

BOOK REVIEWS

Contesting the Borderlands: Interviews on the Early Southwest. By Deborah Lawrence and Jon Lawrence. Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2016. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, and index. xiv + 262 pp. \$24.95 paper.

Reviewed by Doris S. Morgan Rueda, M.A., Independent Scholar.

The American Southwest, a region extending from Texas to southern California—and that under the broader term “Borderlands” includes northern Mexico—presents historians with a unique challenge. It is a region that has been claimed by no less than four nations and has been home to a large number of indigenous tribes. The Borderlands force traditional historians to reexamine ideas of nationality and culture. *Contesting the Borderlands* proposes using an interdisciplinary approach to the region’s complex history.

In *Contesting the Borderlands*, editors Deborah and Jon Lawrence take on the challenge of writing an interdisciplinary text using the novel approach of compiling interviews. Yet neither has specialized training in any of the fields represented. A physicist and English professor by training, the Lawrences provide edited interviews with historians, ethnographers, and archeologists to explore the prehistory and colonial history of the American Southwest. The blended specialties and methodologies provide a well-rounded understanding of the Borderlands while concurrently creating a text that is accessible to a range of readers. The interviews are organized chronologically and each is preceded by a contextual overview which serves as a summary of the relevant information and historiography. These summaries are absolutely necessary to understanding the concepts and arguments of many of the interviews.

The common theme among the majority of the interviews is the idea of *convivencia*, defined in an interview with John Kessell as periods of coexistence interspersed with bouts of war and conflict. Beginning in pre-European contact Arizona, readers learn about the nature of inter-tribal warfare and its effects on tribe composition and religion through the interviews with archeologist Steven Leblanc and art historian Polly Schaafsma. Changes in trade, climate, and power relations dramatically altered the tribal landscape of the Southwest prior to any contact with Europeans. The arrival of the Spanish conquistadors only complicated the already complex political environment. Through interviews with academic and non-academic historians, the editors portray the American Southwest as a region rife with competing goals and motives. Even among the Spanish, officials of the Catholic Church were often at odds with secular elite who, public historians

Shirley and Richard Flint argue, were more interested in raising capital than with controlling the native population. The final interviews focus on the Southwest under the control of Mexican and U.S. forces. These chapters reveal the rapidly changing relations among natives, Mexicans, and Americans during a relatively short period of time. Here the theme of *convivencia* is particularly strong, as the interviews focus on the ways these different groups negotiated trade and alliances in order to best meet their needs. However, these unions were dependent upon their ability to provide stability to the respective groups; otherwise, alliances were easily abandoned and made elsewhere with frequency. The nature of these evolving relations is what makes the study of the Borderlands such a complex task.

The book succeeds in blending disciplines and methods into a cohesive text that is accessible and informative. Academics will find the discussions regarding methodology and contributions an interesting read, but these sections are also accessible to non-academic readers. While not present in each interview, the questions regarding conflicting theories are particularly interesting since they offer very frank answers about why each subject agreed or disagreed with a fellow academic. Non-academics will appreciate the careful editing and introductions as they are often necessary for understanding the interview topics. However, there are several places throughout the text where terms, events, and people are brought into conversation without any introduction. These appear to be simple matters that could have been resolved through more thorough editing or adding footnotes, but they may distract readers not familiar with the subject.

Contesting the Borderlands does not suggest that it is presenting any new ideas or arguments in the fields of history or archeology. Rather, it stands as a successful example of how interdisciplinary research can be conducted and presented. While the book is not without flaws, Lawrence and Lawrence have crafted a valuable addition to interdisciplinary studies and scholarship on the Borderlands.

The Life and Times of Lilian J. Rice, Master Architect. By Diane Y. Welch. Arglen, PA: Schiffer Publishing, 2015. Foreword, 94 color & b/w images, bibliography, and index. vii + 192 pp. \$34.99 cloth.

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

Architect Lilian J. Rice (1889-1938) built over one hundred and fifty structures between 1908 and 1938, including eleven buildings now on the National Register

of Historic Places. Best known for her work in Rancho Santa Fe, California, she also designed eighteen homes in La Jolla and dozens of others throughout San Diego County.

A native of National City, California, Rice graduated from the University of California, Berkeley in 1910 with an undergraduate degree in architecture. She was inspired by the career of Julia Morgan, also a Berkeley graduate, who became the first woman architect licensed in California. Author Diane Y. Welch recounts the stories of Rice's early years, delving deeply into her family's history in the region and her years at Berkeley. Spared from the effects of the 1906 San Francisco earthquake and fire, the university provided a fertile ground for experimenting with fireproof building materials. In fact, the first house that Rice designed was a wood frame and cement cottage in the Mission style (1908).

Rice is best known for her role in the design and construction of Rancho Santa Fe. She was employed as a drafter in the San Diego-based firm Requa and Jackson when Richard S. Requa asked her to work on the project in 1922. The thirty-three year old became supervisory resident architect for the Santa Fe Land Improvement Company in 1923 and built dozens of structures in the Spanish Revival style, including "La Morada," now the Inn at Rancho Santa Fe.

