
Review note by Sylvia Inn Grider.

Considering the current exorbitantly inflationary costs of printing and paper, it is curious that Gryphon Books chose to reprint verbatim a book of such slight value and interest as *Legends of the Spanish Southwest* without even so much as a comment or a preface to the new edition. Originally published in 1930, this collection typifies the exaggerated romanticism which enveloped folklore at that time and which folklorists today would just as soon forget. This is a book intended for the reading public which made Helen Hunt Jackson's *Ranier* a best seller and is typical of the supplementary readers which were used at one time in junior high school social studies classes throughout the Southwest. The twenty-eight "legends" are all sub-literary re-writes by the authors on about a fifth or sixth grade reading level and deal primarily with the romances and unrequited loves of the proverbial "dusky maidens" and "dashing caballeros." The collection even includes one of the ubiquitous lovers' leap stories so popularized by B.F. Skinner. (see "Antonia's Leap," pp. 135-41). There are, as to be expected in a work of this type and from this period, no notes and no sources for any of the material, although there are brief historical introductions for some of the selections.

The book is of absolutely no value or interest to a folklorist or any other serious reader, even as a "period piece," and hopefully it will not find its way again into the libraries of the public schools.


Reviewed by Sigmund C. Fredericks.

Ms. Vitaliano is a professional geologist who works for the Translation Center of the U.S. Geological Survey at the Bloomington Campus of Indiana University. In this volume she has combined mythology with the science of geology in order to create a new, mixed discipline, "geomythology," which "seeks to explain certain specific myths and legends in terms of actual geologic events that may have been witnessed by various groups of people (p. 1)." From