

*The Proceedings of the 2000-2003 Meetings of the Southwest/Texas Popular Culture and American Culture Associations.* Leslie Fife, ed.,

**Reviewed by** Peter C. Rollins

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Since the early 1970s, the Southwest/Texas PCA/ACA have met together in Oklahoma, Texas, and New Mexico. In recent years, Albuquerque has been a very attractive venue and will be so in the future according to Ken Dvorak, the convention planner (Ken.Dvorak@sjcd.edu). For the last ten years, the organization has had a web site on H-Net and has been able to announce conference information on that site with great success—not only in the United States, but around the globe. In recent years, the meeting has been enhanced by participation from the Rocky Mountain American Studies Association (contact: Amanda Cobb, University of New Mexico, at acobb@unm.edu). <p> The papers at these meetings have real merit and some are published in scholarly journals; however, there are many quality discussions which could inspire further research which will not see print. For this reason, the meeting has produced <cite>Proceedings</cite> for decades beginning in 1979 and continuing in hard copy, microfilm, or CD-ROM to the present. During the early years, with the help of graduate students in the Oklahoma State University program, we produced hard-copy <cite>Proceedings</cite>. We deposited a copy of the ponderous collection in the Edmon Low Library of OSU and then a second copy at Cowboy Copy of Stillwater—which sent out Xerox sets to requesting libraries and individuals. For most of the early years, the Oklahoma Historical Society created a microfilm record for preserva-

tion purposes. This service was appreciated by both participants and the institutions, but had obvious drawbacks since we did not produce an index to the collection. <p> For the last seven years or so, we have produced our <cite>Proceedings</cite> on CD-ROM. These collections are word-searchable and thus help scholars to pull their net through all of the papers in search of particular authors, images, and concepts. Not surprisingly, there is a lot of overlap in the popular culture/American culture presentations and the CD-ROM format allows Adobe Acrobat to do its work in service of the intellect. <p> The current <cite>Proceedings</cite> covers papers delivered from 2000 to 2003 and represents those presentations actually submitted to the editor, Dr. Leslie Fife of Oklahoma State University. There are 142 presentations in this collection and it is possible to enter a term such as "audience" and then ask the Adobe Acrobat software to seek out instances in the collection as a whole. The search can come up with some very important connections which may spark further insight by the researcher. Just as an experiment, I put in the name of "Ray Browne," founder of the national organizations: there are 21 such references. The term "mass media" yielded 171 entries. And every discussion represents a new approach to their chosen subjects. <p> While there is no index to the collection, there is a detailed, topical table of contents arranged in alphabetical order. For example, the first ten cate-

gories with papers are as follows: <ul>  
 <li>African-American Culture <li>American Myth-  
 ic Patterns <li>American Studies <li>Animal  
 Rights <li>Atomic Culture <li>The Beats and Coun-  
 terculture <li>Biographies and Autobiographies  
 <li>California Culture <li>Captivity Narratives  
 <li>Chicano Culture </ul> The list marches along  
 through motion pictures, material culture, music,  
 icons in popular culture, and other fascinating  
 popular culture genres. The lead consultant,  
 Philip Heldrich (Emporia State University) de-  
 scribes the collection in his introduction: <p>  
 <blockquote>The purpose of these Proceedings is  
 to share knowledge. Some pieces take more for-  
 mal approaches while others communicate in less  
 theoretical terms. Some studies represent the gen-  
 esis of an idea, while others present more final-  
 ized research. I'm proud to say that many of the  
 pieces from previous years made their way into  
 published papers, anthologies, and book-length  
 studies. As much research grows from the kernel  
 of an idea, these Proceedings and its wealth of  
 knowledge should be necessary holding for aca-  
 demic, community college, and local libraries. (p.  
 xviii)</blockquote> <p> Heldrich's comments  
 point to the varying states of readiness of the pa-  
 pers. Some are here for discussion purposes while  
 others are finished products; either way, for the  
 right person, they could provide inspiration. <p>  
 There are some 2,550 pages of text in the body of  
 the collection and the papers make a very large  
 pool of information and expertise. The collection  
 concludes with author profiles which, as someone  
 associated with these meetings since day one, I  
 found of great interest--giving me new insights  
 into people whom I have known for decades. As a  
 device for promoting community, the author pro-  
 file section is interesting, indeed. For many years,  
 Gary L. Kieffner has been our Area Chair for Mo-  
 torcycle Culture and Myth; he is now joined this  
 year by Co-Chair Suzanne Ferriss. Gary has done a  
 wonderful job of attracting fascinating papers  
 about this element of popular culture, including  
 legislative battles. Gary Keifner includes a photo

of himself from earlier days that will be difficult  
 to match with the current scholar, but the pictori-  
 al for Suzanne Buck will be an inspiration to all  
 who admire the motorcycle as a symbol of recre-  
 ation and pure fun. The photo entries put a hu-  
 man face on the articles--a detail of importance to  
 all who celebrate scholarship as a human endeavor.  
 <p> This is a fine collection and, as one of the  
 founders (along with Michael K. Schoenecke) of  
 the organizations, I am delighted that the current  
 executive committee (Philip Heldrich and Ken  
 Dvorak) are carrying this task forward with the  
 expert help of Leslie Fife. One of the great thrills  
 of scholarship is the act of sharing insights with  
 others; this CD-ROM <cite>Proceedings</cite> is a  
 cornucopia of information, opinion--and sharing.  
 <p> This compilation is a must for all university  
 and college libraries, and a required item for all  
 libraries concerned about contemporary culture  
 and the influence of popular images and genres.  
 Certainly, the libraries of scholars represented in  
 the collection should own it for preservation,  
 teaching, and scholarly purposes. <p> CD-ROM is  
 available for purchase from:<br> Philip  
 Heldrich<br> Department of English<br> Box  
 4019<br> Emporia State University<br> Emporia,  
 KS 66801-5087<br> email:  
 pheldrich@esumail.emporia.edu<br> telephone:  
 620-341-5216

If there is additional discussion of this review, you may access it through the network, at  
<https://networks.h-net.org/h-pcaaca>

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