

BOOK REVIEWS

Tending The Wild: Native American Knowledge and the Management of California's Natural Resources. By M. Kat Anderson. Berkeley, CA: University of California, 2005. Coda, bibliography, notes, and index. 526 pp. \$50.00 cloth. \$13.57 paper.

Reviewed by Maria Fadiman, Associate Professor, Geosciences, Florida Atlantic University.

People often refer to the “virgin” landscape that existed before the European arrival to California. In *Tending the Wild: Native American Knowledge and the Management of California's Natural Resources*, M. Kat Anderson makes two important arguments. First, she challenges the concept of an unaltered pre-European landscape and shows how native Californians managed the land. Anderson questions the conventional classification of humans into the categories of hunters/gatherers, on the one hand, and agriculturalists, on the other. Instead she argues for a land management continuum, placing native Californians between the two categories. Second, Anderson argues Indian practices on the land are actually more beneficial to ecosystems than the later practice of trying to protect land completely from human influence.

Relying on Native California informants, traditional archival sources, and secondary sources, Anderson addresses Indian land management in detail. Beginning with an account of the historical abundance of California ecosystems, she moves into a detailed history of the native people and their understanding of plant life cycles, growth patterns, and optimal growing conditions. After explaining indigenous world views in relationship to the environment, she sets the scene for the “collision” with Europeans. She describes the European exploration and settlement of California, emphasizing its lasting effect on the land and native people. Several chapters, illustrated with various diagrams and archival photographs, detail traditional indigenous land management practices, such as harvesting, coppicing, digging, pruning, and burning. Anderson then shows how the California landscape is a direct result of indigenous management practices. She notes how current plant distributions and the existence of ecosystems, such as coastal prairies, montane meadows, and valley oak savannas, are results of native Californian manipulation of flora and soil. The last section of the book explores how today's management activities can incorporate traditional practices. Tables, archival photographs, and illustrations show plant parts used, articles made, and collection methods employed by Native Americans.

In the beginning of the book, Anderson recognizes that some traditional practices had a negative impact on the land, but this idea is not revisited. It would have strengthened her arguments if she had addressed deleterious effects at greater length. Furthermore, when discussing the cultural collision of Europeans and Indians, she falls into a pattern of listing the maltreatment of the Indians and their land. Although historically accurate and important, such details sometimes seem irrelevant to her argument. However, these are minor criticisms for an effective and well-documented book. A particular strength of her work is that throughout she supports ideas, comments, and generalizations with concrete examples.

Not only does Anderson's book give readers details of how traditional land management processes played out in the California landscape, she connects the reader to the people and the land about which she writes. At times, the reader feels as if walking in the California mountains and tasting acorn mush with roasted wild bulbs. This work is exceptionally readable for both academic and lay people. When using a technical term, Anderson defines the word in the text, and when discussing flora and fauna, she includes both the common and the scientific names. By covering in depth the cultural and ecological aspects of traditional land management and the importance such practices have for today's world, Anderson has created a book that is useful to historians, ethnobotanists, ethnobiologists, geographers, anthropologists, and landscape ecologists.

Sanctuaries of Earth, Stone, and Light: the Churches of Northern New Spain, 1530-1821. By Gloria Fraser Giffords. Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 2007. Southwest Center Series. Illustrations, glossary, appendix, notes, bibliography, and index. xii + 461 pp. \$76.00 cloth.

Reviewed by Iris H. W. Engstrand, University of San Diego.

Gloria Fraser Giffords and the University of Arizona Press have produced a thoroughly illustrated and remarkably detailed book on the colonial churches of northern New Spain. The author has assembled a wealth of information in a manner that will appeal both to architectural historians and to general readers of Spanish-era southwestern history. This publication provides an excellent framework of reference for those especially interested in the furnishings, symbolism, and iconography of these early churches. It will also aid the traveler wishing to understand the similarities and subtle differences that make these buildings distinctive with regard to missionary order and geographic region. Each structure tells a story not only of the builders' particular background and faith, but often features the favorite saints of the missionaries who were in charge of the district.

