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Behind the Book

by Brad Balukjian, author of *The Wax Pack: On the Open Road in Search of Baseball's Afterlife* and Rob Taylor, UNP Senior Acquisitions Editor, Sports

BRAD BALUKJIAN:

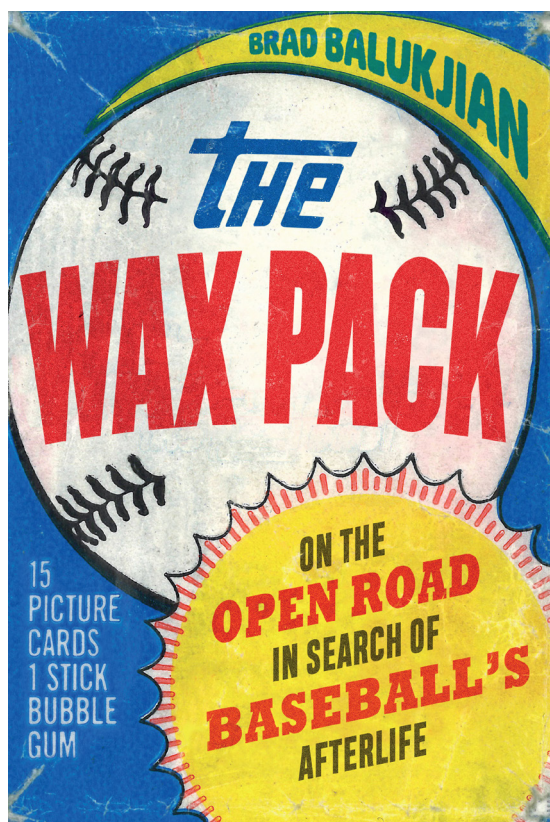
I often joke that I chose the two professions that require the most training and education with the least financial reward: scientist and writer. Science and



PHOTO COURTESY OF AUTHOR

journalism have a lot more in common than most people realize. Both begin with the investigator posing some big overarching question, followed by coming up with a hypothesis, doing extensive field work to test that hypothesis, and then analyzing the data to arrive at some grand conclusion. I didn't know it at the time, but my seven years spent toiling on a PhD documenting new species of Tahitian insects would serve me well on my seven-week, 11,341-mile road trip across America to track down the fourteen players in a single pack of baseball cards from 1986.

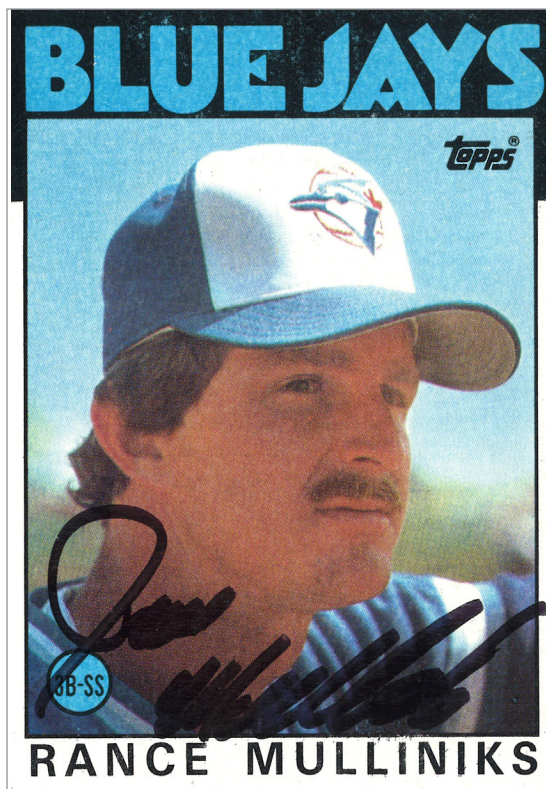
The spirit of discovery fueled both adventures, and this desire to discover is vastly underappreciated in both the science and publishing industries. In graduate school, my quest was to describe a group of insects previously unknown to science; in *The Wax Pack*, my goal was to find out what happened to the ballplayers I grew up idolizing using the narrative device of a single pack of cards and its random contents. In both cases, the gatekeepers of the respective industries were hesitant to provide support. Apparently that insatiable need to understand the unknown wasn't enough to justify an investment—the gatekeepers demanded certainty that what I uncovered in my research would be mind-blowing and transcendent, evoking BIG IDEAS that explain everything. But one of the lessons learned writing this book has been that there is no such thing as certainty. In fact, the quality



“Life isn't predictable, and that should be celebrated, not discouraged.”

that allowed the men I wrote about to be successful on and off the baseball field was their ability to embrace *uncertainty*, to take on the risk of failure in order to indulge their desire to discover. Life isn't predictable, and that should be celebrated, not discouraged. However, The University of Nebraska Press was willing to take that risk on this book. And the result is a work that goes way beyond its “where are they now?” premise.

My interest was not to relive baseball heroics and old box scores but to discover the humanity behind the players who are so often reduced to numbers and statistics, baseball being the wonkiest of sports. I wanted to know what happened when the players reached the end of their careers at age thirty-five (the same age as I was at the time of my road trip) knowing they could never again do the one thing they had spent every waking (and often sleeping) second of their lives thinking about. I wanted to know what got them to the Major Leagues to begin with when almost all others fail. And like the character Rey in the new *Star Wars* trilogy, I wanted to know my part in all of this—what could I learn from my heroes-turned-peers? Where do I belong?



