radio, and even for aviator Charles Lindbergh. As May’s reputation grew so did the possibilities—playing at the Cocoanut Grove in Los Angeles, on the Pantages circuit, and for a cruise ship touring Asia. But when these opportunities fell through, May, on the advice of his father, enrolled in college to study business. In college, May continued to play music and for amusement, started to make furniture. Little did he know that his new hobby would lead him to designing houses and change the course of his life and suburban California architecture.

Clifford Magee May was born to Beatrice Magee and Charles Clifford May on August 29, 1908 in San Diego. Always proud of his family background, May was a sixth-generation Californian through his mother’s family, a descendent of José María Estudillo. A Spanish soldier, Estudillo rose through the ranks from a lieutenant in charge of Monterey for over twenty years to captain overseeing San Diego in 1827. When Estudillo took command of San Diego, his son José Antonio was granted a lot in the newly surveyed lands outside the presidio walls and it is here the family settled down and built an adobe house that overlooked the plaza.

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The Estudillo family grew and married into other prominent Californio families. Consequently, the family continued to serve in a number of important military, political, economic, and social positions under Mexican and American rule. They also acquired several large ranches in present-day San Diego and Riverside counties. Although they would eventually lose most of their vast lands, many descendants remained and lived in the San Diego area including Cliff May’s mother, Beatrice.³

Beatrice was born about 1876 to Maria Victoria de Pedrorena and Lieutenant Henry H.C. Magee. The daughter of Maria Antonia Estudillo and Miguel de Pedrorena, Maria Victoria had married Henry Magee, an army officer from New York in 1859. Beatrice, the eighth of their ten children, grew up in Fallbrook and attended State Normal School.⁴

May’s father, Charles, was a first-generation Californian. Charles’s father, Charles E. May, had made the overland journey from Iowa to California around 1859–60 settling first in San Francisco. In 1868, he moved to San Diego and opened a store. Twelve years later, Charles married Sophie Schlageter, a recent immigrant from Germany and Charles Clifford was born in 1881. Unlike Beatrice’s large family, Charles grew up in a small family with two younger sisters.⁵

As May tells the story, his parents met at the house of Dr. C.C. Valle. Charles later proposed to Beatrice in the doctor’s home and they were married in 1905.⁶ Beatrice and Charles settled down on Albatross Street northwest of downtown San Diego and built a house in 1906.⁷ Soon after, Charles began working as a stenographer for the San Diego Consolidated Gas and Electric Company and two years later, Cliff was born. He remained the only child until his brother Henry (nicknamed Hank) joined the family six years later.⁸

Cliff May enjoyed his childhood. Even though San Diego’s population had
reached about 46,000 and the city was rapidly changing, his parents’ long-time family connections with many of the city’s leading citizens as well as May’s own childhood friendships with prominent families made it seem like a small town. Socially, May’s parents mingled with people such as George Marston and John Spreckels, both of whom had worked towards developing the City of San Diego and restoring its historic town. At school, May’s friends included Bill Cotton, son of real estate mogul O. W. Cotton; Stephen Fletcher, whose father Ed Fletcher built San Diego’s major roads; and Roscoe Hazard, Jr., son of the building contractor Roscoe Hazard. At home, May played with neighbors Eli and Herbert Styris. Their father, Kole Styris, worked as architect Irving Gill’s master carpenter. In addition, May spent time staying with his many aunts and uncles in and around San Diego, Riverside, and Orange counties. Indeed, he stayed many weekends and summers visiting his aunt Jane Magee who lived on a ranch in Oceanside.

Early in his childhood, May developed a passion for music. He bought his first instrument, a bugle, with five dollars an aunt gave him when he was a child. His father, who played the violin, made May take music lessons from a family friend and May learned how to play bugle calls. As May grew older he wanted to play the saxophone and took lessons again from the same family friend. He eventually learned to play well enough to form a dance orchestra in high school and play at Hotel del Coronado and El Cortez Hotel. The band also played for the radio station KFSD that was located in the U.S. Grant Hotel. In 1927, his orchestra played for Charles Lindbergh when a party was staged for the aviator to celebrate his return from his solo flight across the Atlantic at the Hotel del Coronado.

As the band gained more experience and exposure, music seemed to be May’s calling. After playing for Lindbergh, May discovered that his orchestra might fill in for Gus Arnheim at the Cocoanut Grove in Los Angeles while Arnheim went on a short tour with his band. Arnheim was a widely popular bandleader and the Coconut Grove was the premier nightclub for Hollywood’s rich and famous at the time, so this could launch May’s career as a musician. The Grove never called. Then an agent offered May and his dance band an opportunity to play music on a cruise ship touring Asia. The pay was small—only fifty dollars for the entire trip—but May felt that free food, board, and travel would make up for it. He signed the contract. Almost immediately after signing, a promoter for Alexander Pantages contacted May about auditioning for the Pantages circuit. May could not believe his luck. If selected by Alexander Pantages to play on the circuit, May and his band members would each receive one hundred dollars a week—a lot of money for young men in the music business. The band auditioned in front of Alexander Pantages at the Coronado Country Club. May never heard back from him. That was not the only disappointment. May would not be touring
Asia either. He had canceled the contract with the cruise ship believing that Pantages would hire his band.13

When these prospects fell through, May’s father encouraged him to give up music, attend college, and obtain a business degree. May gave in and agreed. He tried to enroll in college but had just missed the deadline. He would have to wait another semester. To pass the time, May stayed with an aunt at her Tahquitz Lodge, a mountain resort located near Idyllwild. There he worked and honed his skills at playing the piano; he could not give up music. When he returned home he enrolled at San Diego State College as a business major in the fall of 1929. He was twenty-one years old.14

May only spent two years at college. By 1931, he had dropped out of school. The nation was in a serious economic depression. Jobs were scarce, college degree or not. Moreover, May was twenty-three years old and probably felt much older than the new students. Having directed his own band, May decided he could at least make some money playing jazz since musicians were in demand as Americans turned to entertainment to forget their cares and woes. It seemed that the musician’s life was going to be his career after all. In fact, May listed himself as a musician in the 1931 San Diego City and County Directory.15

At the same time, Cliff May was engaged to be married to Jean Lichty, the daughter of Roy C. Lichty, a prominent San Diego real estate agent, best known for purchasing and subdividing Talmadge Park in the 1920s. They met when Jean was just eighteen
and May was nineteen years old. Perhaps this is another reason May had decided to go to college and try to obtain a degree—in order to provide for a family.

While he had been in college, May designed and constructed furniture in his spare time, a carpentry skill neighbor Kole Styris had taught him when he was a boy. It started out as a hobby. Jean and May had gone to Barker Brothers to look at the furniture and dream of their future home. When May said that he could build furniture better than what they saw, Jean kept a salesman busy while May measured and drew sketches. He then put his carpentry skills to work and constructed enough furniture in the popular Monterey style for a living room and dining room plus three bedrooms. But he did not stop. He continued to make furniture and soon needed a place to store it.

Cliff May’s future father-in-law helped him. Lichty, who was probably concerned about May’s ability to support his daughter on a musician’s salary, allowed May to place the furniture in one of his new houses for sale. When the house sold—in part because of the furniture—May installed more furniture in another new house Lichty had on the market. Again, the furniture helped to attract a buyer and the house sold. With such success at furniture making, May believed he could apply the same creative style and craftsmanship to design and construct a house. A partnership was formed with O.U. Miracle, a local contractor who had laid sidewalks and streets in Lichty’s Talmadge Park subdivision and who also owned undeveloped real estate. The contract between the two men was most likely Lichty’s doing. Miracle, who was sixty years old, was forming a contract with May, a twenty-three-year-old man, with no architectural or building experience to design, construct and landscape a house in the midst of the Great Depression. Miracle’s business, the Miracle Construction Company, provided the land and deeded it to May so he could take out a loan of $3,500 to build a one-story, seven-room house with an attached garage. May drew up the plans and, under the direction of master carpenter Wilburn Hale, he built, furnished, and landscaped his first house at 4725 Norma Drive, San Diego.

May claimed that his first house, as well as his subsequent houses, was based on his
The houses May remembered from his childhood were not necessarily the authentic California adobes that he believed them to be. The Estudillo adobe had been extensively rebuilt and restored in 1910 by Hazel Waterman. When Waterman started on the project, very little of the adobe existed. Although she took great care to employ the same methods and materials wherever she could to bring the adobe back to its original state, she also took artistic liberties in her work. She added fireplaces, relocated windows and doors, and stained wood lintels, sills, and shutters so that, in the end, José Estudillo, who originally built the U-shaped adobe, would have a hard time recognizing his own house.

Las Flores had changed over the years as well. Built in 1868 in the Monterey style, the two-story adobe house went through changes as various occupants altered the home for their own use. Between 1917 and 1919, the adobe was extensively remodeled after a major earthquake in the area. The roof was replaced, new porches were added, and new doors, windows, and woodwork were introduced. Hence, the houses May drew upon for inspiration were not “authentic” California adobes but a combination of styles, most notably, the Spanish colonial revival style.

During the 1920s and ‘30s, Spanish colonial revival architecture became one of the most popular styles in the Southwest. Popularized by the 1915 Panama-
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California Exposition in San Diego, the style symbolized the West’s mythical Spanish past. Instead of the crude adobes the Californios built, designers of the Spanish colonial revival style constructed houses with red tile roofs, round or square entry towers, roughly plastered walls, arched doorways and windows, window grilles, wrought-iron hardware, stained glass windows, colorful tile, and interior courtyards with arcaded walkways and fountains.

Cliff May’s early houses clearly represent the Spanish colonial revival style. However, to differentiate his houses from other Spanish style homes in the area, May copied elements from the Estudillo and Las Flores adobes to give them a much more crude appearance. In addition, he created his own signature details: chimney pots; wooden window grilles with flower pot boxes; tile doorbells; painted flower decorations on wooden beams, doors, shutters, and cupboards; and landscaping with cacti, yucca, and olive trees.

