

by students who for logistic and other reasons tend to confine their fieldwork to the university community and to their own age group. For similar reasons the term "adolescent legend" is not as precise as we would wish. But I must admit that a convenient alternative to either term has so far eluded me.

Texas Graveyards: A Cultural Legacy. By Terry G. Jordan.
Austin: University of Texas Press, 1982. Pp. x-147,
bibliography, index, illustrations. \$19.95, cloth.

Reviewed by Warren E. Roberts.

Much has been written about gravestones and cemeteries in the United States, but this work offers a new approach. Jordan has visited great numbers of rural cemeteries in Texas. He has not covered it completely, but Texas is a very big state, and he has described not only gravestones, but also grave decorations, lay-outs of cemeteries, fences, gates, flora in cemeteries, and other features. While other geographers, notably Fred B. Kniffen, have spoken of "necrogeography," Jordan is the first to present a large-scale example of this approach to folklife study.

Jordan has been forced to limit himself to three ethnic traditions: southern American, Hispanic-American, and German-American. While he regrets having to omit other ethnic groups in Texas, he does deal with these numerically dominant traditions in admirable detail. He describes and illustrates such noteworthy features as scraped earth cemeteries, shell-decorated graves, and gravehouses. The copious illustrations are a necessary and excellent part of the book. We are all in Jordan's debt for showing the importance of his approach to an important part of folklife studies.

The work is marred, unfortunately, by frequent "Frazerian" interpretations of symbols on gravestones and the ancient origins and supposed meaning of these symbols. For example, the legend for figure 3-20, a photo of a gravestone with a carved dove on it reads "The dove, one of the animal consorts of the ancient Mediterranean mother/fertility goddesses, dominates a commercial tombstone in

Scottsville, Harrison County." What possible relevance can this reference to the Mediterranean mother/fertility goddess have in this context? Are not the frequent references to the dove in the Bible and in the nineteenth century Protestant hymns enough to explain the presence of the dove on the tombstone of a Christian? In the same vein, the legend for 3-21, a photo of a stone on which a rose is carved, states, "This rose blossom, a pagan symbol of the ancient Mediterranean Magna Mater . . ." Again, why mention the Magna Mater, beloved by followers of Frazer, when the rose has long been a symbol for Jesus? One might as well claim that the cross that adorns so many Catholic cemeteries in so many ways is a pagan symbol and forget how Christ died. Were the people who used the crosses thinking of the pagan meaning or of Christ?

Jordan ends his book with a chapter entitled "A Legacy Squandered?" which is a strong and much-needed plea for the preservation of the rural and small town cemeteries of Texas. What he says applies equally as well to the rest of the country. In his visits to these cemeteries, I am sure that Jordan has often repeated to himself, just as I have, the opening lines of Gray's "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard," especially as the sun is sinking. Let us hope that Jordan's plea to preserve these cemeteries will not go unheeded and that his book will not prove to be an "Elegy Written for the Country Churchyard."

Omaha Tribal Myths and Trickster Tales. By Roger Welsch. Chicago: Swallow Press, 1981. Pp. 285, notes, bibliography. \$21.95 cloth.

Reviewed by John B. Wolford.

Roger Welsch retranslates eighty-one tales in this presentation of nineteenth-century Omaha folklore. His purpose is "to make available in more accurate form and with context of annotation Omaha tales collected in the nineteenth century and now generally unavailable to the public." (p. 13). The tales make for enjoyable reading, but in the areas of annotation and analysis that the volume is a disappointment.