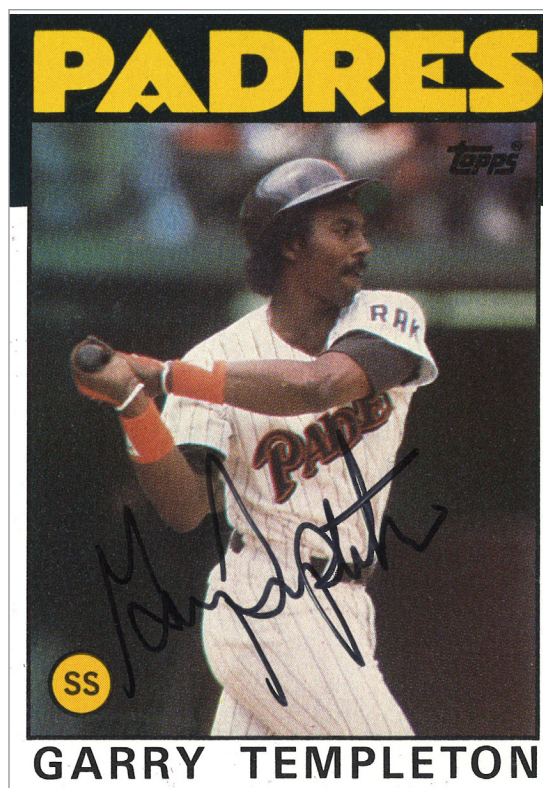
I learned a lot more than I ever expected. My one hypothesis turned into eight, and before long the book was a trove of the very big ideas the gatekeepers craved. For example, I discovered untold tales of childhood trauma as player after player tearfully recounted being abused by their fathers; I discovered that ballplayers are not particularly nostalgic about baseball; and I discovered how the loss of innocence and gift of impermanence manifest in all of our lives. You have a lot more in common with Major League baseball players than you ever realized.

On a more light-hearted note, I learned that if you eat at a restaurant by yourself with a notebook out and a pencil visible, your service improves a hundredfold. I learned that New Mexico has really cheap gas. And I learned what it feels like to drink one hundred and twenty-three cups of coffee over seven weeks.

Not many people read my first book, published by the University of California Berkeley's Department of Environmental Science, Policy, and Management, probably because it contained sentences like this: "Phylogenetic reconstruction was performed under maximum parsimony with 21 discrete morphological characters in the program TNT." But this time around I think you're in for a page turner. You don't have to like baseball to appreciate *The Wax Pack*—you just have to believe in the spirit of discovery.

ROB TAYLOR:

When Brad first emailed me a query on his book idea for *The Wax Pack*, I was instantly hooked on the unique premise: he'd opened a pack of 1986 Topps baseball cards, then set out on a quest to find and interview all the players



in person. But the real appeal of the book began to emerge when he said that upon meeting each player, he revealed to them that he wasn't looking for the typical sports interview. Instead, he wanted to know things like what their relationship with their parents was like, and how they managed the transition from baseball to the rest of their lives. He learned that for many of the players, it wasn't easy to move on from baseball—among many other discoveries you can read about in the book.

Because most of the players had been away from the game for many years, they were more willing to open up to Brad, and he was able to get to know them as real people, not just as former baseball players and statistics. He watched kung fu movies with Garry Templeton and lifted weights with Randy Ready. And even when he couldn't track down a certain player, like Carlton Fisk, the journey to

“You have a lot more in common with Major League baseball players than you ever realized.”

find him still captivates you as a reader. When he'd first meet a player, Brad would tell them he had read all the articles he could find on him, but still felt like he didn't know anything *about* him. “What do you want to know?” each one replied. *The Wax Pack* answers a lot of those questions, and more.



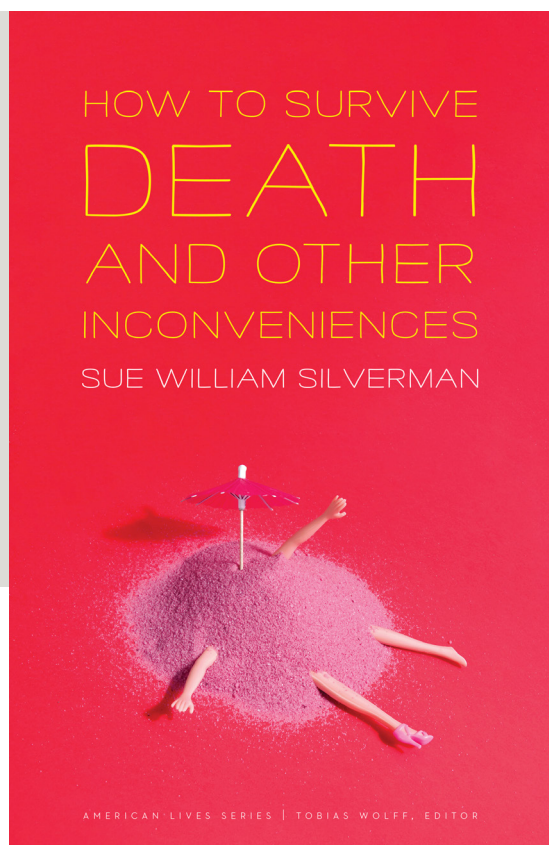
Why I Write

BY SUE WILLIAM SILVERMAN



I write to find my life. I write to save my life. I write to keep myself alive.

