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George N. Green
University of Texas at Arlington

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Texas Oil, American Dreams: A Study of the Texas Independent Producers and Royalty Owners Association. By Lawrence Goodwyn. Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1996. Appendix, notes, bibliography, index. xiii + 274 pp. \$29.95.

This is a history of the independent oilmen of Texas, whose money financed the book. The great oil discoveries in Texas—Anthony Lucas's at Spindletop, 1901, and C. M. "Dad" Joiner's in the East Texas field, 1930, among others—were made and developed by small operators because the major companies did not believe the oil was there. Many farmers' lands remained unleased until oil had already been discovered nearby. Thus oil production and royalties, especially in Texas, the author asserts, were "massively democratized."

Eventually the small operators organized the Texas Independent Producers and Royalty Owners Association, whose policies sometimes deviated from those of the giant companies. TIPRO was perhaps most effective in the 1970s in persuading Congress to keep the oil depletion allowance for the independents while the majors were losing it.

Goodwyn labels TIPRO leaders—Jack Porter and George Mitchell, for example—as "mere citizens" and links TIPRO's "mass membership of independent producers and royalty owners" with Jefferson's yeoman farmers resisting monied corporations. Yet all the TIPRO leaders have been millionaires. Certainly most operators and royalty owners have not been that rich; but despite the impression of mass democratization the author gives, they have

never been more than a minuscule percentage of the Texas population.

Moreover, Texas independents have been very effective in keeping Texas's wellhead tax much lower than that in other oil states, a point ignored by Goodwyn, and in opposing compulsory unitization of fields. Unitization, in place of the individualized "rule of capture," curbs massive expense and waste. Goodwyn admits that the East Texas field could have been fully developed with much less expense and waste by drilling a total of five wells instead of the hundreds that are there. Indeed, the US was the only major oil-producing country in the world that allowed private ownership of subsurface mineral rights. Goodwyn defends private development as democratic and the massive drilling waste as "not irrationally excessive." He takes Secretary of Interior Harold Ickes to task for endorsing government ownership of the East Texas field in the 1930s and all Saudi Arabian concessions in the 1940s. Yet when the US runs out of oil in the twenty-second century the judgement of posterity may be very different. If the federal administrations from the 1930s through the 1960s had overridden the independents' drain-Texas-first policy by massive pumping in the Middle East, the US would have a much bigger oil reserve now. This is not Goodwyn's finest book.

GEORGE N. GREEN
Department of History
University of Texas at Arlington