May’s first home, also known as the “O’Leary House,” is a one-story, one-room deep structure in a U-shaped configuration around a central courtyard. To make it look like an old California adobe, May intentionally laid the red roof tiles haphazardly atop of each other, placed simple terra cotta pots on top of the chimneys, plastered exterior walls coarsely, put in rough-hewn wood lintels over windows and doors inside and out, constructed crude wooden window grilles, and paved floors irregularly with rustic terracotta tiles. The front door does not enter into the house, but into a covered walkway and courtyard. He used this covered walkway or corredor as the central hallway of the house.

Inside the house, May constructed and exposed the large wooden roof trusses with king posts, built beehive fireplaces in all of the living spaces, installed wrought-iron lanterns and oversized hardware, distressed doors and wood cabinets, laid tile floors, and painted flowers on the wooden beams, doors, and

Cliff May’s first house, the “O’Leary House,” 1932. The O’Leary House has a roughly laid red tile roof, chimney pot, wooden window grille with flower pot box, lintel over the door, cactus, and yucca. Photo courtesy of the Cliff May Collection, Architecture & Design Collection, University Art Museum, University of California, Santa Barbara.
cupboards in the Mexican Art Deco style. He finished the interior with his Monterey furniture and Navajo rugs.

Outside, May completed the exterior by enclosing the U-shaped plan with a wall; putting in a fountain in the courtyard; installing paneled garage doors; planting cacti, yucca, and an olive tree; and placing a colorful tile doorbell by the front door.26

Completed on February 27, 1932, May advertised the house as a “rambling Spanish hacienda furnished with old California furniture.”27 The Home and Garden Forum section of The San Diego Union featured the house in its May issue. Entitled “New House Idea Reminiscent of Early California,” the article emphasized the architect’s young age, lack of training and experience, and the “unique” style of the house.28 Waiting for the house to sell, May was probably uncertain of his future as a builder because it was not until August that he and Miracle sold it to Frances and Arthur J. O’Leary for $9,500.29 Once the house sold, though, May’s career as a builder took off with the help of family friends and clients.

Impressed with his newly constructed house, George Marston and his wife Anna granted May and Miracle a lot to build a house in Presidio Hills at the beginning of October.30 In addition, Jean’s cousin Frances and her husband Edward Bernard deeded May a lot two doors down from Roy Lichty’s house in Talmadge Park.31 Just as Miracle entered into a contract in early October to construct a one-story, seven-room, frame-dwelling and double garage on the Bernard lot, May obtained a loan of $3,500 to build the house.32 A few days later, on October 19, Cliff May married Jean Lichty at the Old San Diego Mission. Featuring photographs of the bride and her bridesmaids on the front of the Society Club Section, The San Diego Union reported on the wedding detailing May’s ancestral ties to the mission and San Diego. Moreover, the newspaper noted May was “now associated with the home building branch of the Miracle Construction Company in San Diego.”33 Following his wedding, May received additional work. Marston put him in charge
of the restoration of the city’s old cemetery, El Campo Santo in Old Town, which mainly consisted of reconstructing an adobe wall surrounding it.  

Almost a year later, on February 2, 1933, May completed his second house at 4669 East Talmadge Drive and, by the end of March, May and Miracle sold the house to Ridy and William Lindstrom for $9,500. Similar to the O’Leary House, May’s second house is a one-story, U-shaped home entered through a heavy wooden door into the courtyard. The “Lindstrom House” also would be included in Architectural Digest, a magazine that featured the work of southern California’s leading architects—quite a coup for a young man with little design or construction experience.  

In June, May and Miracle purchased a lot at 4365 Altamirano Way in Presidio Hills and began construction of another house to sell. Although May designed this house like his others, the property presented him with a design problem in that the lot was curved at the front. May still built the house in a U-shaped configuration, but rather than reduce the living and yard space, he turned one wing of the house at a forty-five-degree angle to follow the curve. Completed in August, it took more than a year to sell the house even though May had garnered a great deal of publicity on it, including articles in magazines. But May did not need to worry. His business with Miracle was booming as they started to receive commission after commission. However, there were four commissions,
in particular, that would affect Cliff May’s future career as a successful designer and builder.

Sara and Wade Langston, a couple originally from the South, hired May and Miracle to draw up plans and construct a house for them at 6116 Avenida Cresta in La Jolla. Again, May conceived the house much the same way as his other houses but he added two new design ideas. To take advantage of the views of the Pacific Ocean, he broke the U-shaped plan by turning the living room thirty-five degrees from the rest of the rooms. Also, at the request of the Langstons, he incorporated architectural fragments and details from older buildings into the home. Both of these new elements would become important features in May’s future as a designer of houses.

About the same time, Violetta Horton, a member of the Sweetwater Woman’s Club, commissioned May to design the organization’s new clubhouse in Bonita. This marked the first time May designed a building other than a house. It was also, more importantly, the first time May designed a structure in what he named the “rancheria” style, a style that would define his career and become his legacy.

Cliff May created the Sweetwater Woman’s Club as a one-story structure in an I-shaped plan with a caretaker’s apartment at one end and a storage room at the other. His “rancheria” style was identical to his “hacienda” style design at this time—the illusion of thick walls, white plastered interior walls, exposed beam-and-rafter wood ceilings, protruding fireplaces, French doors—except that May replaced the red tile roof with wood shingles and clad the exterior walls in board and batten.
When the plans for the clubhouse were completed in June 1934 and the building was under construction, The San Diego Union ran an article describing it as “a Mexican farmhouse in a grove of eucalyptus” that, Horton claimed, “will look 100 years old in six months.” Horton was so pleased with the new building that she hired May to design four houses on land that she and her husband owned on Hillside Drive in La Jolla. It was the first time May did not collaborate with Miracle on a building project because Horton insisted that May exclusively work with her. May designed two haciendas and two rancherias for this street. For the rancherias, May installed white picket fences in the front yard and knotty pine paneling in the interior in areas such as the living room—perhaps to appeal to buyers looking for a more traditional American home.

While the Langston House and Sweetwater Woman’s Club were under construction, May and Miracle received their largest commission yet. Alexander Highland, a newly transplanted banker to San Diego, and his wife, Nancy, hired them to design and construct a house in Presidio Hills. It is this house that is an exemplary example of May’s work as a designer of the Spanish colonial revival style and illustrates how far he had progressed since his first house.

Located at 2400 Presidio Drive and a block away from May’s third house built for sale, the “Highland House” posed a new set of design challenges.

The Highland House featured in an advertisement in The San Diego Union, July 8, 1934. The advertisement cleverly illustrates Cliff May’s recent designs and work. At the top of the advertisement is the courtyard of the Hodge House followed by a large sketch of the Highland House. Clockwise from the Highland House is an interior sketch of the Lindstrom House, exterior of the Langston House, unidentified “Hacienda Ranch House,” front elevation view of the Beardsley House, and interior sketch of the O’Leary House. Advertisement courtesy of the Cliff May Collection, Architecture & Design Collection, University Art Museum, University of California, Santa Barbara.
The house would be built on a corner lot with two facades exposed to the street and include a two-story block that could not take up a significant amount of the property. Both of these challenges would affect the arrangement of the living spaces of the house.

In dealing with these challenges, May produced an outstanding design. He conceived the house as a one-story, U-shaped configuration anchored by a two-story block at one end. But this was not one of May’s typical U-shaped designs. To soften the corner of the two main wings, he curved them and designed attractive facades by carefully placing doors, windows, shutters, window grilles, chimneys, and garage doors. Moreover, May arranged the rooms individually turning them as needed to follow the street, frame a view, or maximize the courtyard, thus designing a home that functions better for its occupants.

May also added an important new element to the Highland House. In the living room, he installed a large window, almost the length of the living room wall, facing the courtyard. This was not the first time May had installed large windows in a home. He had installed them in the Langston House but for a different reason, so that the homeowners could take advantage of the views of the Pacific Ocean on the backside of the house. For the Highland House, May had the window face the courtyard to create an intimate connection with the outdoors that was also private. This design idea of using large expanses of glass to create an intimate and private connection with the outdoors would become a defining feature in May’s future houses.44
As May developed these designs, he received a commission that would eventually lead him to Los Angeles. During the time he offered his third house for sale, C. Arnholt Smith, a banker, toured the house. Impressed, Arnholt convinced his older brother, John, to see it. An oil promoter and banker, John and his wife Flossie visited the house. John agreed with his brother and, in 1934, hired May to design and construct a house on forty acres that he owned in La Habra Heights in Los Angeles County.45 Cliff May went to work.

May also went to work on a house for himself. With his rising success, he was finally able to design and construct a home for his family, who had been living in a rented house on Vista Street. In January 1935, May and Jean purchased a lot at 4338 Adams Avenue. In February, The San Diego Union announced in the “Tete-a-tete” section, “Mr. and Mrs. Cliff May are building their first home on Adams Ave., Talmadge park. They call it a California Rancheria...Mr. May is taking his inspiration from the early California casas of his ancestors (he is descended from the Estudillo and de Pedrorena families)46 May’s own house plan matches the third house he built. But, like the Sweetwater Woman’s Club, May put on a wood-shingle roof and decorated part of the exterior with board-and-batten walls. He also installed a large window in the living room facing the courtyard. Completed in April 1935, the house drew praise for May and was featured in Arts & Decoration and Architectural Digest.47
As May worked on John Smith’s house in La Habra Heights, the two men formed a partnership. May was becoming a successful designer of houses in the San Diego area; he had designed about fifty houses and even listed himself as an architect in the 1937 San Diego City and County Directory. However, Smith felt May would have better opportunities if he moved to Los Angeles and convinced May that if there was anywhere that the housing market would grow, Los Angeles was the place. In fact, Smith promised to provide the necessary financial backing for May to build in Los Angeles and introduced him to real estate giant Alphonzo Bell, who had developed Bel Air.48

Cliff May took Smith’s advice and financial assistance and moved to Los Angeles in 1938. Smith was right: in Los Angeles, May’s career thrived. When he died in 1989, he was remembered for building over one-thousand custom homes; developing suburban tract plans that resulted in over eighteen-thousand houses for middle-class families; designing motels and commercial buildings; and producing two books in collaboration with Sunset magazine on the western ranch house. Most of all, Cliff May is now remembered as defining the key characteristics of the ranch house style and making the California ranch house one of the most popular styles that is still built widely today.49 Because of growing awareness of May’s work, architectural historians are studying his early designs and homes to understand how his ideas evolved into the California ranch style. May might have had a career as a professional musician had he continued to pursue his passion. But for many proud homeowners of Cliff May’s houses in San Diego, they are most likely pleased that he took a chance, designed and built a house, and flourished as a “Designer of Dream Houses.”50
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NOTES


9. Marston had led efforts in the City Beautiful movement of San Diego and Spreckels had invested his money into restoring the Estudillo adobe in 1910. Cliff May, interviewed by Laskey, 58-63.