Long Saturday afternoons, in my family's Danish colonial house on the island of St. Thomas, I sat before my mother's black Underwood typewriter randomly tapping keys. I barely knew how to spell—at least how to spell *real* words. That made no difference to my third grade mind. I created long rows of letters such as eixfoe388sn23*&) xlfjepzqqqZQ. I filled pages of onion skin paper with what some would label gibberish. To me, however, this private, singular language held deep meaning. This personal argot was like a child's imaginary friend. An imaginary friend *is* real to a child, just as my invented language was real to me. Hour after hour this secret language held my interest more than trade winds gusting through screenless windows, more than tropical scents of mango, hibiscus, sugarcane. I preferred tapping out my secret language to swimming in Magens Bay. I never showed anyone what I wrote.



What was I writing? Words I couldn't yet speak. At that time, growing up, my father misloved me. He misused me. I never told anyone—I didn't have the language to tell anyone—until decades later. Yet I was confiding to myself in my own private diary in my own private language.

Later, as a young adult, I again tried to write my narrative—this time in the form of a novel. But *my* story wasn't fiction, so the voice sounded emotionally inauthentic. I might as well still have been typing se939n**woqoeth. It wasn't until later, at the urging of a therapist, that I switched to writing *nonfiction*. Finally, my random keystrokes evolved into words; the words cohered into sentences; the sentences became books that deciphered my

life. Finally, my private language evolved into shared language.

I've now written four memoirs, and there's still more to discover.

A memoir is a slice of a life, not a whole life. Therefore, in my first book, I revealed my childhood growing up in an incestuous family. In the second, I explored how that childhood resulted in a sexual addiction. In the third, *The Pat Boone Fan Club: My Life as a White Anglo-Saxon Jew*, I confronted a search for a spiritual identity.

Now, in my fourth book, *How to Survive Death and Other Inconveniences*, I tackle a lifelong fear of dying. And even though I still have my heart set on never physically dying, in case I can't quite pull that off, I seek ways to metaphorically survive. One way, I've learned, is through memory—by crafting language that forever secures the past tightly to the page. In fact, one of the sections in this new book, "Requiem for a Qwertyist," is set in St. Thomas and shows that child-me banging out her lines of eiu9w9f7w, exploring those early scribbles, as if knowing one day she *would* make sense of them.

I, as narrator, reflect in this essay: "Perhaps this rush of private words boiling across paper, spreading like an ink stain, are exactly the right ones in order to slip through pin-hole-sized punctuation marks on pieces of carbon paper, apertures or portals to reach an everlasting *somethingness*. I imagine lm.pljui

exploding past galaxies to black holes in outer space before slamming to the end of a sentence, where jdiwjNNN@@ beams white as the moon, or where cryptic ioegxnl remains embedded in carbon for future civilizations to decipher.”

In short, even back in third grade, I sought a way to survive death. Which is to say that I sought to both *find* my life and *save* my life. Each book I’ve written has helped save either my physical self or my emotional life. Or both. Before I wrote my first memoir, back when I disguised my truth as fiction, still, the mere (mere? heroic!) act of setting words on paper kept me alive. For back then I was having a massive emotional breakdown, which led me to that therapist’s office. But still I believed, just like that little girl writing lines of gibberish, that each word would somehow, ultimately, bring me to me.

And the thousands of words, the thousands of pieces of paper, ultimately *did* bring me to me. I truly don’t know who I am, what I think, until I write “me” and my world. Writing creative nonfiction helps me discover the metaphors that guide my life. We, all of us, are complex beings; I, for one, can only explore one part of me at a time. With each book, I feel more whole. Like an archaeologist I excavate heart and soul through language. This is how I make sense of all the seemingly random moments, events, thoughts, feelings—everything that is the foundation for who I am now.

In *How to Survive Death and Other Inconveniences*, I confront the ultimate unknown, attempting to “enter” Death while still very

much alive. After all, *if* I die, I won’t be able to write that experience! So if I’m to tell *all* my stories, I need to get a head start on death and write it now. Maybe that in itself will diminish some of my fear surrounding that final experience. In this book, I seek the origins of the fear. I seek the metaphors and memories of the fear, all in an attempt to outsmart death—to get a grip on it, to keep writing, to keep myself alive—at least on the page. And that page will always exist in the world.

SUE WILLIAM SILVERMAN is a memoirist, poet, and teacher of writing at the Vermont College of Fine Arts. She has published several books, including *Because I Remember Terror, Father, I Remember You*, which won the AWP Award; *Love Sick: One Woman’s Journey through Sexual Addiction*, which was made into a Lifetime TV movie; *The Pat Boone Fan Club: My Life as a White Anglo-Saxon Jew* (Nebraska, 2014); and *Fearless Confessions: A Writer’s Guide to Memoir*. Her new book in UNP’s American Lives series is *How to Survive Death and Other Inconveniences*.



Director's View

BY DONNA A. SHEAR, UNP DIRECTOR



Fewer than 150 universities in the United States have university presses, and as a consequence, many people aren't familiar with their role within the academic ecosystem. These university presses are charged with publishing the bulk of scholarly and creative works in the humanities and social sciences by researchers and academicians around the nation and the world. Their works are rigorously peer reviewed and go through challenging approval processes. Here at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln, UNP's presence as a major university press signals the university's commitment to being a top research institution.