Welch extends her account of the development of Rancho Santa Fe provided in her earlier book, *Lilian J. Rice: Architect of Rancho Santa Fe* (2010). She discusses Rice's trip to Spain in 1925 and includes unique photographs taken by the architect on that journey. She notes Rice's work in the reconstruction of the Juan María Osuna Adobe in 1924, and reveals work done for celebrities Douglas Fairbanks, Jr., Mary Pickford, and Bing Crosby, among others. Welch deserves special credit for interviewing many people who live or lived in structures designed by Rice.

In 1927, Rice opened her own office in Rancho Santa Fe and began to take on projects throughout San Diego. A member and former president of ZLAC Rowing Club, she designed a new clubhouse in Pacific Beach. She also designed a number of houses in La Jolla. The Marguerite M. Robinson House (1929) in La Jolla's Ludington Heights drew on her knowledge of San Francisco Bay Region domestic architecture with its attention to indigenous materials and local topography. The William S. and Anna R. Bradley House (1930) in the English Tudor style, meanwhile, reflected the owners' family ties to Britain. Like other architects in the area, Rice worked with the natural environment; she stepped both houses down sloping grades rather than flatten the lots. The Bradley House was the first house built in La Jolla by Ernest Dewhurst, whose family business continues his legacy to this day.

In the early twentieth century, many people designed homes without acquiring an architectural license. They included Edgar V. Ullrich, Clifford M. May, Herbert

E. Palmer, and others designated as “Master Architects” by San Diego’s Historic Resources Board. Rice went through the arduous process of earning a license from the American Institute of Architects (AIA) in 1929. At the time of her death in 1938, she was the only female member of the San Diego chapter of the AIA.

Welch’s extensive research reveals a wealth of photographs and drawings that remain in private hands. She also uncovers flawed documentary evidence that, for years, led people to believe that someone other than Rice had designed the civic center at Rancho Santa Fe. The book concludes with a plea to give the architect “her rightful place in the history books as a career woman and a trailblazer, who paved the way for other up-and-coming architects, both male and female” (p. 162).

Race, Religion, and Civil Rights: Asian Students on the West Coast, 1900-1968. By Stephanie Hinnershitz. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2015. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, and index. viii + 268 pp. \$78.98 cloth, \$28.07 paper.

Reviewed by Stephen Cox, Professor, Department of Literature, University of California, San Diego.

Throughout American history, Christian institutions have provided ethnic and immigrant groups with agencies of self-identification, self-defense, and social advancement. The most powerful illustration is the crucial role of churches in the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s, but other examples abound, and deserve more notice than they sometimes receive from historians. In *Race, Religion, and Civil Rights*, Stephanie Hinnershitz examines the role of Christian ideas and institutions in motivating what can be termed civil rights movements among Asians and Asian Americans during the early and mid-twentieth century.

Hinnershitz’s subject is West Coast student groups, often sponsored by the YMCA (then a Christian outreach organization). In these groups, first- and second-generation Chinese, Japanese, and Filipino students came together to advocate Christian ideals of equality and tolerance in opposition to racially-inspired discrimination in housing, employment, and social acceptance. Some of the groups were dominated by young men and women of a single ethnicity; others aimed at, and achieved, sympathetic relations among Asian students generally, while cultivating similar relations with non-Asians. Promotion of ethnic unity was a task for true idealists, considering the different social formations of the various ethnic groups and the actions of the Japanese Empire, aggressive against both China and the Philippines—a reality that threatened to separate Japanese from other students.

Hinnershitz's work is sound, though limited. Her data base is extensive, and she exploits it thoroughly, but it consists in large part of student journals and newsletters, reports of conferences, copies of resolutions, and similar institutional wares. Little information is provided about broader historical and social contexts. Most regrettable is the absence of any information about the Christian students' church life or, indeed, their specifically religious life. Churches are assumed to exist, but they are barely noticed; denominations are almost never mentioned, and their significance is never considered. Among the religious and intellectual issues that remain unexplored is pacifism—a major inspiration for many of the students whom Hinnershitz is studying. The students received pacifist ideas from Christian sources, but how, and in what form? On a practical level, how much funding did politically oriented students get from churches and other Christian organizations? What were their difficulties in getting it? The book entertains no such questions.

One gathers from Hinnershitz's research that for two reasons the Christian students had little practical impact. First, they were, after all, students, operating within the limited context of college life, with little opportunity to affect events. Second, American society was, through much of the period she studies, already on its way to the elimination of gross forms of anti-Asian discrimination. In 1959, the California Intercollegiate Nisei Order, formed by Japanese American students for "the furtherance of racial tolerance," actually dissolved: "Citing 'negligible' occurrences of intolerance against Japanese following the war, the leaders and members believed that the 'serious work' of CINO was complete, since few students reported incidents of racism or discrimination on or off campus" (p. 180).

But the point Hinnershitz wants to make is that the students' "interracial and Christian" advocacy, proceeding in virtual isolation from the interracial activity of the American Left, of which so much has been written, "preceded the type of racial liberalism that historians argue was a product of" World War II (p. 173). This is an important historical issue, and about it Hinnershitz has made a very good case. As she observes, it is time for historians to think critically about how they "tend to identify an activist by using certain standards (such as radicalism and leftism)" that impose unwarranted restrictions on their vision of the past (p. 211).