12. May’s dance orchestra was one of three bands that played for Lindbergh on September 21, 1927. Cliff May, interviewed by Laskey, 67-70.


15. During college May still had his orchestra and played for various people and at events. Cliff May, interviewed by Laskey, 75-81.


18. In his oral history May states that he placed his furniture in the house of a friend, O.U. Miracle, a realtor. It was Miracle who then introduced him to his future father-in-law, Roy Lichty and Lichty agreed to put up the land and money for May to build a house. In return, May would provide the labor and if the house sold, they would split the profits in half. However, David Bricker writes that May placed his furniture in one of Lichty’s model homes and that May worked in partnership with Miracle, who was Lichty’s grading contactor, to design and build the house at 4725 Norma Drive. In addition, if Cliff May was engaged to Jean then he knew Lichty and the title deed to this house confirms Bricker’s statement. Cliff May, interviewed by Laskey, 81-83; David Bricker, “Cliff May,” 285; County of San Diego, Office of the Recorder, Deed, Deed Book no. 54, October 31, 1931, 176.

19. Looking at the deeds of Roy C. Lichty at this time indicate that he had been hard hit by the depression. Under Roy Lichty as grantor, the deeds show foreclosure, default, and homestead. Therefore, Lichty was probably unable to provide May with property to build a house. However, to help May, Lichty arranged the contract with Miracle and, most likely, introduced May to the men who would help him construct his first house. County of San Diego, Deed Book no. 16, July 30, 1931, 250; Deed Book, no. 46, November 4, 1931, 431; Deed Book no. 46, November 7, 1931, 468.

20. County of San Diego, Deed Book no. 54, October 31, 1931, 176; Deed Book, no. 54, November 2, 1931, 177; Deed Book no. 98, February 27, 1932, 38; “O.U. Miracle, Contractor, Succumbs,” San Diego Union, October 10, 1949, sec. A; Gregory, Cliff May and the Modern Ranch House, 31; Cliff May, interviewed by Laskey, 90-91.

21. Soon after completion of the project in 1910, John Spreckels, who owned the adobe, leased it to minstrel performer Tommy Getz. To the dismay of Waterman and the Estudillo family, the place was promoted as “Ramona’s Marriage Place” and decorated with Native American handicrafts, wagon wheels, and other Spanish-era curios. Plays, movies, and other types of promotions added to its romantic lure into the 1930s when May completed his first house. Victor A. Walsh, “Una Casa del Pueblo — A Town House of Old San Diego,” The Journal of San Diego History 50, nos. 1-2 (Winter/Spring 2004): 1-16.


24. Living in San Diego, May might have attended the exposition as a young child. As a young man he would have been quite aware of the architecture in Balboa Park since buildings such as the California Building/Museum of Man, House of Hospitality, Spreckels Organ Pavilion, and House of Charm were never demolished.

25. The chimney pots May used are not of the Spanish colonial revival style. They are reminiscent of the ones found at the Indian Pueblos of New Mexico. There is no evidence that May visited New Mexico and thus it is most likely that he picked up this idea from the Indian Village at the Panama-California Exposition of 1915, where a “pueblo” featured chimney pots made by the soon-to-be-famous Maria Martinez of New Mexico.


27. County of San Diego, Deed Book no. 98, February 27, 1932, 38; Union Classified Ads, “Homes for Sale,” The San Diego Union, May 22, 1932.


29. County of San Diego, Deed Book no. 150, August 20, 1932, 313.

30. In his oral history, May claimed that the third house he built was on the Marston lot, but this is not accurate. He never built a house on this land probably due to the steep grade and odd shape of the lot. He sold it in 1945. Cliff May, interviewed by Laskey, 122; County of San Diego, Deed Book no. 168, October 3, 1932, 98; Deed Book no. 480, March 17, 1936, 312; Deed Book no. 1862, April 26, 1945, 285.

31. The Bernards had acquired three lots in this area in August 1932. Frances was a cousin of Jean Lichty on her father’s side and would serve as her matron of honor at their wedding. Edward S. Bernard was the manager of the U.S. Grant Hotel. As May stated in his oral history, many friends helped him in his early career in San Diego. Ronald V. May and Dale Ballou May, Legacy 106, Inc., “Historic Designations” http://www.legacy106.com/CommanderWilburVandM.htm (accessed June 29, 2011); County of San Diego, Deed Book no. 157, October 15, 1932, 255; “Historic Mission is Setting For Picturesque Wedding,” San Diego Union, October 23, 1932; Cliff May, interviewed by Laskey, 103.

32. County of San Diego, Deed no. 170, October 15, 1932, 169.

33. In addition, the newspaper reported on the music program. Part of the program included a song written by Cliff for Jean during their courtship entitled ‘Jean.’ “Historic Mission Is Scene Of Unique October Wedding,” San Diego Union, October 23, 1932.


35. May completed the restoration of El Campo Santo in March. San Diego Union, March 26, 1933; County of San Diego, Deed Book no. 196, February 4, 1933, 97; Deed no. 202, April 3, 1933, 207.


37. Architectural Digest, IX [1933]: 44-47. It is difficult to date early editions of Architectural Digest. The magazine was published sporadically and each issue was not dated until after the 1960s. An article in The San Diego Union states that the Lindstrom House was featured in the 1933 edition of Architectural Digest even though Cliff May took out an advertisement in a later edition of the magazine stating 1934 as the year. Therefore, it is difficult to ascertain which date is correct. “Spirit of old California Blends With New,” San Diego Union, February 11, 1934, sect. 2, p. 3; Architectural Digest, IX [1937]: 160.

38. For this house, May borrowed $2,750. May and Miracle sold the house to Helen and Sheldon Hodge in November 1934. County of San Diego, Deed Book no. 227, June 10, 1933, 74; Deed Book no. 225, June 10, 1933, 56; Deed Book no. 225, August 21, 1933, 445; Deed Book no. 357, November 20, 1934, 150. Magazines that featured the “Hodge House” include American Home, Architectural Digest, California Arts & Architecture, California Pictorial Life, and Sunset. The original
house burned down due to a gas explosion. Helen and Sheldon Hodge also commissioned Cliff May to design a block of houses in the neighborhood. Although the Hodges planned for six houses, the author can only verify three houses in this neighborhood—4366 and 4369 Altamirano Way and 2440 Marilouise Way. “Block of Homes of Hacienda and Rancheria Type,” *San Diego Union*, n.d., Cliff May Collection, Architecture and Design Collection, University Art Museum, University of California, Santa Barbara. In his oral history, May remembered the details incorrectly. He claimed that not only had Marston given him this lot, but also that he built four or five more houses in the neighborhood because of Marston’s generosity. Cliff May, interviewed by Laskey, 122-123.


40. “Early-Day Home is Reproduced,” *San Diego Union*, May 20, 1934, sect. 2, p. 5; Cliff May, interviewed by Laskey, 133-34; Bricker, “Cliff May”, 288-89. The “Langston House” has since been remodeled with a second story over the garage. From this job, May would receive three more commissions to build homes in the neighborhood. They are 6004, 6117 and 6126 Avenida Cresta.

41. “New Women’s Clubhouse Center of Interest,” *San Diego Union*, June 3, 1934.

42. According to May, Miracle was happy that May was working with others and encouraged him to strike out on his own. Cliff May, interviewed by Laskey, 134-135.

43. Both haciendas still stand at 7477 and 7575 Hillside Drive. Although the Department of Parks and Recreation Primary Record states that the rancheria at 7455 was moved, the house was actually bulldozed. The other rancheria at 7447 was moved due to unstable soil conditions; however, the owner has since let the house fall into disrepair. State of California—The Resources Agency, Department of Parks and Recreation, Primary Record, 7455 Hillside Drive, March 2000; State of California—The Resources Agency, Trevor Residence, November 1998; “A Hilltop Cottage,” *Sunset* (April 1940): 56; Bruce Coons (Executive Director, Save our Heritage Organization), telephone conversation with author, February 14, 2011. Both Spanish words are misused. Hacienda is an area of land or a ranch and “rancheria” is a word coined by the Spaniards for an Indian village.

44. Interestingly, this house never seemed to be featured in architectural magazines of the day such as *Architectural Digest* and *California Arts & Architecture*.

45. Cliff May, interviewed by Laskey, 122-125.


47. “The California Hacienda Develops into the Modern Rancheria,” *Arts & Architecture*, (September 1936): 23-25, 52, 54; “Residence of Mr. and Mrs. Cliff May, San Diego,” *Architectural Digest*, IX [1936]: 72-73. May claimed that this is the house he first built in the rancheria style. However, both the Sweetwater Woman’s Club and Neil B. Dittenhaver House were clearly built in the rancheria style before May’s own house. Cliff May, interviewed by Laskey, 128; County of San Diego, Deed Book no. 360, November 28, 1934, 110.


