
Celebrating Latino Folklore: An Encyclopedia of Cultural Traditions. Ed. by María Herrera-Sobek. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2012. 3 vols. acid free \$294 (ISBN: 9780313343391). E-book available (ISBN: 9780313343407), call for pricing.

Celebrating Latino Folklore is a three-volume encyclopedia focusing on the Latino culture of the United States. "Folklore" can cover many areas, and a list is provided of the various folklore genres the volumes address, such as folk narrative, folk songs, folk food, folk art, etc. For those of us less familiar with what concepts various folklore genres might entail, there is a table of contents and a grouped list of similar topics in the first volume that covers all three volumes. A simple browse through the books is much more fun, however, as one can come across entries on the Chupacabra (the mythological being that sucks the blood of goats and other small animals that has become a favorite topic of Spanish-speaking UFO enthusiasts), Joan Baez, tequila, Santería, and descansos (the practice of placing a memorial in the physical location where a loved one has died, such as on the side of the highway).

The entries are a mixture of short (500–1,500 words) and long (3,500+ words) entries, depending on the topic, and include suggestions for further reading. The introduction defines the purpose of the work "to provide the reader with a sampling of Latino folklore and to give a small glimpse of the rich cultural heritage that belongs to the Latino population and that has now become part of our American folklore treasure" (xvii). While such a volume is perhaps necessary to those needing a small glimpse of a wide variety of authoritative information, the fact that it is not an exhaustive—or even easily defined—collection of information makes it a little difficult to know if it will meet the needs of users. However, there is a list in the introduction of the folklore of the Latin American countries that the editor chose to include.

Since many library collections feature general folklore materials that include many cultures, such as Rosenberg and Brown's *Encyclopedia of Folklore and Literature* (ABC-CLIO, 1998), *Celebrating Latino Folklore* would be a good addition to general collections and provides a starting point for research in this area.—Tracy Carr, Information Services Director, Mississippi Library Commission, Jackson, Mississippi

Critical Survey of Graphic Novels: Independents and Underground Classics. Ed. by Bart H. Beaty and Stephen Weiner. Critical Survey of Graphic Novels Series. Ipswich, MA: Salem, 2013. 3 vols. acid free \$395 (ISBN: 9781587659508). Online access included with purchase of print.

Independents and Underground Classics is the second title in the Critical Survey of Graphic Novels series from Salem Press. The stated intention of this title is to provide "clear, concise, and accessible analysis of not only the historic and current landscape of the interdisciplinary medium and its consumption, but the wide range of genres, themes, devices,

and techniques that the graphic novel medium encompasses" (xi). Fortunately, the work lives up to its stated purpose very well. Through detailed analysis of individual graphic novels, *Independents and Underground Classics* does an admirable job of demonstrating how the graphic novel form is just as effective in engaging readers and portraying the human condition as more established art forms.

Independents and Underground Classics provides alphabetically arranged entries on more than 200 graphic novels published from the advent of the underground comics movement in the 1960s until the present. Most of the graphic novels discussed were published by the creators themselves or by smaller publishing houses rather than by larger comics companies such as DC Comics and Marvel Comics. The brief but insightful introduction attributes the evolution of the modern graphic novel to the underground comics of the 1960s and to the direct market of comic book specialty shops. The underground cartoonists saw comics not as a commercial product but as a vehicle for artistic expression. The attitude and works of the underground artists encouraged and influenced many of the creative people who have produced today's graphic novels. The direct market comic book shops have encouraged the development of the graphic novel form by providing an outlet for creators who wanted to tell stories that would not be accommodated by the larger commercial companies that published superhero titles such as *Batman* and *The Amazing Spider-Man*.

Each entry provides basic information about a given graphic novel, such as its publication history, a detailed synopsis of the plot, and descriptions (both physical and psychological) of the main characters. But researchers will probably find more value in the sections that provide in-depth analysis of each graphic novel. The "Artistic Style" sections discuss the visual styles and devices (realism, cartooning, shadows, page layouts, lettering styles, etc.) the artists employ in telling the stories. The "Themes" sections discuss the dominant themes within each work and how the creators convey those themes. The "Impact" sections discuss how each work was received by the public and its effects on the graphic novel medium.

Independents and Underground Classics is recommended for academic and public libraries. Libraries that own the first title in the Critical Survey of Graphic Novels series (*Heroes and Superheroes*) will also find this second title to be a worthy addition.—Edward Whatley, Georgia College and State University, Milledgeville

Chronology of the U.S. Presidency. Ed. by Mathew Manweller. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2012. 4 vols. acid free \$399 (ISBN: 9781598846454). E-book available (ISBN: 9781598846461), call for pricing.

The highest office of the US government, the presidency, has been held by forty-three men. Each of these presidents came to office with their own vision of the presidency, which would not only help shape the nation, but would also shape and expand the powers of the executive branch. *Chronology of*