Because of the difficulties inherent in written records, whether they be the personal prejudices of the writer or the lack of complete information, documentary accounts are also subject to the differing interpretations of various readers. "But," according to Giffords,

the church buildings, decorations, and furnishings ... serve as other records, records in stone, tile, wood, and adobe that have much to tell those who can read them. Although there will always be debate over the "civilization" and consequent destruction of native cultures by Spanish colonizers and clergy, the surviving churches of northern New Spain bear silent witness to the concentrated efforts of priests, parishioners, and converts to build and beautify structures that would serve as foci for religious and social life. They mark the introduction of Catholicism, on the one hand, and the replacement and even extirpation of indigenous religions and traditions on the other. Their furnishings and decorations signal the arrival and

expression of European technology in the form of manufactured goods as well as architectural, artistic, mining, and agricultural methods. (pp. 5-6).

Sanctuaries of Earth, Stone, and Light is divided into twelve chapters organized around various themes. The first chapter explains the scope and focus of the work while chapters two and three cover the style and plans for the churches. The author discusses the various architectural movements and their influence on church design. The next two chapters consider the buildings, materials and techniques. Chapters six through twelve include details, furnishings, liturgical linens and objects, vestments, images, *retablos*, symbols, and sacred iconography. Each example is well illustrated, making it easy for any reader to understand its meaning and particular role.

What is missing is the daily life of the native peoples and the Spaniards – both military and civilian – who accompanied the missionaries during nearly 300 years of religious interaction. Nevertheless, the buildings have their own stories to tell, and the author has done a complete job of telling them. Giffords leaves literally few stones unturned, carrying out her research by visiting and photographing the colonial churches covered. She has also done research in the Archives of the Indies (Sevilla), in the major repositories in Mexico and the United States, and in the archives of the various colonial missions discussed, including numerous collections of historic photographs. An appendix gives an extensive list of the churches in northern New Spain that the author considers of special interest. A glossary within the chapter on symbols and attributes defines the majority of objects and symbols and explains the use of various colors as they appear within the churches.

Sanctuaries of Earth, Stone, and Light is a welcome addition to the list of significant books on the architecture and religious symbolism of colonial churches in the Spanish Southwest. The price of \$76.00 makes this attractive and complete work an excellent investment.

Converting California: Indians and Franciscans in the Missions. By James A. Sandos. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004. Bibliography, index, notes, and 18 b&w photographs. 251 pp. \$35.00 cloth.

Reviewed by Mark Sigmon, Lecturer, California History, San Francisco State University.

The subject of the Spanish missions stirs very strong emotions, as anyone who has taught California history can attest. On the one hand, there are those who damn the Catholic Church and its efforts at spiritual conquest in California; on the other, there are those who celebrate the Church's spiritual triumphs. In a truly outstanding book, Sandos seeks to move beyond the simplistic debate between what he calls "Christophobic Nihilists" and "Christophilic Triumphalists" and instead to show how Indians and Franciscans co-created mission culture. In so doing, Sandos renders a genuine contribution to a field that is already somewhat saturated.

In his opening chapter, Sandos discusses various theories of social control. He mentions methods of conquest and resistance to cultural erosion. He also discusses how the Franciscans themselves had to contend with control from the Crown and the priests' resistance to military impositions. The second chapter is a straightforward discussion of the Native American tribes on the eve of Spanish settlement. In the third chapter, Sandos focuses on Junípero Serra and the theology that guided his evangelical outlook. This is one of the most crucial points that Sandos makes. Serra and the Franciscans were clinging to "medieval thought and practice." These medieval practices included "flogging, shackling, or incarcerating in stocks any miscreant" (p. 50). Sandos points out that Serra faced a great deal of difficulty because Spanish colonial administrators and military leaders were beginning to adopt policies based on the Enlightenment and the concepts it fostered. Chapters four through seven are a narrative of the efforts of Serra and his successors to resist, evade, and eventually compromise with the Spanish colonial authorities.