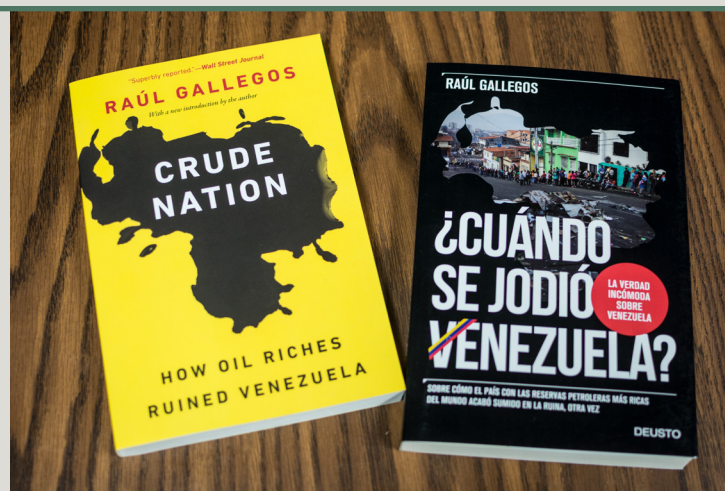
The Press also extends the university's mission. Each book or journal we publish at UNP is made available globally through library aggregators, our foreign distributors, or both. In addition to disseminating these works broadly in English, we strive to get our books translated into other

languages. Some, like *Black Elk Speaks*, have been translated into more than a dozen languages; others find a home in just one or two.

It seems a day hardly goes by in my office without being presented with an offer by a foreign publisher requesting translation rights to one of our books. With the expert assistance of our foreign rights representative, Jen Schaper, and with advice from Leif Milliken here at the Press, we ensure foreign publishers are continuously aware of the right books for their

markets. Consequently, in just the past few months, we have received offers on various titles from publishers in China, Mexico, Spain, Korea, Croatia, France, Italy, and Turkey. On average, we license about one book per month for translation. It's fascinating to see the cover a foreign publisher puts on its edition or even to take a glimpse inside to see how its language is rendered in the book.

Whether it's a fiction or poetry collection, a current affairs Potomac title, one of our baseball books, or a scholarly monograph, it's heartening to know that readers around the globe appreciate and value what we do here at the Press, so much so that other publishers will go to the time and expense of translating our books into their native languages. What our robust translation program tells me is that people all over the world hunger for knowledge and that curiosity knows no boundaries.



Crude Nation: How Oil Riches Ruined Venezuela by Raul Gallegos was published by UNP's Potomac Books imprint in 2016. The Press sold the worldwide Spanish-language rights of *Crude Nation* to Centro Libros PAPER, S.L.U., based in Barcelona, Spain, and they also published their version in 2016. Our two editions appear side-by-side in this photo, illustrating an example of how UNP books reach important global audiences.



Four UNL Journalism Students Record UNP Audiobooks

In a highly successful collaboration between the Press and the University of Nebraska College of Journalism and Mass Communications (CJMC), journalism students recently took part in an immersive new pop-up course called Audiobook Narration. The class—held in the fall semester of 2019—was led by Assistant Professor of Practice Kaci Richter.

In order to learn more about the audiobook narration process before teaching the course, Richter first narrated the UNP book *Terrorism, Betrayal, and Resilience: My Story of the 1998 U.S. Embassy Bombings* by Prudence Bushnell. She has since expanded her skills to the production side of audiobooks, helping to produce the poetry collection *Nebraska* by UNL English faculty member Kwame Dawes, who did his own narration on the work. Both books are now available on Audible.

Under Richter's guidance in the course, students learned techniques for audiobook narration and had the opportunity to narrate various UNP books. Six of the nine students completed narration projects, and the four following projects are now available on Audible:

- Mia Virgillito recorded the poetry collection *Famous* by Kathleen Flenniken
- Grace Fitzgibbon recorded the poetry collection *A Mind Like This* by Susan Blackwell Ramsey
- Brandon VanDeMortel recorded the historical novel *Wynema: A Child of the Forest* by S. Alice Callahan
- Jessica Walsh recorded the collection of short stories *The Troll Garden* by Willa Cather



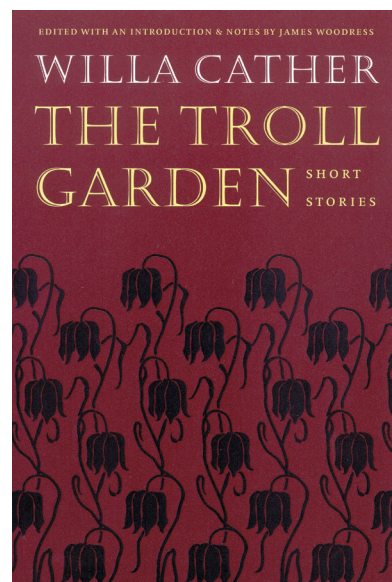
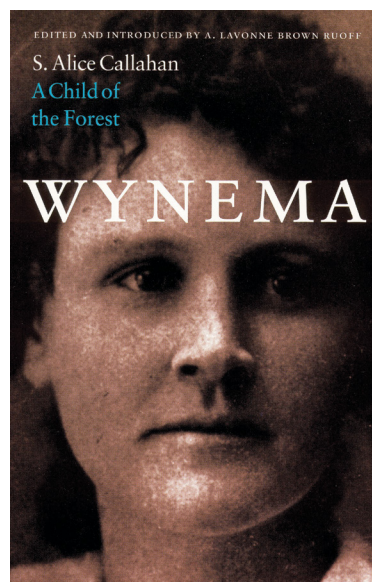
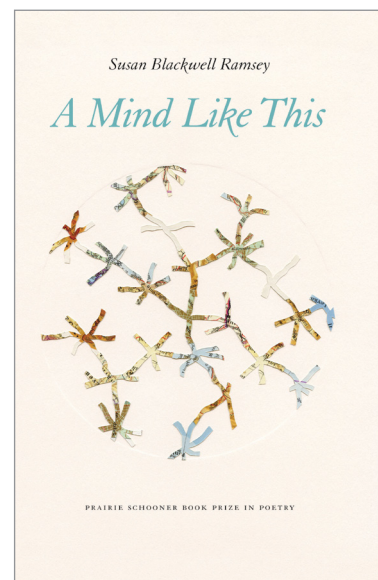
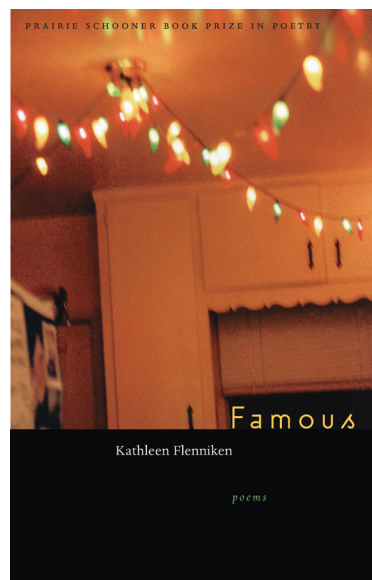
Kaci Richter, Assistant Professor of Practice, UNL College of Journalism and Mass Communications

