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## Review of Texas Country: The Changing Rural Scene

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*Texas Country: The Changing Rural Scene.* Edited by Glen E. Lich and Dona B. Reeves-Marquardt. College Station: Texas A & M University Press, 1986. Foreword, afterword, photographs, index. xv + 264 pp. \$18.95.

Although the United States boasts many large, progressive cities, many areas are still in reluctant transition from rural to urban. This transition has been rapid and exciting in some areas and mostly for younger people, but too rapid and painful for others whose orientation is toward a supportive past.

Some of the ways in which this movement has been felt in Texas are reflected in the nine essays and almost forty black and white photographs in *Texas Country: The Changing Rural Scene*. This collection, compiled and edited by Glen E. Lich and Dona B. Reeves-Marquardt, both of whom contributed essays to the work, covers subjects ranging from the nature of the rural Texas scene, its people, place names, and economic mainstays, to architecture, women, folk music, and Texas writing, as well as including case studies of four of the many ethnic groups in the state.

One of the most informative pieces is the study of folk music by F. E. Abernethy, a widely known and respected folklorist. Texts of several songs reflecting Texas influence—"The Texas Boys," "Greer County," "The Buffalo Hunters," and others—illustrate Abernethy's points. Informative as well is Betsy Colquitt's essay on Texas writing—she avoids the term "literature" in her title—in which she traces the develop-

ment from the earliest, somewhat utilitarian writing to the present of such novelists as Larry McMurtry and Elmer Kelton and such poets as Walter McDonald. The composite essay on ethnic groups—the South Texas Mexican by Carl Weigand, Blacks by Joe Graham, Wends by Joseph Wilson, and Hunville Germans by Dona B. Reeves-Marquardt—offers an in depth look at some of the ethnic diversity in Texas.

Collections of this sort never do all that should or could be done, but this one gives an interesting survey of some of the developments, positive and negative, found in the change of Texas rural life to modern times. The book does not build on the mythic Texas; instead, it focuses on the actual conditions and people making this transition from old to new, a situation Joe B. Frantz labels in his Introduction as "personal."

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