In the eighth chapter, Sandos carefully discusses the nature of disease. With surprising skill, Sandos builds a compelling argument concerning the European origins of syphilis. He goes on to describe the devastating impact the disease had on the mission Indians. The "cures" offered by shamans, unfortunately, contributed to the epidemic. Sandos also addresses the issue of venereal disease and priestly celibacy. He concludes that among the priests in Alta California "a small, but undetermined number probably contracted" venereal disease. However, Christophobic Nihilists should be warned that Sandos does carefully explain the many ways that syphilis could be spread through non-sexual transmission (pp. 123-124). The most poignant point that Sandos makes in this chapter is the very real effect that syphilis had on fertility rates among the Native American women living at the mission. "No one can imagine the anxiety of Indian mothers as they beheld their children born sickly and weak. Some babies and children had collapsed skulls and potbellies." He concludes, "Female Indians bore the brunt of the colonial experience, while children simultaneously suffered the greatest fatality rates in the missions" (pp. 126-127).

In the last three chapters Sandos explores methods of Spanish control as well as Native Americans' efforts to resist them. He argues that "in the attempt to win Indian hearts and minds, the Franciscans possessed a powerful tactic in music instruction" (p. 152). Indeed, as late as 1879, Robert Louis Stevenson would report that Native Americans were able to sing and chant in perfect Latin. However, Sandos is less than persuasive in explaining "music theory" and its role in "Low and High Mass." Despite showing a willingness to learn Latin, there was a great deal of Native American resistance to the missionization process which Sandos explores in his tenth chapter. By carefully dissecting what he calls the "hidden transcript" of Native American subversion and intransigence, Sandos builds a very powerful case for Indian resistance manifesting itself "in a nearly infinite variety of ways." In his final chapter, Sandos attempts to assess the California missions and he comes to a remarkable conclusion. It seems Serra and his priests were successful in converting Native Americans only when tribal elders believed they had something to gain.

Sandos does an excellent job of moving the debate of the California missions beyond simplistic "Christophilic" and "Christophobic" positions. He builds a compelling argument surrounding the mindsets of both the priests and the

Native Americans. As Sandos puts it, "From a scholarly perspective ... Indians and Franciscans together created mission culture in a complex interplay in which the identification of heroes and villains is as difficult as it is irrelevant" (p.184). Sandos's work in carefully exploring that "complex interplay" will make a lasting contribution to the field.

Chicano San Diego: Cultural Space and the Struggle for Justice. Tucson, AZ: The University of Arizona Press, 2008. Edited by Richard Griswold del Castillo. Bibliography, illustrations, index, and notes. ix + 300pp. \$29.00 paper.

Reviewed by Carmen Nava, Associate Professor of History, California State University, San Marcos.

Despite decades of important scholarship on the history of the borderlands and Chicano Studies, Mexican heritage continues to be undervalued in the American national consciousness and the grand narrative of U.S. history. For most scholars and members of the Mexican American community, the historical issues are more complex than awakening a "sleeping giant" or a deficit of cultural assimilation. In a welcome addition to the literature, Richard Griswold del Castillo's *Chicano San Diego: Cultural Space and the Struggle for Justice* argues that "Chicanos" in San Diego are engaged in a complex process of "cultural creation, accommodation, rejection, and acceptance" (p. 6).

The study's intellectual rationale is to respond to "the lack of understanding of the political, economic, and cultural importance of the Mexican people in the United States" (p. 1). For Griswold del Castillo, the root of the problem is "ignorance, which starts in the school and pervades public life" (p. 1). By "documenting the struggle" for social justice in San Diego, where Mexican Americans and Mexicans have encountered, and continue to confront, "oppression," Griswold del Castillo and the other contributors continue the effort of scholars such as Rodolfo Acuña, Carlos Vélez-Ibáñez, and Vicki L. Ruiz to rewrite the master narrative of U.S. history. The authors correctly perceive that their reinterpretation has local, regional, national, and transnational significance.

The authors use multiple terms for the ethnic group under consideration: Spanish-speaking, ethnic Mexican, Mexican-origin, Mexican descent, U.S. Mexicans, Chicano, Chicana/o. While these multiple identifiers signal complexity in the historical experience of, and scholarly regard for, this ethnic group, the interchanging of multiple terms may be disconcerting and obscure meaning. For example, "Chicano" is used in an expansive sense for Mexican Americans, when it is usually understood as a specific reference to the political self-affirmation of the Chicano Movement in the 1960s. Furthermore, it should be noted that the term "Chicana/o" is a more recent effort to emphasize that the ostensibly inclusive term "Chicano" can actually obscure the significance and divergent experience of women. More precise discussion of terminology in the individual chapters would have helped both a general audience and scholars follow the development of individual and group identity and the fluidity of national and transnational identities. Still, readers can navigate successfully by attending to the voice of each author, and when read as a whole, the collection presents both fine details and broad contours.

