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1989

## Review of Basic Texas Books: An Annotated Bibliography of Selected Works for a Research Library

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Lich, Glen E., "Review of Basic Texas Books: An Annotated Bibliography of Selected Works for a Research Library" (1989). *Great Plains Quarterly*. 453.

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the years since 1970 when Jenkins started to prepare the first edition of this volume; much more has transpired since 1983 when that edition was published. Yet Jenkins's selections and what he says about them hold up as well now as they did then, perhaps better.

This volume defines a basic research bibliography of books specifically about Texas—thus omitting Webb's *Great Plains* as well as fiction, periodicals, and some of the mixed genre favorites like John Graves's beautiful *Goodbye to a River*. But for what it says about the 224 selections in this second edition, their authors, the scholars who reviewed these texts and taught from them, the 1017 works mentioned in addition to the basic selections, and the 217 bibliographies listed in an annotated guide, *Basic Texas Books* can hardly be surpassed, either as a scholarly bibliography or as a fine, first-hand account of Texas studies through the 1970s and the people who made the term legitimate and meaningful.

Many ethnic groups, classes, and occupations are represented in the selections. The reminiscences and biographies of great men predominate, of course. For every book on women or education or three on cattle, there are five on colonization, nearly ten each on taming the frontier and conflict with the Indians, on the military, and on exploration. Yet Jenkins has not neglected a wide range of subjects like geology, mining, oil, religion, medicine, education, languages, government, and the arts. If expeditions appear to be the dominant mode of learning in and about Texas and the episode the basic literary form, that may have been because the writers or subjects of these books were generally Anglo or Hispanic explorers, heroic in their outlook, and faithful products of their time and place. Jenkins neither apologizes for them nor makes them into what they weren't. And any bone one might have to pick with Jenkins's bibliography should more appropriately be directed toward the scholarship of the time and culture he describes.

There is much in this volume that delights hardened historians and even more that young historians cannot learn as easily elsewhere as

*Basic Texas Books: An Annotated Bibliography of Selected Works for a Research Library.* By John H. Jenkins. Revised Edition. Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1988. Illustrations, preface, appendix, index. xii + 648 pp. \$22.95.

Two things always surprise one anew upon turning to John H. Jenkins's *Basic Texas Books*: its breadth of overview and the depth of its entries. Much has happened in Texas studies in

they prepare to write what some future John H. Jenkins will gather into an equally balanced, well-worded, and attractive critical reference. Whether one person can write that future volume with the good style and uncanny ability to inform himself on the provenance or reception of the obscure but significant, as well as of the widely known, is questionable.

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