49. For more information on Cliff May’s career, see Mary A. van Balgooy, “Designer of the Dream: Cliff May and the California Ranch House,” *Southern California Quarterly*, 86 (2006): 127-44.

The La Jolla of Ellen Browning Scripps

By Molly McClain

Ellen Browning Scripps, one of San Diego’s most important philanthropists, fell in love with La Jolla’s natural beauty and small community. In 1919, she described the changes that had taken place in the village since 1894 in a speech, “La Jolla Then and Now,” reproduced below. Preserved among her letters, diaries, and other manuscripts in Scripps College’s Ella Strong Denison Library, her words reveal the interests and values of the woman who invested much of her substantial fortune in the seaside community, founding the Scripps Institution of Oceanography, The Bishop’s School, the La Jolla Recreational Center, Scripps Memorial Hospital, the Children’s Pool, and Torrey Pines State Reserve, among other landmark institutions.

Scripps gave her speech at the twenty-fifth anniversary of the La Jolla Woman’s Club, held on March 24, 1919.1 Founded in 1894 as the Woman’s Literary Club of La Jolla, its first members included Eleanor McGilvery Mills and her daughter Ellen, Olivia Mudgett, the elderly Eleanor McGilvery, Ellen F. Mills, Clara Kennedy, Carrie McGraw, Nellie Johnson, and Eliza Jones.2 Scripps joined in 1899, soon after she

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moved to La Jolla, and served as club president (1901-04, 1909-10) and longtime member of the board of directors. She hosted meetings in her home before commissioning architect Irving Gill to design and build a permanent clubhouse at 715 Silverado Street. Dedicated in 1914, the La Jolla Woman’s Club was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1974.

Scripps was an experienced writer with a highly descriptive prose style and a tendency to embellish her public speeches, in particular, with the kind of heartfelt language characteristic of the Victorian period. Born in 1836, she admired Romantic-era novelists and poets such as Samuel Taylor Coleridge, William Wordsworth, the Brontë sisters, Charles Dickens, Victor Hugo, and Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. While her career as a journalist and editor had disciplined her writing, she recognized that her work could become “too diffuse or prosey,” including the travel letters that she wrote for the *Detroit Evening News* in the 1880s. When she expressed her doubt that she had “the pen of a ready writer,” her sister Annie replied, “What would I not give for your command of language and your power of expression.”

Ellen gave a number of speeches, often before the La Jolla Woman’s Club, though she claimed that she did not like to speak in public. In 1899, she offered an address on the future of La Jolla to a “full and appreciative house” and wrote...
“a paper on Rome.” She later discussed the trans-Siberian railroad, explained the history of Great Britain’s Hanoverian kings, and prepared a paper on eighteenth-century novelists, including Alexander Pope. Her friend Mary Eyre later recalled a “delightful talk” that Scripps had given to the senior class of The Bishop’s School: “The gist of her speech was to young women just starting out. Spoke of her own hopes for development of women. There was a little poem—flowery but direct. I remember her face for she looked as if she enjoyed doing it. She was quite spirited.”

Ellen’s 1919 speech began with a description of La Jolla in the 1880s and 1890s. She recognized that Indians had lived in La Jolla for centuries before the arrival of Europeans, but she focused on the time “when we as newcomers first discovered its hidden mysteries.” At that time, La Jolla was a summer campground for San Diegans who spent their time bathing in the sea, looking for seashells, fishing, and living in the sunshine and fresh air. They camped on the bluffs overlooking the Cove until hotel-cottages became available on Prospect Street in 1887. An article in *The Land of Sunshine* touted it as, “A Tented City by the Tide,” and “the favorite summer camping ground of nearly all San Diegans.”

Scripps visited La Jolla during her first trip to San Diego in 1890. She and her brother Fred had come from Detroit, Michigan, to see family members, including cousin Fanny Bagby, a writer for the *San Diego Sun*. On February 19, they left their downtown San Diego hotel—Horton House—and made the fourteen-mile trip...
to La Jolla with Bagby and Gustav Schultz, an artist and civil engineer. They spent the day gathering seashells, mosses, and abalone. Scripps noted in her diary: “Found a few fine specimens, also starfish, black mussels, and various other kinds of shells.”

Before the arrival of the railroad, visitors approached La Jolla slowly along dirt roads. Scripps’ first memories of the village included “meandering and half-obliterated cow paths, over hillocks and down ravines, through straggling vines and thickets of fragrant sagebrush and blossoming greasewood and clumps of yellow poppies.” She recalled the abundant plant and animal life; the sunshine and “glorious sunsets”; the beaches, tide pools, “legend-haunted caves,” and landmarks such as Cathedral Rock.

The completion of a transcontinental railroad in 1885 transformed La Jolla when visitors from the East Coast and Midwest began to arrive during the winter months, drawn by the sunny weather and the cheap ticket fares. Scripps recalled the price wars between the Santa Fe and the Southern Pacific railroads: “I remember there was one day when the round trip rates between Chicago and San Diego went down to one dollar.” As a result, she wrote, “Speculation ran high, and hotels were built to catch the eastern tourists, who were coming out in legions in 1886, enticed by the competing rates of rival railroad companies.” The Pacific Coast Land Bureau built five rental cottages on the south side of Prospect Street, between Herschel and Girard, and planned an eighty-room hotel—the La Jolla Park Hotel. Frank T. Botsford, meanwhile, auctioned off lots in the first La Jolla Park subdivision in 1887.
The La Jolla of Ellen Browning Scripps

In 1888, however, the real estate boom went “bust” when it became clear that Los Angeles—not San Diego—would become the terminus of the Santa Fe Railroad. Real estate prices dropped dramatically and properties like the La Jolla Park Hotel were temporarily abandoned. Scripps noted, “A mighty ‘slump’ followed the boom; and the property stakes rotted out in time, and the hotels became the abode of bats and mice until in due time they became a liability on the insurance companies.”

In the early 1890s, La Jolla had only a few resident cottages, “picturesque in their environment and their unpretentiousness,” and a general store at the northeast corner of Wall and Herschel Streets. The latter, a two-story frame structure, had been built in 1887 by George W. Heald. It served a “triple purpose,” Scripps recalled, “the ground floor serving as a sort of general merchandise store, the upper floor doing duty on Sundays as a church, and on weekdays as a school.” The Union Church, which first met in 1889, occupied the second floor until 1897 when a new church building was built on the west side of Girard Avenue, south of Wall Street. The La Jolla School was also there until 1899 when George W. Chase bought the store and moved it to the corner of Prospect Street and Girard Avenue.

In 1894, the village began to attract visitors year-round after the San Diego, Old Town, and Pacific Beach Railway extended its services to La Jolla. It now took only an hour to get from the Santa Fe depot to the intersection of Prospect Street and Fay Avenue. An article in *Sunset Magazine* noted, “Until recently La Jolla’s

Before the La Jolla Park Hotel opened to the public, visitors to La Jolla camped in tents. Photo dated June 1892. ©SDHC #16372.
The glad season was during the summer months decidedly, but for several seasons past the winter has been vying for popular favor. Winter tourists, fleeing from the wrath of the chilly East, discovered ‘the gem’ and sent the good news flying. The resident population of La Jolla has more than doubled within the past two years, while furnished cottages and the hotels have found their capacities taxed, and increased their accommodations.”

Many visitors felt the urge to colonize the beautiful stretch of coast by buying lots in the La Jolla Park subdivision and building houses. Anna Held developed the Green Dragon Colony (1894-1902) and invited artists and musicians to share a few rustic cottages on the cliffs above Goldfish Point. Dr. Joseph Rodes, a San Diego physician, built a nearby bungalow that, after his death, became a rental property named Brockton Villa. Two redwood cottages—Red Rest and Red Roost (the latter called, ‘Neptune,’ at that time)—were built close to the park. Other houses built in the 1890s included the Hawley House, Merrimac (W.W. Wetzell), Brownie (Miss Frances Brown), the Burnell house, the Belmont, Windermere, and Montezuma Cottage. By 1898 there were nearly one hundred homes in La Jolla.

Scripps participated in the housing boom, building a house above the sea, South Moulton Villa. Architects Anton Reif and John Stannard created a modified Queen-Anne-style bungalow while nursery owner and horticulturalist Katherine Olivia “Kate” Sessions supplied the earliest plants. Scripps lived there with her unmarried sisters Virginia and Annie, describing it as an “old maid’s establishment.”

In the early days, La Jolla was “a woman’s town.” Among the leading residents...
were Eleanor McGilvery Mills (1856-1937) and her sister, Olivia McGilvery Mudgett (1845-1918) whom Scripps later described as “the old-time ‘bone and sinew’ of the community.”25 Eleanor, a native of Maine, had moved to La Jolla in 1890 with her husband, Anson P. Mills, and daughter Ellen. She worked as a real estate agent while her husband, a former lawyer, served as a handyman, painting and fixing up rental cottages. They lived at Kennebec Lodge at the corner of Prospect Street and Fay Avenue.26 Olivia, meanwhile, lived in a Victorian house called Villa Waldo, built in 1894. The widow of a prominent shipbroker, she had graduated from Belfast Academy in Gorham, Maine, one of the oldest women’s colleges in the United States, and lived for a time in New York City.

