

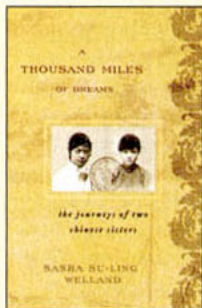
tary history, and ends with the little-known battle of Palmito Ranch in Texas. The entries include other battles, politicians, military heroes, and what Lanning calls the causes of the conflict. Lincoln, Grant, Lee, Sheridan, Jefferson Davis, John Wilkes Booth, and John Brown are included, as expected. But also documented are such topics as blockades and blockade runners, communications and transportation, war correspondents, draft riots, and black soldiers and sailors. A map, photographs, or illustrations supplement each entry. —*George Cohen*

Martin, John A. *When White Is Black*. Aug. 2006. 191p. River's Bend, paper, \$14.95 (0-9729445-1-6). 973.

An early morning phone call announcing his mother's accidental death and the corner's inquiry regarding her race set Martin pondering the complicated mixed-race heritage of his family. His mother, who appeared white, was mixed, with white, black, and Seminole Indian blood. Living in Houston and Oakland, the family mostly associated with other fair-skinned blacks, holding themselves apart from whites and most black folks. Martin explores the tortured complexities of how the mixture of white and black was historically recorded and determined and eventually evolved into the one-drop rule. He recalls a great-grandfather so fair he lived as a white man. When it was discovered that he was black, he lost his status in the community, suffered lower wages and prospects, and eventually took to drink. Martin's mother was light enough to pass for white; instead, she navigated a balance between demanding respect and accepting any advantages that came with fair skin but also eventually became an alcoholic. Martin's recollection of his family history is a poignant example of the complexity and effect of racial designations in America. —*Vanessa Bush*

☆ **Welland, Sasha Su-Ling.** *A Thousand Miles of Dreams: The Journeys of Two Chinese Sisters*. Sept. 2006. 368p. illus. Rowman & Littlefield, \$24.95 (0-7425-5313-2). 979.4.

HISTORY



The "journeys" of the subtitle point to the multileveled movement of Welland's narrative from China to the U.S., from China to London, from the nineteenth century to and through the twentieth, from old to new. In the persons of two sisters—Welland's grandmother, Amy Ling Chen, and her great-aunt, Ling Shuhua—the book catches a tension between science and art that nevertheless joined the two women as if at the hip in creative processes that then significantly diverged as Amy became a doctor, Shuhua a writer and artist. The book introduces, wonderfully well, the work and the literary circle of Ling Shuhua, an important author whose work came to the West via the mediation of Virginia Woolf's Bloomsbury group. Welland has a sharp eye for the intersections and choices in her great-aunt's life that made her, as well as her English and Chinese mentors, proud; and the intersections Welland are conducive to better understanding of not only contemporary China but also the social construction of race, class, and gender in the U.S. Welland is an anthropologist with a novelist's eye for the art of both making lives and making books. She weaves biography, memoir, genealogy, social history, literary criticism, and theoretical reflection coherently, accessibly, and, indeed, beautifully. —*Steven Schroeder*

Moore, MariJo. *Eating Fire, Tasting Blood: Breaking the Great Silence of the American Indian Holocaust*. Aug. 2006. 336p. Thunder's Mouth, paper, \$16.95 (1-56025-838-1). 978.

In the words of indigenous scholars, community activists, and artists, this unique collection of essays and poems presents the last 500 years of American history from the Indian viewpoint—not the "white-washed, academic-tainted, hypothetical . . . history" found in most textbooks. Paula Gunn Allen addresses the myth of the colonists coming to an empty continent, when in fact the acknowledged number of Native Americans at that time is 10 million and rising. Others elucidate the special problems confronted by indigenous women, from those who lost children to the smallpox

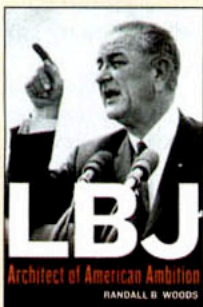
brought by the initial waves of white settlers, to those marched to "removal reservations" in the 1830s, to incarcerated Native American women today who are denied the opportunity to practice their religious rites. Perhaps the most compelling essays are those chronicling the decimation of entire tribes, such as the Choctaws, dispossessed of their land through a series of 14 treaties, and the Powhatan and Monacan tribes of what is now Virginia. This substantial and meticulous collection supports all who are breaking the "great silence" surrounding the reality of American expansion. —*Deborah Donovan*

Perrin, Noel. *Best Person Rural: Essays of a Sometime Farmer*. 2006. 224p. Godine, \$24.95 (1-56792-307-0). 974.3.

Perrin's 2004 death deeply grieved the thousands who escaped from urban routine by reading his *First Person Rural* (1980) and the three subsequent *Person Rural* collections of essays in which this sometime farmer celebrates rural life. In this posthumous collection, one of Perrin's longtime friends, Terry Osborne, brings together many of the best essays from his four *Person Rural* collections and adds a handful of previously unpublished essays. Osborne has selected several pieces that memorably convey Perrin's keen pleasure in rural labor—fencing pastures, making maple syrup, cutting down trees, and splitting firewood. A number of other essays sketch out a philosophical perspective on the cultural meaning of rural life, reminding readers (for instance) that the inefficiency of a Vermont hay farmer reflects a wise recognition of natural limits. Yet other essays confront large-scale political issues affecting rural life—including the right of farmers to protect their way of life by resorting to ecosabotage. A cross-grained and piquant personality, Perrin has left readers with a wonderful legacy of regionally rooted writing. —*Bryce Christensen*

☆ **Woods, Randall B. LBJ: Architect of American Ambition**. Aug. 2006. 704p. illus. index. Free Press, \$35 (0-684-83458-8). 973.923092.

HISTORY



Joining the two top LBJ biographies, multivolume affairs by Robert Dallek and Robert Caro, Woods' single volume evenhandedly condenses the complexities and controversies associated with the thirty-sixth president of the U.S. LBJ's legacies, such as Vietnam and the Great Society, lie beyond Woods' ambit, but within it are Johnson's family, social, and political background, which inclined him toward expansive and expensive efforts in foreign and domestic policy. Raised in the populist tradition, LBJ cut his political teeth as an all-out New Dealer. But he shrewdly knew that the ambitions he harbored for himself and American society would never be realized without placating conservatives of various kinds—economic, segregationist, or anticommunist. In this

fact of Johnson's political life, which induced some to perceive him as a malodorous wheeler-dealer, Woods detects a remarkable consistency, an inwardly liberal LBJ whose outwardly moderate politics were an expression of his mastery of political calculus. Then there's the volatile LBJ, prone to self-pity, aggressiveness, and insensitivity. Woods illustrates this aspect of LBJ's personality most effectively through his relationship with Lady Bird, to whom he accorded respect, trust, and repetitive infidelity. Thorough, astute, and readable. —*Gilbert Taylor*

YA/C: *An exhaustive resource for the most serious history students researching the era. GE.*