Two of the books' authors reached out to UNP to compliment the students' work. The author of *Famous*, Kathleen Flenniken, wrote, "Honestly, I haven't thought of a few of these poems in quite some time, others are favorites still—she (Virgillito) brought every one of them back to me." Susan Blackwell Ramsey commended student Grace Fitzgibbon for her narration of Ramsey's book *A Mind Like This*.

"We were delighted to participate in this program," Professor Richter said. "In the industry, whether it's voice acting or audio narration, no one will give you a job unless you've had a job. No one will hire you as a voice narrator if you don't have any published narration under your belt. The point of the class was to get students' work submitted and published."

"This has been a fabulous collaboration," said Donna Shear, director of the Press. "We are hoping for more opportunities to work with Professor Richter and her students."

Richter is planning to lead the class again in the fall semester of 2020.



A Generalist's Perspective

Kay Walter Brings Unique Approach, Background to Press Advisory Board



For much of her forty-year career at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln, Kay Walter has worn multiple hats. She is Professor and Chair of Digital Initiatives & Special Collections (DISC) at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln Libraries, as well as co-director of the internationally-acclaimed Center for Digital Research in the Humanities (CDRH). Kay has been a valued member of UNP’s Press Advisory Board (PAB) since 2013.

An Iowan by birth, Kay received degrees in history, English and library sciences from the University of Iowa. While in Iowa, she worked briefly at the university libraries there before accepting a faculty position at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln in 1980. “I’ve found my UNL colleagues to be dedicated and welcoming. And once I met my husband here, a lifelong Nebraskan, I knew this would be home,” Kay says.

In the 1980s, she and her husband were also owners of an out-of-print bookstore called Middletown Books, located inside Dirt Cheap, an iconic record store in downtown Lincoln. After five years, she and her husband made the decision to close the bookstore. “I had just accepted an administrative position and we had a young child,” she explains. But to this day, she credits her stint as a bookstore

owner—along with, of course, her experience as a librarian—to developing a deep appreciation for the world of publishing.

Since 2001, the Press and CDRH (formerly E-Text), have collaborated on a number of projects, giving Kay familiarity with the other side of the publishing world, which enhances her work on the advisory board. The first collaboration was the creation of an online version of the Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition. Other joint online projects have included Civil War Washington, Encyclopedia of the Great Plains, Omaha and Ponca Dictionary, Elia Peattie: An Uncommon Writer, and Uncommon Woman, and the William F. Cody Archive. In collaboration with authors, the online sites expand content to highlight relevant archival and scholarly materials. Collaborative projects are available at https://cdrh.unl.edu/projects/projects_publications.

Kay says she enjoys being on PAB. “As a generalist,” she says, “I think I bring a different perspective to the materials we look at, and I have enjoyed the spirited discussions.” The Press has been fortunate to work with Kay, both at the CDRH and on PAB.



Americas: A Hemispheric Music Journal joins UNP's Stable of Journals; Plans to Expand Focus

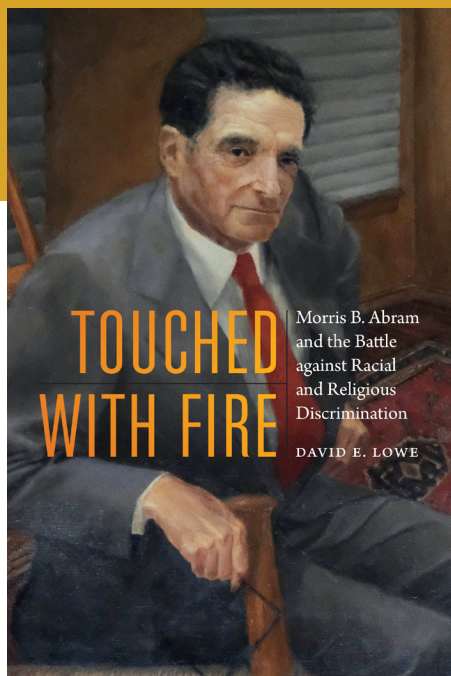
Americas: A Hemispheric Music Journal (previously known as *American Music Research Center Journal*) is based at the American Music Research Center (AMRC) at the University of Colorado Boulder. The journal has traditionally been “dedicated to publishing articles of general interest about American music, particularly in subject areas relevant to [the AMRC’s] collections” of archival materials related to American musical history.

The director of AMRC, Dr. Susan Thomas, believes, however, the time is right to expand the journal’s focus to address growing interest in a Western Hemispheric view of American music. Accomplishing this goal means transitioning the journal from an in-house publication to one partnered with UNP. “We’re delighted to add *Americas* to our Journals publishing program,” said Manjit Kaur, manager of UNP’s journals division. “It fits nicely with some of the other journals we publish, particularly *Women and Music*. We know we can help the journal accomplish its expansion goals.”