The first four chapters provide a cohesive historical chronology of the diverse peoples in the San Diego region during the pre-colonial period, the era of Spanish colonization (1769-1820), the Mexican era (1821-1848), and the period of U.S. control (1848-1940s). The discussion of the early period is particularly effective because it documents the interactions between Native Americans and people of European and African descent in the San Diego and cross-border regions, and examines the missionization process thoroughly and without nostalgia. The discussion of the 1930s and 1940s provides insights into efforts for community organization and civil rights. The subsequent five chapters are topical and interdisciplinary, emphasizing the twentieth century and the present day. Five case studies explore family life in a San Diego labor camp; the gentrification of a well-known barrio; Chicana/o activism; Chicana art; and human rights and the border. The thematic chapters make good use of local newspapers and archival sources and provide the reader with thorough notations and bibliography. They all utilize oral histories, ethnographies and/or *testimonios*, including personal reflections by the authors. One of the most compelling chapters is Rita Sanchez's "Chicanas in the Arts, 1970-1995: With Personal Reflections," which is both a history of a little-known artistic community and an intensely personal reflection by the author as artist/activist/wife/mother. The personal stories do have limitations as evidence, but they also have strength and validity as testimony of agency, activism, and multiple responses to oppression. The cohesion of this collection is reinforced with a thoughtful final chapter, "Some Concluding Comments."

As editor, Griswold del Castillo goes out of his way to acknowledge the significance of the scholarship published by the *Journal of San Diego History* but notes that scholarly writing on Chicano San Diego is still incipient. Significant in and of itself, the historical experience of "Chicanos" in the San Diego region should be seen as integral to U.S. history. *Chicano San Diego* documents stories that persuasively contradict negative stereotypes and should inform the continuing discussion of transnational migratory labor.

Chicano San Diego will be useful both for expert and non-expert audiences, but in very different ways. Readers familiar with the historical experience of Mexican Americans will find nuanced discussion and intriguing voices that enrich the literature and suggest directions for future research. For readers who are new to this field, *Chicano San Diego* offers a thought-provoking introduction to key issues and themes.

San Diego County Victorians. Eric C. Pahlke. San Diego: Our Heritage Press, 2008. Illustrations, bibliography. vii + 75 pp. \$24.95 paper.

Reviewed by Molly McClain, Associate Professor of History, University of San Diego.

Author and photographer Eric Pahlke has produced a beautifully illustrated book focused on the Victorian houses remaining in San Diego County. It includes a brief introduction to nineteenth-century San Diego and descriptions of the various architectural styles. Included are opulent mansions in Uptown and Sherman Heights, modest farmhouses in La Mesa, and summer cottages in Oceanside and Pacific Beach.

The book provides a visual reminder that people continue to love and preserve Victorian homes. The author hopes that his work “will inspire others to undertake the same effort” to save “these and other historic structures from San Diego County’s past” (vii). Victorian-style structures were built throughout the United States from the 1850s through the 1890s. Balloon framing, a rapid and inexpensive method of wooden framing, made possible irregular ground plans with many extensions. Doors, windows, roofing, siding, and decorative details were mass-produced in factories and shipped on the expanding railway network. Popular styles included the Italianate, Queen Anne, Shingle, Stick Eastlake, and Folk Victorian.

After World War II, nineteenth-century houses slowly started disappearing from neighborhoods to be replaced by parking lots, highways, urban renewal projects, and apartments. Tax laws rewarded owners for demolishing old buildings and penalized them for preserving them. In the 1960s, Victorian-era structures became the focus of the historic preservation movement. In San Diego, local artist Robert Miles Parker founded Save Our Heritage Organization (SOHO) in response to the scheduled demolition of the Sherman-Gilbert House, at that time located at 139 Fir Street. SOHO’s activism led to the creation of Heritage Park in Old Town and the preservation of historic structures countywide.