The McGilvery sisters drew Ellen and Virginia into the center of La Jolla’s social life. Olivia often had young people over for music and dancing; she and Eleanor also hosted socials at the Pavilion, a meeting place for both tourists and La Jolla families, located near Coast Boulevard and Girard Avenue. On New Years’ Day, 1898, the Mills family invited forty-eight people to a party at the Pavilion. Anson Mills noted in his diary: “Mrs. Balsfar played on the piano, Nellie sang, and Mr. Holliday gave three phonograph selections. We had cake, sandwiches, coffee and cocoa. After the refreshments we had a Virginia Reel. Everyone seemed to have a good time.”27
In the summer, there were card parties, dances, suppers, and picnics almost every day. Holidays, in particular, drew crowds into La Jolla. On July 4, 1898, the railroad brought an estimated 1,600 people into town to see the fireworks and an "illuminated dive" in which daredevil Horace Poole covered his body with oil and set himself afire before jumping into the ocean from a springboard placed over the caves. High school students came for "straw rides" and an occasional "Tally Ho" while tourists gathered abalone shells by the shore at low tide. In 1898, the railroad offered an excursion "and gave each ticket holder a piece of watermelon." Fishing was popular, and people regularly caught sea bass, barracuda, spotted
bay bass, calico, halibut, mackerel, yellowtail, and rock cod. They also organized sporting events. In 1899, a group of young people held a concert and dance to raise money for a tennis court; they also laid out golf links on the cliffs above the Cove. In 1902, Mills reported, “Golf is all the rage now. A great many of the ladies are playing, getting ready for the ladies’ tournament next Saturday.”

Ellen and Virginia joined the card club that met at the Pavilion on Saturday nights. They also invited neighbors over to play whist, a popular trick-taking card game that originated in eighteenth-century England. In February 1899, Ellen noted in her diary, “Mr. Kennedy and Mr. Robinson spent the evening. Played whist. Candy and oranges.” Anson Mills wrote in March 1900, “We all went down to the Scripps last evening and played whist. Had a pleasant time.” A whist club met on Friday afternoons at the Reading Room and its members also socialized at one another’s houses.

The Scripps sisters also got involved in intellectual activities, joining the women’s literary and current events club that later became the La Jolla Woman’s Club. At a time when few women had college educations, clubs provided a venue in which their members could advance their knowledge and intellectual skills. Clubwomen discussed current events such as U.S. territorial expansion following the Spanish-American War and women’s suffrage. In October 1899, Irene Robertson gave a paper on “Municipal Housekeeping” while Eleanor Mills spoke on the subject of British imperialism in Africa, or “Cape to Cairo.” The club subsequently talked about the troubles in South Africa that would lead to the Boer War. In 1918, Ellen described the club as a place “for serious thought and work.
and study; a means of mental growth, spiritual culture,” and the development of women’s “natural forces and resources.”

Scripps recalled the simplicity of these early gatherings: “People were neighbors—not formal callers—in those days, with the house door always on the latch, and the glad hand always open to another's clasp. And it didn’t take a very big house, or a classical program, or an elaborate menu to entertain as evening guests the whole community—men, women and children.” At the same time, she resisted the temptation to cloak La Jolla in a veil of nostalgia. She wrote, “applaud as we may the good old days, I doubt if any of us would willingly return to them if we could.” She recognized that the events of the early twentieth century, including World War I (1914-18), had started a process of globalization that drew the village into the modern world.

In the twenty-five years between 1894 and 1919, La Jolla changed from a modest seaside village to a year-round vacation destination with hotels, shops, and restaurants. Two large hotels—the Cabrillo Hotel (1908) and the Colonial Hotel (1911)—welcomed guests while the Crescent Café, the Brown Bear, and the White...
Rabbit Roof Garden served lunches and dinners. Businesses included a laundry, bakery, barber, two grocery stores, a bank, a drug store, a shopping emporium, a curio store, and an auto repair shop. In addition to railroad transportation, there were “paved streets, fire protection, water in abundance, gas, electricity, telephone, automobile,” wrote Ellen. The first telephone came to La Jolla in 1899 while electricity arrived in 1911. A volunteer fire department was formed in 1907. The first concrete road was the Torrey Pines Grade, completed in 1915, followed by Prospect Street in 1918.

Scripps played a key role in the modernization process. In 1899, she joined the La Jolla Village Improvement Society, an advocacy group that dealt with roads, water supply, sewers, electricity, fire protection, and transportation, among other issues. The group met monthly to consider ways to enhance La Jolla’s appeal to both residents and visitors, occasionally financing advertisements in Out West magazine published by Charles Fletcher Lummis. In 1903, Ellen proposed that the organization put up shelters along Coast Boulevard and around the park; she later gave a talk to the Woman’s Club on the subject of “village improvement.”

Scripps was “more interested in the civic than in the commercial advancement of the community,” according to her friend Mary Ritter. Her contributions to La Jolla in these early years included the creation of the Scripps Institution of Oceanography (1903), The Bishop’s School (1909), the Children’s Playground and Recreation Center (1915), the La Jolla Woman’s Club (1914), and the La Jolla Sanitarium (1918). She opened her library and gardens to the public, hosting hundreds of visitors every year, and worked with the City of San Diego to preserve Ellen Browning Scripps’s home, left, was located along Prospect Street. ©SDHC #92:18833.
the Torrey pines. She later described her philanthropy as a testament to “loyalty to truth, social service, and infinite human progress.”

Scripps also contributed her time and money during World War I. Beginning in 1914, she and other members of the La Jolla Woman’s Club gathered donations for Belgian refugees, made bandages for the Red Cross, bought Liberty Bonds, opened their facilities to soldiers from Camp Kearny, and hosted public dances and suppers at the clubhouse. They rationed foodstuffs such as wheat, sugar, eggs, and butter, and developed recipes, “a la Hoover,” for cakes made from rice flour and molasses. When Scripps and her friends viewed the silent film, “Hearts of the World” (1918), directed by D.W. Griffith, they found themselves so “wrapped in a spirit of intensity” that they rose to their feet when the orchestra started to play the Marseillaise. “There was much silent weeping; but an intense ‘stillness,’” Scripps wrote.

By 1919, La Jolla was no longer a provincial paradise. Knowledge—in the form of science, technology, and war—had caused women to mature, to become aware of their responsibilities in a global world. Scripps ended her address by suggesting that La Jolla women had become part of a national and international community fighting for peace, suffrage, prohibition, and other progressive causes. They were “combatants in world struggle for righteousness; as workers for the good of all.”

Ellen’s speech before the La Jolla Woman’s Club provides insight into the
changes that took place in La Jolla over twenty-five years. It also helps us understand the nature of Scripps’s philanthropy in the years before and after 1919. Before the war, she helped to improve a village; afterwards, she worked to change the world.

“La Jolla Then and Now” (1919) by Ellen Browning Scripps

I have taken this caption merely to emphasize the changes that have come over the spirit of our past dreams.

It is of the past, not the present, that I am booked to speak; but things are seen better in the highlights of contrast.

Not the La Jolla of the past as Balboa may have glimpsed it or the primitive Indian exploited it.51

But of the time when we as newcomers first discovered its hidden mysteries, when we set out on a journey of exploration from the hill boundaries of the far stretching mesa, along meandering and half-obliterated cow paths, over hillocks and down ravine, through straggling vines and thickets of fragrant sagebrush and blossoming greasewood and clumps of yellow poppies; past the structural homes of the kangaroo rat and the caverned mounds which were the habitat of the ground squirrel; invading the haunts of the quail and the lizard and the horned toad; startling the frightened jack rabbit, and the self-centered road runner, and

A popular activity in early San Diego was the “Tally-Ho” ride, a sightseeing excursion to La Jolla. Photo taken among the Torrey Pines, 1905. ©SDHC #13358.
the wary coyote; the air above and around was sweet with the scent of the cyclamen; and resonant with the song of the meadow lark; the drone of the bees, the chirp of the cricket, and the hum of aerial insect life.

So out from the narrow winding canyon, with its high green and flowering banks we emerged into the open, with the broad ocean before us, in whose embrace nested the little village with the liquid name of La Jolla.

How we loved her, in those far off days, unvexed by city turmoil, untroubled by national and international problems! How we loved the sunshine that flooded the homes, glorious sunsets that empurpled the seas and bejeweled the hills; the white surf that lapped her feet; her own little mountain that crowned and fortified her. How we loved her shell-
strewn beaches, her unstable sand dunes, her legend-haunted caves, her rock-bound pools teeming with life and color, her wave-carved Cathedral Rock, even her dusty roads and grass grown foot paths which lured us to unexplored wonders of sea and land.

Would you see the other side of the picture—the corporeal side?

If I try to list her material assets and deficits of a quarter of a century ago I may sometimes get them on the wrong side of the ledger.

There was a hotel of capacity at that time, with 2 or 3 cottages as an appendage, for the overflow of patronage—which never came. It had been built by some bold projector in the days of the boom, when resident lots that lay out on the tide lands or hung vertically above the eye-range changed hands at fabulous prices. Speculation ran high, and hotels were built to catch the eastern tourists, who were coming out in legions in 1886, enticed by the competing rates of rival railroad companies. I remember there was one day when the round trip rates between Chicago and San Diego went down to one dollar. Of course, the tourists were ‘caught’ as people always are—or ought to be—who try to get something for nothing; but they didn’t ‘stay caught’; and a mighty ‘slump’ followed the boom; and the property stakes rotted out in time, and the hotels became the
abode of bats and mice until in due time they became a liability on the insurance companies.

There were a few—a very few—little resident cottages scattered over slopes and levels, picturesque in their environment and their unpretentiousness.

There was a moderate sized frame building which (if my memory serves me aright) served a triple purpose, the ground floor being used as a sort of general merchandise store, the upper floor doing duty on Sundays as a church, and on weekdays as a school.

It must have taken some effort—possibly a little subterfuge—to rally even the minimum number of children of school age to entitle us under the law to public school privileges and it must have been often a difficulty to keep the number up to 5.

The preacher—when we had one—was, naturally, of the itinerant class, and was entertained for the weekend consecutively by the few members of the congregation—I suppose in part payment for his services.