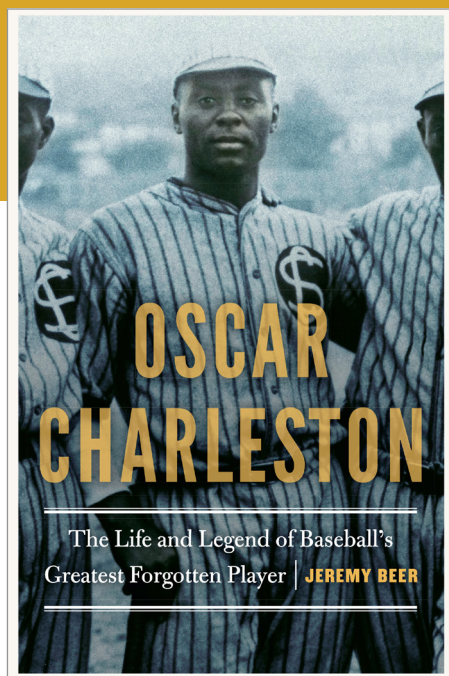
Americas is an annual journal published in the late fall/early winter each year. UNP’s first issue will be Volume 29 in 2020.



Awards

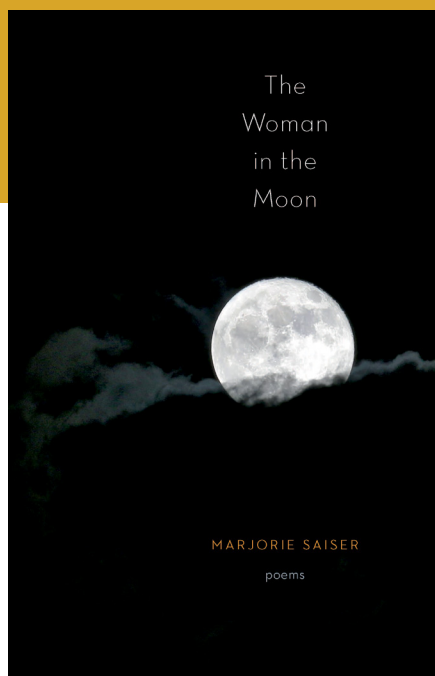


Touched with Fire: Morris B. Abram and the Battle against Racial and Religious Discrimination, by David E. Lowe, won the 2019 National Jewish Book Award in the Biography category.

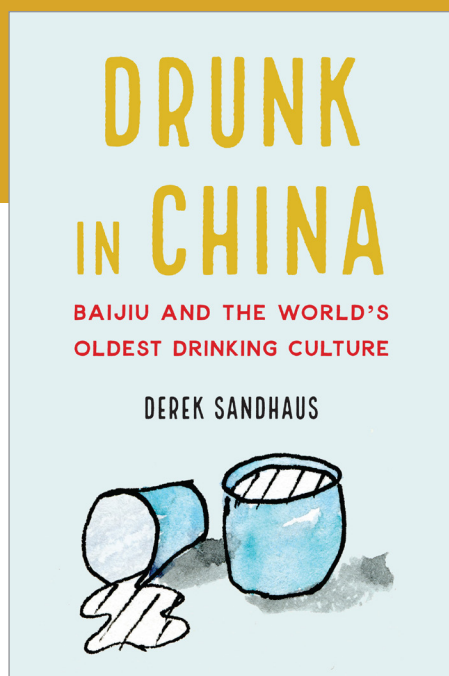


Oscar Charleston: The Life and Legend of Baseball's Greatest Forgotten Player, by Jeremy Beer, won the 2020 Dr. Harold and Dorothy Seymour Medal from the Society for American Baseball Research. The Seymour Medal honors the best book of baseball history or biography published during the preceding calendar year.