Pahlke’s book begins with a brief description of the houses in Heritage Park but he is most concerned to chronicle less well-known structures in other parts of the city and county. His photographs include houses in downtown San Diego, Sherman Heights, Golden Hill, Uptown, Logan Heights, Pacific Beach, La Jolla, National City, Chula Vista, Oceanside, Escondido, Coronado, Del Mar, Carlsbad, La Mesa, Lemon Grove, Poway, San Marcos, Lakeside, and Fallbrook.

The Hinkle House (1892) is the only remaining Victorian structure in Pacific Beach, a community that had one hundred permanent residents in 1899. Other survivors include the Elder House (1884) in Fallbrook, the Castle House (1887) in Lakeside, cottages in La Mesa, and the ornate Schutte Residence (1887) in Carlsbad.

Pahlke’s photographs emphasize the striking color combinations favored by homeowners. Some houses have been restored to the Victorian color palette—sienna red, hunter green, burnt yellow, brown—while others hark back to the “colorist” movement of the 1960s and 1970s. In National City, the Charles Blossom House (ca. 1879) is a purple and red “Painted Lady.” Pahlke illustrates the exterior and, occasionally, the interior of San Diego’s Victorian houses but he does not show cars, people, or the surrounding neighborhood. He wants readers to imagine what these houses looked like when they were new. His text focuses on the moment of creation, not on subsequent decades of use.

As a result, readers may not realize that Victorian San Diego remains under threat from developers. For example, the 1600 block of Union Street was once the only complete block of Victorian houses in the city. Since the 1980s, five houses have been torn down or removed to make way for a condo complex and an office building. Pahlke shows us only the remaining Ordway-Cassidy House (1888) and the Edward F. French Rental (1888), not their new neighbors.

San Diego County Victorians showcases an architectural style made possible by industrialization, the railroad, and a self-confident middle class. It is recommended to readers interested in local history, architecture, and the historic preservation movement.

BOOK NOTES

After the Gold Rush: Tarnished Dreams in the Sacramento Valley. By David Vaught. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007. xi + 310 pp. Illustrations, maps, notes, bibliographic essay, and index. \$55.00 cloth. Focusing on the community of Putah Creek, David Vaught examines the fate of gold rush migrants who settled in California rather than returning home after failing to strike it rich. While many were no more successful in farming than in mining, their efforts did help lay the foundation for California's agricultural economy.

Aimee Semple McPherson and the Resurrection of Christian America. By Matthew Avery Sutton. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007. 351 pp. Illustrations, notes, and index. \$26.95 cloth. Sutton's biography of evangelist McPherson, who gained a wide following during her years in southern California, considers her complex social thought, her popular appeal, and her contributions to the religious life of the nation.

Berkeley: A City in History. By Charles Wollenberg. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008. xi + 224 pp. Illustrations, bibliography, and index. \$18.95 paper. This monograph about the East Bay city begins with Native American inhabitants and traces the development of the Spanish-, Mexican-, and American-era communities. The author explores economic forces that shaped Berkeley, important infrastructural developments, as well as social protest movements centered around the University of California and the wider Berkeley community.

Chinese American Transnationalism: The Flow of People, Resources, and Ideas between China and America during the Exclusion Era. Edited by Sucheng Chan. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2006. xvi + 294 pp. Tables, notes, and index. \$25.95 paper. The essays in this collection examine numerous facets of Chinese American life in the period from the passage of the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1882 to its repeal in 1943. Topics include demographics and family formation, strategies of resistance, cultural developments, and transnational trade.

Devils Will Reign: How Nevada Began. By Sally Zanjani. Reno, University of Nevada Press, 2006. xi + 222 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, and index. \$29.95 cloth, \$18.95 paper. Sally Zanjani of the University of Nevada, Reno explores the decade between the arrival of Nevada's first settlers and the formal organization of the territory in 1861.

The Pursuit of Knowledge: Speeches and Papers of Richard C. Atkinson. Edited by Patricia A. Pelfrey. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007. xiv + 210 pp. Index. \$19.95 paper. This collection brings together some of the reflections and public statements of the seventeenth president of the University of California and former chancellor of the University of California, San Diego. The speeches and writings in this volume deal with a range of topics, including academic freedom, diversity in the university, and the role of the university in a knowledge-based economy.