There was a woman’s club even at those early times, but Mrs. Mills has given you the history of that. I remember the day of my introduction
The La Jolla of Ellen Browning Scripps

(I don’t think we paid any initiation fees). Mrs. Mills was the speaker of the day and her subject, I remember, was From the Cape to Cairo, for the elucidation of which a rough sketch of the continent of Africa had been pinned up which showed that even then ones minds’ were not confined to village life.52

But we had other resources apart from household and intellectual activities. People were neighbors—not formal callers—in those days, with the house door always on the latch, and the glad hand always open to another’s clasp. And it didn’t take a very big house, or a classical program, or an elaborate menu to entertain as evening guests the whole community—men, women and children. For our literary tastes were not hypocritical; nor were our appetites capricious, and we always had a ‘feast of reason and a flow of soul,’ even if it was of light weight.

No, there were not as many men and children as there should have been at our neighborly rendezvous.

It was a woman’s town, as rather satirically denominated. I remember the first baby that was born in La Jolla—and that was an accident.

They began to come later, ‘trailing clouds of glory as they came’ to irritate and humanize us. But that period doesn’t belong to this paper.

And what of the things that we didn’t have—things that seem essentials
to us now—railroad transportation, paved streets, fire protection, water in abundance, gas, electricity, telephone, automobile.

I suppose unconsciously we appropriated to ourselves the aphorism that if we couldn’t have what we liked, we would like what we had.

But, after all, applaud as we may the good old days, I doubt if any of us would willingly return to them if we could.

More particularly because we must realize, from our new perspective, not only their incompleteness of purpose and design; but their devitalizing effect on real life and character.53

It needs be that all of us must at some time in our lives taste of the fruit of the tree of good and evil, and be driven from our Eden of self satisfaction. If only in order that we may test our powers, master the riddles of life, and learn the blessedness of self sacrifice.

And in the larger and fuller life of today, we are all finding our true selves as combatants in world struggle for righteousness; as workers for the good of all.

NOTES


2. Ellen F. Mills was Anson Mills’ mother and Eleanor Mills’ mother-in-law. Clara Kennedy was the second wife of William Kennedy, a well-known local builder. Nellie Johnson was the wife of Hamilton Johnson, owner of the La Jolla Park Hotel. Eliza Jones was Ada Dearborn’s mother. Howard S.F. Randolph, La Jolla Year by Year (La Jolla: The Library Association of La Jolla, 1955), 28. The Women’s Literary Club of La Jolla (also known as the Reading Club) succeeded the Current Events Club founded in 1892. Patricia A. Schaelchlin, La Jolla: The Story of a Community, 1887-1987 (San Diego: The Friends of the La Jolla Library, 1988), 79, 104-105.

3. The club was renamed the La Jolla Woman’s Club in March 1899.


5. EBS to James E. Scripps, Naples, Italy, April 16, 1882, SC 3/34.


7. EBS, Diary, February 18, March 14, 1899, SC 23/3.

8. EBS, Diary, November 14, 1900, SC 23/4; EBS, Diary, November 13, 1907, SC 23/11; EBS, Diary, January 12, 15, 1908, SC 23/12.

10. In fact, many people had found evidence of Kumeyaay occupation in the form of arrowheads, pottery shards, and other items. Joseph Jessop (1851-1932), founder of J. Jessop & Sons Jewelers, wrote in her guest book: “...to think of a time thousands of years ago when this coast and these hills, and right where this house stands, bands of savages were roaming about and they have left us their arrow points, paint-pots, mortars and pestles and other implements to show how they lived; I have myself found over 400 mortars, pestles, and other implements besides lots of fragments of pottery.” Guest Books: South Moulton Villa, 1897-1915, SC 25/56.


12. Mary Frances “Fanny” Bagby (1851-?) worked on several Scripps papers before joining the staff of the San Diego Sun. For more information, see Molly McClain, “The Scripps Family’s San Diego Experiment,” The Journal of San Diego History (hereafter JSDH) 56, nos. 1-2 (Winter/Spring 2010), 25n20. Gustav Schultz (1849-1912) moved to La Jolla in 1890. He purchased a lot in La Jolla Park from actress Anna Held and began the creation of the La Jolla Cave and Shell Shop tunnel in 1902. Born in Germany, he had travelled all over the world collecting art, much of it said to be lost on his voyage from the Falkland Islands to San Diego. He exhibited his work at the St. Louis World’s Fair. Edan Hughes, “Artists in California, 1786-1940,” La Jolla Historical Society (hereafter LJHS); Patricia A. Schaelchlin, “La Jolla Caves Curio Shop,” Historical Resources Inventory, November 15, 1977, in La Jolla, A Historical Inventory [San Diego: s.n., 1977].

13. EBS, Diary, February 19, 1890, SC 22/40. She made another shell-collecting trip to La Jolla on February 28, 1890.


15. Ibid.


17. The La Jolla Park Hotel, which stood empty for several years after its construction in 1888, opened on January 1, 1893 and burned to the ground June 14, 1896. Randolph, La Jolla Year by Year, 15-17.

18. EBS, “La Jolla Then and Now.”

19. Ibid.

20. Randolph, La Jolla Year by Year, 13, 26-27, 48, 65.


22. Randolph, La Jolla Year by Year, 47, 55, 57.


24. EBS to E.W. Scripps, Chicago, July 11, 1895, SC 2/43.


27. Anson Mills, Diary, January 1, 1898, LJHS.
29. Mills, Diary, August 1, 1898, March 22, 1902, LJHS.
30. Mills, Diary, September 4, 1898, LJHS.
31. Mills, Diary, July 8, 22, 1899, May 8, 1901, August 12, 1902, LJHS.
32. Mills, Diary, June 9, 1898, LJHS.
33. EBS, Diary, February 8, 1899, SC 23/3.
34. Mills, Diary, March 7, 1900, LJHS.
35. EBS, Diary, February 3, 10, 17, 24, 1899, SC 23/3.
36. The Women’s Literary Club of La Jolla (also known as the Reading Club) succeeded the Current Events Club founded in 1892. Schaelchlin, *La Jolla*, 79.
37. EBS, Diary, January 4, 1899, SC 23/3.
38. EBS, Diary, October 4, 18, 25, 1899, SC 23/3.
40. EBS, “La Jolla Then and Now.”
41. Ibid.
42. Randolph, *La Jolla Year by Year*, 34, 76, 90, 102, 122.
43. EBS Diary, March 5, 1899, SC 23/3; EBS, Diary, December 8, 1898, SC 23/2.
44. EBS, Diary, September 6, 1906, SC 23/10.
45. EBS, Diary, June 4, 1903, SC 23/7; EBS, Diary, June 14, 1905, SC 23/9.
47. EBS, undated note, SC 22/36.
48. EBS to Virginia Scripps, La Jolla, October 22, 1917, SC 3/18.
49. EBS to Virginia Scripps, La Jolla, May 21, 1918, SC 3/19.
50. Ibid. Here, she repeated language that she had used in previous speeches, reminding women of their duty to extend democratic principles and work for justice. EBS, “Paper Read Before the Club,” May 13, 1918, SC 22/23; EBS, Speech, La Jolla Woman’s Club, October 5, 1914, SC 22/32.
51. Crossed out is the following paragraph: “We wouldn’t be carried to the skies on flowery beds of ease while others fight to win the prize and sail o’er bloody sea. and in the larger and fuller life of today we are all finding our true selves as contestants in the world struggle for righteousness, as workers for the good of all.”
52. In October 1899, Eleanor Mills spoke on the subject of British imperialism in Africa: “Mrs. Mills received account of construction of Cape to Cairo railroad and telegraph line. Had some paper and discussion on the Transvaal situation.” EBS, Diary, October 25, 1899, SC 23/3.
BOOK REVIEWS


Reviewed by Barry Alan Joyce, Associate Professor of History, University of Delaware.

Some stories, it seems, never grow old, especially those so woven into the American mythic fabric as the tale of westward movement. Will Bagley has parlayed his National Park Service research into the initial volume of a compendious four-volume study of the trails leading to Oregon and California in the nineteenth century. Volume One--So Rugged and Mountainous: Blazing the Trails to Oregon and California; 1812-1848--details the whys and hows of the opening act in this great American saga. Bagley’s goal is to “recast the tale in a new and more complete fashion,” (p. xvi) by providing a reinterpretation of the classic American migration epic. To do so, he references many new trail narratives that, according to the author, were unknown to historians before 1988. These accounts, as well as his attempt to place “previously neglected people” such as American Indians and migrants of color “at the center of trail history,” attest to his desire to compose a richer history of this migration west. While few new ideas are actually posited in this work--western historiography, after all, has undergone a transformation in the twenty-three years since those new narratives surfaced--Bagley’s well written volume is not without considerable merit. Weighing in at 458 pages, So Rugged and Mountainous is a valuable reference work for students of the American West, as well as for history buffs who never tire of rereading the tales of the great American migration.

Bagley sets the scene for the development of these trails, then proceeds year by year through the 1840s, with occasional chapters sandwiched between the chronology on topics such as Conestoga wagon design and debates over of the efficacy of horses versus oxen. A clear message emerges from Bagley’s story: today’s readers are incapable of comprehending the risks and challenges weighed and considered by those first migrants who blazed the trail. Virtually nothing was known about routes, available supplies, distances from point to point, topography, and, if they succeeded in traversing the continent, what awaited them in Oregon or California. In fact, the concept of “blazing” a single trail is a misnomer. Instead, the movement west should best be characterized as an uncoordinated yet inexorable
surge toward the West Coast, marked by countless proposed cutoffs, shortcuts, and other sub-trails. It amounted to a trial and error process that often led to tragic consequences. “Yet Americans had the will,” Bagley reminds us, “and where there were willing Americans, there was a way” (p. 80). The articulation of these trails into the main roads that emerged in the late 1840s should be looked upon as an achievement at least as impressive as the construction of the transcontinental railroad twenty years later, when tracks were laid over pathways already trod by adventurous Americans of the prior generation.