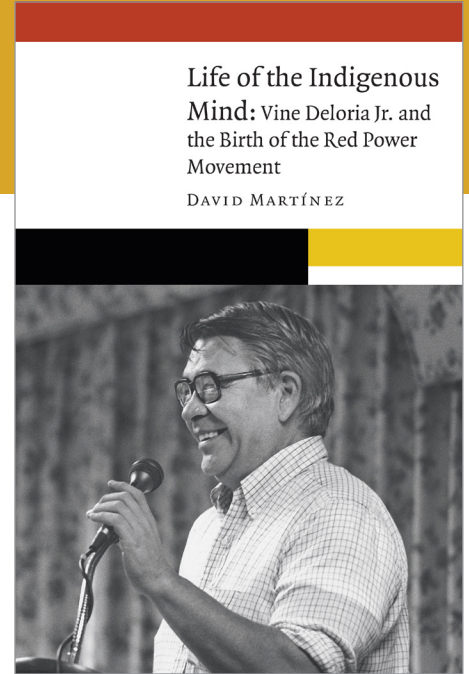
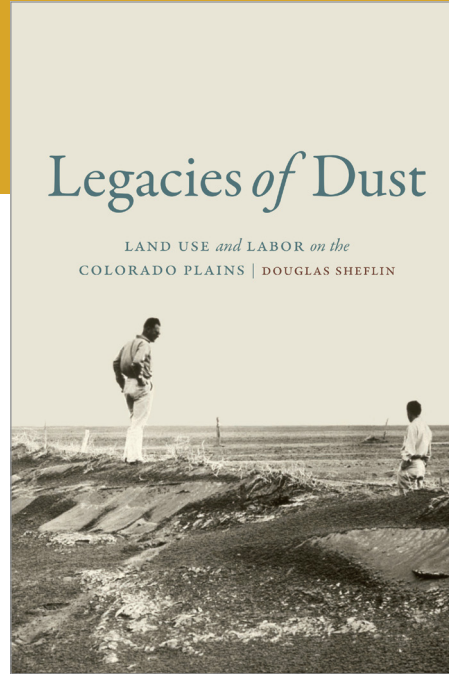
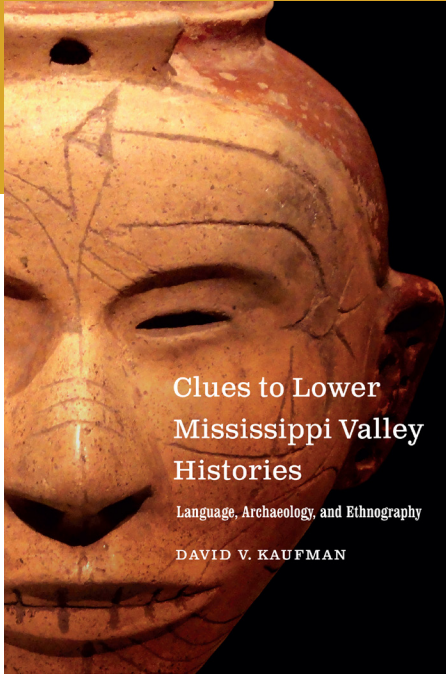
Oscar Charleston also won the 2019 CASEY Award for Best Baseball Book of the Year from *Spitball: The Literary Baseball Magazine*. In garnering first, first, and second place votes from the three judges, *Oscar Charleston* received the most near-unanimous ballot in the thirty-seven-year history of the CASEY Award. Judge Michael Leahy said: “Sometimes a book appears that feels like the product of a miraculous archaeological dig—uncovering a largely forgotten community and its people, leaders, and legends. Such is the power of Jeremy Beer’s *Oscar Charleston*—his biography of the tragically little-known but extraordinary Negro League titan whose baseball talent ought to place him among the game’s immortals—that we feel Oscar’s on-field intensity, his off-field joys and frustrations, his anger, humiliations, and ultimately his dogged triumphs.”



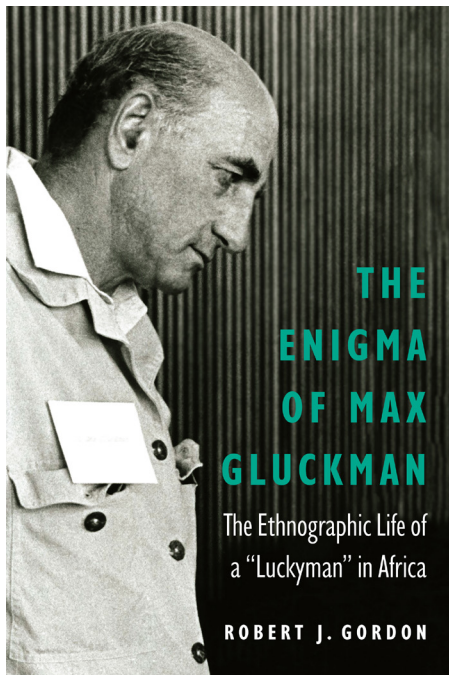
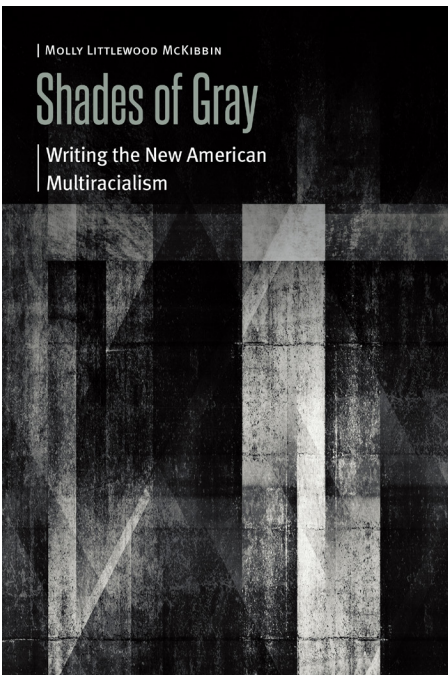
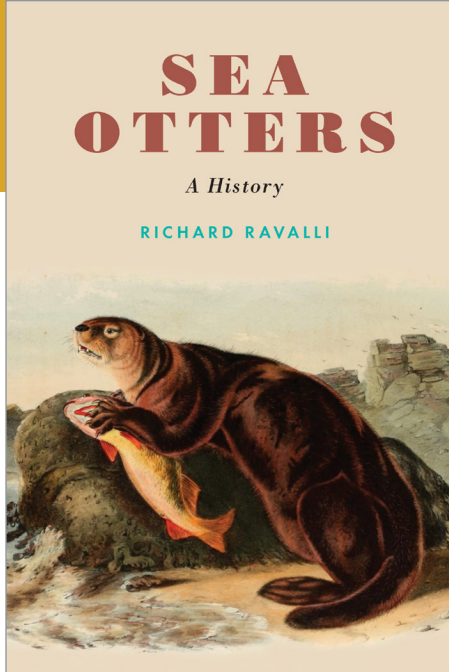
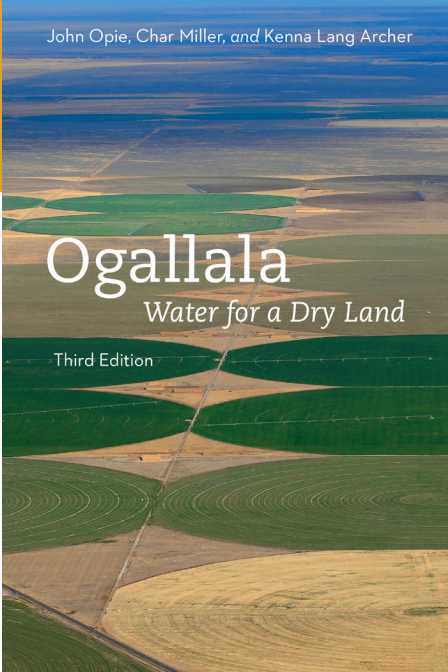
The Woman in the Moon, by Marjorie Saiser, won the 2018 Nebraska Book Award for Poetry.



