

completed his own odyssey traveling facedown in a canoe, having been shot in the buttocks by one of his own men in a hunting accident. His increasing mental instability and debilitating reentry issues after the expedition (what Jenkinson calls “Buzz Aldrin Syndrome”) seem to confirm that Lewis’s death was indeed suicide (not murder as some people insist). Lewis was remarkable but strange, a hero who sometimes cut a rather pathetic figure, a man whose triumphs disintegrated in tragedy.

This is not a book for readers who want the epic story of the expedition or a biography of its leader; it is more textual analysis than narrative history. But those who already

know the journals will find Jenkinson’s close re-readings insightful and provocative. There is too much repetition of points and evidence across the essays, too much use of the authorial first person, and too many unnecessary (and some rather forced) literary references, but Lewis and Clark scholars and buffs will have this book on their shelves and on their minds for many years to come.

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Lions of the West *Heroes and Villains of the Westward Expansion*

By Robert Morgan

(Chapel Hill: Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill, 2011. Pp. xxiii, 497. Illustrations, notes, bibliography. \$29.95.)

Robert Morgan’s *Lions of the West* gathers a series of chapter-length biographical sketches of figures from the early American West. The eclectic group includes Thomas Jefferson, Andrew Jackson, John Chapman (a.k.a. “Johnny Appleseed”), David Crockett, Sam Houston, James K. Polk, Winfield Scott, Kit Carson, Nicholas Trist, and John Quincy Adams. Morgan proceeds in a generally chronological fashion, carefully interweaving the lives of his subjects as their paths crossed over

time and space. At times the narrative seems like one big historical version of the “Six Degrees of Kevin Bacon” game.

Jackson in many respects brought on the fulfillment of Jefferson’s dreams of the expanded settlement of white yeomanry. Both Crockett and Houston fought in the Creek War that helped to make Jackson famous, and became legends (Crockett posthumously) in Texas. James K. Polk helped to bring on the Mexican War, which made a hero of

his political rival, Winfield Scott. The enormous cession of land wrenched from Mexico was secured in part because of the efforts of Carson and John C. Frémont, etc. Excepting Johnny Appleseed, the willingness to either personally engage in or call for combat with Native Americans or Mexicans to satiate American land hunger and facilitate territorial expansion served as a common link among these men.

Focusing solely on famous figures in the story of the West can easily lead to hagiography, a pitfall Morgan acknowledges in his prologue. "Historians may concentrate on the famous, but most of what happens is the composite deeds of common folk.... We must consider the 'lions' of the West, but it was the unnoticed thousands on foot and on horseback, in wagons and ox carts, who made the story a fact, who wrote history with their hands and feet, their need and greed, their sweat, and often their blood" (p. xix). While Morgan himself falls into that pit on

several occasions, he does seem to make a genuine effort at balance.

Morgan's book is obviously not aimed at academics, who would find in it precious little new information or insight. Indeed, many of the chapters read simply like condensed versions of recent biographies of their subjects. Morgan's ability as a writer—and the narrative does flow quite smoothly—has already led to considerable popular success, and this book will no doubt find a similarly broad audience. The numerous excellent maps and useful timeline will be helpful to the droves of history buffs who will delight in the simple, concise sketches of their frontier heroes.

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Kentucky Rising *Democracy, Slavery, and Culture from the Early Republic to the Civil War*

By James A. Ramage and Andrea S. Watkins

(Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2011. Pp. 445. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$40.00.)

James Ramage and Andrea Watkins's *Kentucky Rising* is the best single overview of antebellum Kentucky ever written. Skillfully weaving polit-

ical history with the social and cultural aspects of early Kentucky, Ramage and Watkins have produced a lasting and excellent framework that