Bagley skillfully uses the stories of three characters in the second half of the book to emphasize these points. Two--John Frémont and Narcissa Whitman— are familiar names in the migration tale. A third historical figure, Lansford Hastings, is more obscure. His important story reminds us that not all pioneers were noble and intrepid, and that “a sizable contingent of ne’er-do-wells and outright scoundrels” (p. 126) left their marks on the trail.

So Rugged and Mountainous marks an attempt to refocus the historian’s gaze upon the epic journey westward. While the book succeeds in providing an incrementally more complete image by introducing new vignettes to the grand tale, the greater story remains essentially unchanged. Perhaps a true transformation of our understanding of the westward movement in the nineteenth century is now in the hands of those disciplines and perspectives (for instance, geography, economics, the “hard” sciences, and comparative studies) less wedded to both our historical and mythic national narrative.


Reviewed by Clare V. McKanna Jr., Lecturer, Department of History, San Diego State University.

California historians have longed for a biography that would examine the life of the legendary Tiburcio Vásquez and, more importantly, dispel the myths about nineteenth-century banditry. In the past historians had to rely upon the biographies of George A. Beers and Eugene Sawyer and other secondary sources that tended to glamorize the life of Vásquez and other Hispanic bandits. Now John Boessenecker has provided what should prove to be the definitive biography on this famous and often misunderstood Californio bandit. The author has
dissected the myths and legends that have prevented us from really knowing what Vásquez was like and why he has become a social hero to some modern-day Hispanics. Boessenecker has collected and examined an impressive collection of court documents, prison records, newspapers, and secondary sources to write this remarkable chronicle.

Tiburcio, one of ten children, was born in Monterey in 1835. He learned the skills of riding, roping, and shooting, all the characteristics of a vaquero, and lived during a chaotic period of history when some Hispanics turned to banditry as a way to resist or attack the new Anglo-dominated social regime. Historian Leonard Pitt coined the phrase “decline of the Californios” to identify what happened during the second half of the nineteenth century. It was an era when Anglos, who did not respect the rights of the founders of California, gained control of the government and the court system. Vásquez apparently became obsessed with women and this may have been the beginning of his troubles. While attending fandangos in the early 1850s he became involved in fights with Americans who came to dance. Thereafter, he began to associate with a tough crowd of young Californios like Anastacio García and Mariano Hernández. In February 1857, Vásquez and two comrades stole cattle from a ranch in Los Angeles County. He was arrested, tried, convicted, and sentenced to serve time at San Quentin. During this era San Quentin housed a substantial number of Hispanics including first offenders and hardened criminals. In June 1859, Vásquez escaped from prison but was soon captured. He was an unlucky bandit who would spend over ten years of his life in prison. Eventually, after serving three terms in prison, he was released in 1870.

For the rest of his bandit career Vásquez became involved in a series of robberies including thefts from stores in isolated towns. His modus operandi included tying up the victims, taking their money and jewelry, and casually consuming oysters, cheese, crackers, and wine before leaving. His techniques created the image of a “good natured” bandit who was not especially violent; however, the 1873 Snyder’s Store robbery in Tres Piños destroyed that myth. In this particular robbery his men rounded up the people, tied them up, and began robbing them. Although accounts differ as to what happened next, there is no doubt that the theft turned into a bloody encounter that left three people dead. From that point Vásquez ceased to be the “gentleman bandit” and turned into a hunted killer who had to be captured. In 1875, Harry Morse, sheriff of Alameda County, tracked Vásquez into Los Angeles County; however, it was William R. Rowland, the local sheriff, who captured the famous bandit. While incarcerated in a jail in San José numerous reporters and writers interviewed Vásquez and their stories helped to create the myth that he was forced into a life of crime. Despite his claims that he had killed
no one, Vásquez was quickly tried, convicted, sentenced to death for murder, and hanged.

In his epilogue Boessenecker notes that “numerous scholars have identified Tiburcio Vásquez as a social bandit” (p. 372). The author’s critique of social banditry explains why this Californio does not fit Eric J. Hobsbawm’s vague concept. Vásquez may have been charming and a lady’s man but he could hardly be labeled a Hispanic “Robin Hood.” The author notes that “Hobsbawm’s view is naively romantic. He fails to recognize that the outlaw hero is...a creature of folklore, not history” (p. 374). Despite his self-serving stories that highlighted his abuse at the hands of Anglos, there is no credible evidence that the local Hispanic population supported Vásquez. In fact some Californio ranchers must have been angry when he robbed them and stole their cattle. One would have to conclude that Vásquez did not fit Hobsbawm’s criteria for social banditry. Perhaps Boessenecker’s quote from John Steinbeck says it best: “Everybody thinks Vásquez was a kind of hero, when in reality he was just a thief.” Boessenecker has provided us with an excellent biography that will be welcomed by western historians. It is highly recommended.


Reviewed by Sandra Cook, Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs, Enrollment Services, San Diego State University.

Neil Smelser’s *Reflections on the University of California* is a personal and documentary history of his long and distinguished relationship with the University of California, Berkeley. He served as distinguished professor of sociology and in other academic roles (chair, Academic Senate, and committees). However, the opportunities that allowed him “to touch many parts of that special elephant” (p. 1) began in 1965 when he was appointed special assistant in the Chancellor’s Office during the Free Speech Movement, and continued with his involvement in myriad task forces, committees, commissions, and special assignments until his retirement. This book reflects on the university’s journey through three decades of change and challenge by combining a retrospective on the Free Speech Movement with documents and reports that Smelser authored while serving in these various capacities.
Smelser refers to his tenure in the President’s Office during the Free Speech Movement, the Obscenity Crisis, and Vietnam Day Events as “the most educational and exciting of my life” (p. 55). These were times of unprecedented student political conflict throughout higher education. Applying his sociological research to practice, Smelser advised the administration on how to cope with political conflict proactively. In 1973, at the request of the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education, Smelser wrote an essay about “Berkeley in Crisis and Change” that looked back on the events that preceded and precipitated the conflicts.

In two of his previously published essays on diversity and affirmative action, Smelser addressed the dichotomy of the research universities’ tradition of meritocracy and the push for diversity for its own sake, acknowledging the politics and complexity of the issues. Smelser discussed the “Problematics of Affirmative Action” from the historical, political, and cultural context and pointed to the ambiguity of implementing such programs. Smelser, never shy about addressing politically sensitive subjects with a brutally straightforward analysis, suggested that the main problem is not implementing affirmative action, but rather addressing the racial, ethnic, and gender struggles themselves.

California’s multisegment system of higher education, the result of the 1960 Master Plan, has tried to strike a balance between excellence and access. Smelser reflects on what he considers to be future challenges to this model in light of increasing costs and student enrollment and decreased funding. Hired to be an advisor on long-term planning in the Office of the President in 1993, Smelser felt compelled at the end of that experience to write a memorandum on “Governing the University of California” that he sent to the president. In this document, published a decade later, Smelser shared his wisdom and experience regarding the essentiality of keeping the traditional values of the university at the core of all decisions.

Smelser’s ability to marry “analysis and action” is highlighted in the final section of the book. He chaired a commission to review the failing School of Education, led a Task Force on Lower Division Education, and chaired the Chancellor’s Blue Ribbon Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics. Throughout each assignment, Smelser kept the core values of the university central to the outcomes.

Smelser’s “commitment to and affection for” the University of California resulted from his multifaceted involvement and the freedom and trust bestowed upon him by the university throughout his involvement. Through this collection of documents, the reader is offered a glimpse into the Free Speech Movement from a new vantage point, the complexity of the political issues faced throughout the last several decades, and a peek into the future (the “looming problems” of which
appear uncomfortably contemporary). The complex and symbiotic relationship of this man and this institution is at the very heart of Reflections on the University of California.

Unless one is a scholar or student of higher education (or somehow involved with its inner workings) the academic culture and politics contained in the book will be baffling. Additionally, Smelser’s erudite writing requires a careful consideration of virtually every word to absorb completely the depth and scope of his thinking. That being said, this book is a significant contribution to the history and sociology of higher education because it reminds us that the more things change, the more they stay the same.


Reviewed by William Issel, Professor of History Emeritus, San Francisco State University.

Writer Rebecca Solnit and twenty-nine artists and photographers, novelists and poets, cartographers and geographers teamed up to produce this rendering of the “imaginative possibility” they discovered in their individual and collective readings of the city of San Francisco at the end of the first decade of the twenty-first century. Infinite City is not the first work to approach a city as a text, but it is certainly one of most successful and generous of such endeavors, beginning with Solnit’s acknowledgment of the project’s indebtedness to the magical realism genre. Two giants of that post-realist perspective, Jorge Luis Borges and Italo Calvino, appear in the introduction, which also contains an admission of the book’s “arbitrariness” and a genuflection to Borges’s “infinite libraries” concept and Calvino’s notion that every actual city contains an infinite number of imaginative “magical and strange cities.” These concepts provided the inspiration for the book, as well as its title, as Solnit explains: “Maps are always invitations in ways that texts and pictures are not; you can enter a map, alter it, add to it, plan with it. A map is a ticket to actual territory, while a novel is only a ticket to emotion and imagination. Infinite City is meant to be such an invitation to go beyond what is mapped within it” (p. 8).

Twenty-two maps, each of which occupies two adjoining pages in the seven-by-twelve-inch atlas, beckon readers to use their imaginations while contemplating the “compendium of perspectives” that make up the book. In 1978 British historian James Burke, in the celebrated television series Connections, startled a trans-Atlantic audience into an illuminating new way of understanding the history of invention.
and technology. Now Solnit and her team introduce a kaleidoscope of thought-provoking vignettes about “the un-American place where America invents itself” (p. vii) by way of the connections visible within the exquisitely detailed maps themselves, and the connections suggested by reading the maps along with the accompanying essays. Map 2, for instance, gives us “Green Women: Open Spaces and Their Champions” and an essay on “Great Women and Green Spaces.” Map 7, “Poison/Palate: The Bay Area in Your Body,” is paired with an essay on “What Doesn’t Kill You Makes You Gourmet.” Map 18 is “The World in a Cup: Coffee Economies and Ecologies,” which appears with an essay on “How to Get to Ethiopia from Ocean Beach.”

