

color plates of these pictures so the reader can also see how the participants were portrayed. Davy Crockett was always the hero and the Mexicans were always sinister savages. Hollywood played its own role in both television and movies, convincing all Americans that Crockett, whether played by John Wayne or Fess Parker, could never have surrendered or been captured. The truth, as Crisp found, was otherwise.

James Crisp narrates the real story of Texas Independence based on reliable sources, and speculates that the de la Peña account could be factual, that Crockett did surrender or was captured, and that he was executed like all the rest by Santa Anna's order. The public reaction to his version was immediate and negative. He received hate mail and death threats for daring to correct the John Wayne version of the Alamo. It seems most people want their history written in large letters, in black and white, with mythology and prejudices intact.

Crisp also addresses the story of the Yellow Rose, who supposedly kept Santa Anna busy the night before the battle of San Jacinto, which allowed the Texans to win their independence. Again the reader sees the historian at work as Crisp wades through the stories to find out what can be proved. He analyzes the race, class, and gender stereotypes that gave rise to the heroic Yellow Rose and that remained so prominent in Texas histories for so long. It turns out we cannot know if there was an Emily Morgan (or West) at that battle. If there was, she, like other women and people of color, has been erased.

This book should be mandatory reading for all Texans, for all Texas historians, and especially for all students who are learning to be historians.

West Texas A&M University

Jean A. Stuntz

**David E. Kyvig. *Daily Life in the United States, 1920-1940: How Americans Lived Through the 'Roaring Twenties' and the Great Depression*. Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2002, 2004. Pp. xv, 330. Paper, \$18.95; ISBN 1-56663-534-5.**

Only rarely are we treated to a volume that serves equally well as a resource for lecture preparation and as a required text. Most books that we keep on a handy shelf for quick reference are too narrow and technical for undergraduate or secondary school students; most texts that we choose for classroom use are too general and derivative to bother with for reference. David Kyvig's new volume fills both bills for the cultural and social history of the 1920s and 1930s. *Daily Life in the United States, 1920-1940* is virtually encyclopedic in its coverage of a vast array of topics, yet it manages to be readable and engaging. Kyvig ranges across changes in family demographics, religion, education, media (especially radio and the movies), leisure pursuits, courtship, labor, immigration, transportation, economics, and fashion (right down to women's underwear), paying careful attention to the differential experiences of social change

across region, race, class, and gender. For introductory courses in United States cultural history, or as a supplementary text in survey courses, *Daily Life* is accessible and absorbing without talking down to students; for teachers and scholars, Kyvig provides an excellent synthesis of the last three decades of historical scholarship in social and cultural history, with well-chosen data and vignettes to illustrate findings and trends.

The basic premise of the book, as of most contemporary social history, is that the fabric of daily life is as worthy of historical consideration as the "big events" that usually dominate historical study. Working from that premise, Kyvig focuses on the effects of technological, economic, and social changes on the ways Americans experienced daily life. And certainly those changes were dramatic, ranging from the rapid embrace of radio, automobiles, and the movies to the effects of electrification and advances in sanitation on the ways many, if not all, Americans thought, worked, and acted. Oddly, however, after devoting three-quarters of the narrative to a fine-grained foregrounding of social and cultural change separate from the "big events" (though with due regard for the experiences from World War I and the Depression), the book concludes with an extended traditional rendering of the New Deal, replete with an agency-by-agency rehearsal of New Deal initiatives. Although the chapter does make obligatory references to the Depression's and the New Deal's social and cultural impacts, most of them are repetitive of earlier observations. The result is an unfortunate reification of "big events" as the legitimate focus of historical inquiry, quite the opposite of what appears earlier to be Kyvig's interest.

Kyvig's research base is comprehensive. Those who have kept up with the scholarship in cultural history will recognize the sources of his narrative, though documentation is spare. He does not devote attention to the historical debates at the heart of much of the scholarship, rendering the text less valuable for upper-division and graduate courses but probably more accessible to secondary school and lower-division college students and a general audience. In only one area is this volume disappointing: Although Kyvig occasionally notes changes in educational attainment from 1920 to 1940, both the narrative and the bibliography are virtually innocent of the remarkable work in the social and cultural history of education produced in the last quarter century. This omission is doubly curious, since, birth and death excepted, by the 1920s, arguably, no institution or experience was more universally experienced than public schooling, at least through the elementary years. In that fault, of course, Kyvig merely participates in an omission common to contemporary social and cultural historians, few of whom read the work of historians of education.

That disappointment aside, this is a book worth the time of every teaching historian interested in the twentieth century. It deserves consideration as a classroom textbook, and will serve all of us well as a resource for our class lectures and discussions.