The essays and the maps contain material both demonstrably real and cleverly conjectural, and all of them are grounded in stories plucked by the authors from their personal experience, literary and artistic invention, and studious research. Infinite City is a spirited tour de force assembled with obvious enthusiasm and affection that documents the historical and contemporary range of personal identities, social diversities, cultural possibilities, and political complexities that are possible to imagine existing within the forty-nine-square-mile place known to current residents of the San Francisco Bay Area as simply “The City.”


Reviewed by David González-Hernández, Ph.D. Student, Department of Communication, University of California, San Diego.

Kristin C. Moran’s Listening to Latina/o Youth: Television Consumption Within Families is a synthesis of scholarly research on media and culture, Latino youth market and consumption reports, and insightful examinations on what it means to be represented as a Latina/o in relation to English-language mainstream media. Moran analyzes such diverse themes as Latino audience studies, the development of Spanish-language television, the methodology of subject interviews, the telenovelas phenomena, and the risks associated with Latina/o media representations in the United States. Two principal aims of the book, the author writes, are to discuss “the ways in which the mainstream media industry have responded to the growing numbers of Latina/os living in the United States” and to think “more broadly about representation” (p. ix).
Moran, a communications professor at the University of San Diego, is an experienced investigator of media texts created for Latino audiences as well as the reception process of these audiences in southern California. This experience, it would seem, has prepared Professor Moran to critique the tendency of mainstream media to reify and contain a Latina/o identity that is then sold back to youth in ways that limit their agency. Understanding these processes, Moran suggests, provides an opportunity “to change the way Latina/o youth are conceptualized, and listening to them is the first step” (p. 33). While this book certainly does advance that argument, I think its greatest strength is in the diverse voices and personal insights that it brings together and cultivates in its readers a deeper, broader understanding of the interrelationship between media and the Latino/a experience.

Though each of the six chapters stands by itself, the book is one that must be read from beginning to end for the reader to fully understand the conclusions. The first two chapters provide a foundation for understanding the current media environment. An important contribution is Moran’s historical investigation of the development of Spanish-Language television with a national, local, and international/border scope. Here the author underscores the powerful Spanish-language media and their ability to compel English-language media to take notice of the Latino audience and push the creation of bicultural programming. This portion of the book develops a theme that is reinforced throughout the volume: Latinos’ relationship with media is intertwined with market forces.

Chapters 3–5 report the primary findings. This section of the book is intended to pay critical attention to how Latino audiences actively negotiate with media. A central rationale for this investigation, the author explains, is that “there is no one way to define the Latina/o audience. Audience members are conditioned by multiple layers of influence that manifest in a myriad of ways... Latina/os in the United States find themselves pulled in several directions since the media may position them as immigrant, outsider” (p. 157). Considered here, for instance, is the priority of a hybrid reality for many young people and children who see themselves as typically American in their media use. “However, the availability of domestic U.S. production, both news and entertainment, in Spanish complicates the puzzle” (p. 65). For example, in chapter 4, Moran analyzes the appeal of telenovelas as a way Latina/os may maintain cultural connection to an “imagined home.” Chapter 6, “(Re) Imagining the Latina/o Audience,” wraps up the significant findings and suggests paths to pursue in future research, as well as possible questions for researchers.

Listening to Latina/o Youth cautions us about the media tendency to use “Latinidad” as a commodity: a stereotype that it is made for sale in the marketplace because
Moran is able to go beyond representation and further illuminate such themes as heterogeneity, hybridity, and transnationality by studying multiple affiliations – even within individual Latina/o families – and disruptive identity positions. Moran challenges the stereotypes associated with Latina/o audiences, and reaffirms Latina/os as a heterogeneous cultural group, creative and dynamic. Finally, the focus on youth is not gratuitous; these Latina/o youth, bicultural and cosmopolitan in their perspective and experience, are the very audience media targets yet fails to comprehend fully.

_Book Reviews_

**California Crack Up: How Reform Broke the Golden State and How We Can Fix It.**

Reviewed by Casey B. K. Domínguez, Associate Professor, Department of Political Science and International Relations, University of San Diego.

Part history, part policy brief, part political science lesson, this colorful and engaging book argues that California is running on a DOS operating system in a Google world. The book is written for two audiences: concerned California citizens who know something is very wrong with state government but aren’t sure what it is, and more knowledgeable citizens and activists who know what is wrong and are already supportive of serious reform. The authors’ goal is to persuade both groups to support not just a serious, but a radical, overhaul of California’s “operating system.” Their diagnosis of the problems with the state’s governance structure is spot-on accurate, and their proposed reform is well-researched and sophisticated. It leaves this reader wishing they had included a political blue print for enacting their proposed reform as detailed as the reform they propose.

The first third of the book is devoted to describing California’s current governance structures, how we got them, and the problems that they cause for us. The state Constitution, as they correctly observe, is a conglomeration of many disparate rules, all of which served the interests of the dominant political majority at a given point in time. The stories they tell about these origins, with the exception of sympathy for the plight of homeowners prior to Proposition 13 in 1977-78, emphasize the dirty side of the state’s political history. The 1849 Constitution was cribbed from Iowa’s by a bunch of lazy miners. The 1879 Constitution was
written under the influence of the anti-Chinese Workingman’s Party. The state lottery was the brainchild of a petition company that wanted to drum up business. Mathews and Paul want to dispel any myths Californians might have about the sacredness of their state Constitution, and they do a good job of it. Their approach is reminiscent of Robert Dahl’s *How Democratic is the American Constitution* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), although perhaps due to the material, a little more crass.

In part 2, the authors begin with a more detailed diagnosis of the problems with California’s government, beginning with its budgeting process. There is no shortage of research to back up their claims about the damage done to local governments, to the state’s budget, and to policy, by various well-meaning initiatives. They could have gone even further to substantiate the claims that Proposition 13 has not solved problems with spending and debt, and that Proposition 98 has not improved education, by including better and more detailed comparisons to rules used in other states. Still, most neutral observers would agree that their overall diagnosis is correct. The “shackles and chains” imposed on state policymakers by the initiative process have done more harm than good. In their indictment of our state government, they also explain how budget stalemates are brought about by both supermajority rules and by political polarization and its roots in residential patterns. Throughout, they paint a picture of policymaking in Sacramento that is dominated by interest groups and public employee unions, and a picture of local governments that are emasculated and hopelessly and needlessly complex.

As their primary solution to all of these problems, Mathews and Paul suggest a major overhaul of California’s electoral system. They argue that California needs a completely new, larger, unicameral legislature, with 2/3 of the seats elected from districts, as they are now, and 1/3 of the seats elected by proportional representation from large geographic regions. They also propose electing only the governor and the secretary of state, and making all other executive offices appointed by the governor. Finally, they suggest that we should move from an initiative-dominated to a referendum-dominated system, to empower our new, more democratic legislature. They also suggest doing away with most special districts, remaking local government, and remaking the prison system. These proposals to create a more democratic, accountable, responsive state government look very much like the consensus solutions around any graduate seminar table. People who spend a lot of time thinking about how governments work best, and most democratically, would approve of these suggestions. But these authors do not intend this to be an academic exercise.

However, they do not suggest an explicit path to getting to this reform. As the authors note, all entrenched interests have something to hate in their
proposals, and in the past, more modest proposals have been political non-starters. Nevertheless, the book is carefully written to serve as a model for a real political proposal. Propositions 13 and 98 are both indicted, providing grounds for a compromise in which both liberals and conservatives have to give something up. The promise of a more effective, accountable government is an enticing one, and people who are genuinely interested in that outcome should seriously consider what these authors have to say.

BOOK NOTES

*The American West: Competing Visions.* By Karen R. Jones and John Wills. Edinburgh, UK: Edinburgh University Press, 2009. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, and index. vii + 344 pp. $135.00, cloth; $45.00, paper. Jones and Wills explore a variety of themes and topics in western history; their aim is to reassess western myths and historiography in the aftermath of the New Western history. The first two sections of the book investigate the “Old West” (of exploration, the westward movement, and Frederick Jackson Turner) and the “New West” (of the genocide of Native Americans, women’s roles in the West, and environmental crises), while a third considers the position of the West in American culture and mythology.

*Cities and Nature in the American West.* Urban West Series. Edited by Char Miller. Reno: University of Nevada Press, 2010. Notes and index. vii + 278 pp. $34.95 paper. This volume, edited and with an introductory essay by Pomona College professor and leading environmental historian Char Miller, brings together fourteen essays grouped into four parts: “Land,” “Water,” “Campground,” and “City.” The contributors explore the cultural, economic, and political dimensions of the connections between the cities of the West and the environments and resources that surround them.

Farm Workers and the Churches: The Movement in California and Texas. By Alan J. Watt. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2010. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, and index. ix + 252 pp. $48.00, cloth; $24.00 paper. Dedicating a part to each of the two states under consideration, Farm Workers and the Churches investigates how a number of Catholic and Protestant churches took up the cause of economic justice and became active supporters of the movement among Mexican and Filipino farm workers.

Inventing Autopia: Dreams and Visions of the Modern Metropolis in Jazz Age Los Angeles. By Jeremiah B. C. Axelrod. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, and index. xii + 401 pp. $25.95 paper. In this book, Jeremiah Axelrod explores how the competing visions of planners and utopians helped create the city that is, ironically, synonymous with unplanned sprawl. The key to understanding the “fragmented metropolis” of Los Angeles, Axelrod maintains, lies not in the post-Second World War expansion of freeways, but in the planning decisions made in the 1920s that placed the city on course to become an automobile-dependent metropolis.

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