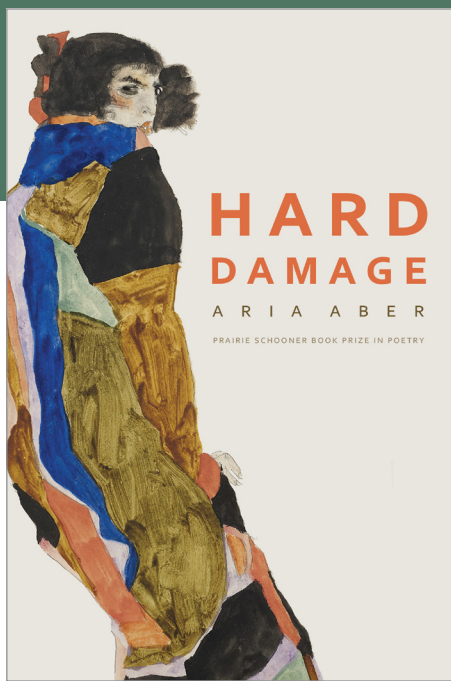
Drunk in China: Baijiu and the World's Oldest Drinking Culture, by Derek Sandhaus, won a 2020 Gourmand International Award in the Spirits category.



Seven UNP books were chosen as 2019 Choice Outstanding Academic Titles. They are: *Clues to Lower Mississippi Valley Histories: Language, Archaeology, and Ethnography* by David V. Kaufman; *Legacies of Dust: Land Use and Labor on the Colorado Plains* by Douglas Sheflin; *Life of the Indigenous Mind: Vine Deloria Jr. and the Birth of the Red Power Movement* by David Martínez; *Ogallala: Water for a Dry Land, Third Edition* by John Opie, Char Miller, and Kenna Lang Archer; *Sea Otters: A History* by Richard Ravalli; *Shades of Gray: Writing the New American Multiracialism* by Molly Littlewood McKibbin; and *The Enigma of Max Gluckman: The Ethnographic Life of a "Luckyman" in Africa* by Robert J. Gordon.



Select Publicity Highlights



Hard Damage by Aria Aber

“I appreciate a book of poems where the speaker (and, by extension, the self) aren’t let off the hook by whatever other concerns the book is circling. But, even in that process, there’s a real generosity and warmth extended, balancing not only accountability to the always shifting world but also forgiveness.”—Hanif Abdurraqib, *GQ*

“*Hard Damage*—which elaborates a constellation of beauty and terror between Afghanistan, Germany, and the United States. . . . is [a] brilliant debut poetry collection.”—Claire Schwartz, *LA Review of Books*

“Aber is not afraid of erudition or the hard labor of crafting poems that peel open in layers; at times, reading her work reminded me of poets who have worked across similarly broad linguistic topographies: Carolyn Forché, Frank Bidart, Paul Celan, Sylvia Plath, Wallace Stevens, and others. But Aber’s work here is hardly derivative of those masters. She is her own poet, her own voice, and her debut is my favorite volume of poetry this year.”
—Christian Kiefer, *Paris Review*

“Aria Aber’s first book of poetry, *Hard Damage*, does not consent to the simple narrative or the soundbite. It reminds readers that every displaced person, whether refugee, immigrant, or the child of one, carries with them a parcel of stories, stories that are often suppressed and mutated by the dominant culture, or lost to reductive media coverage. . . . *Hard Damage* allows the songs—and the lives that they contain—to unfurl.”—Marie Scarles, *Rumpus*

“To properly review the new collection *Hard Damage* . . . you simply want to copy the entire text of the book into your article and just say: Read this. I can add nothing.”—Joe Hoover, *America: The Jesuit Review*

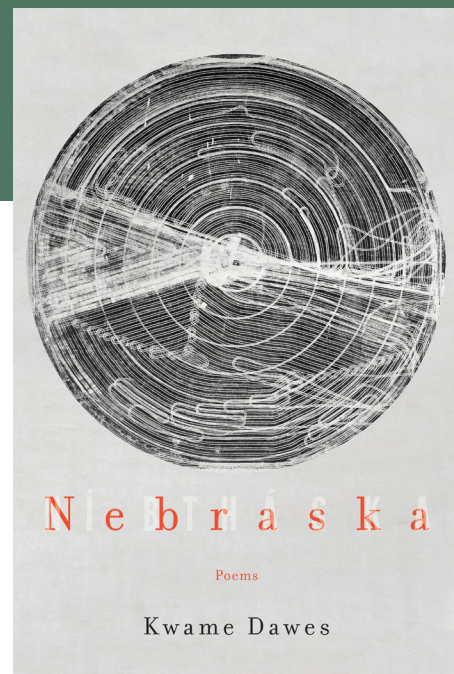


Skin Memory by John
Sibley Williams

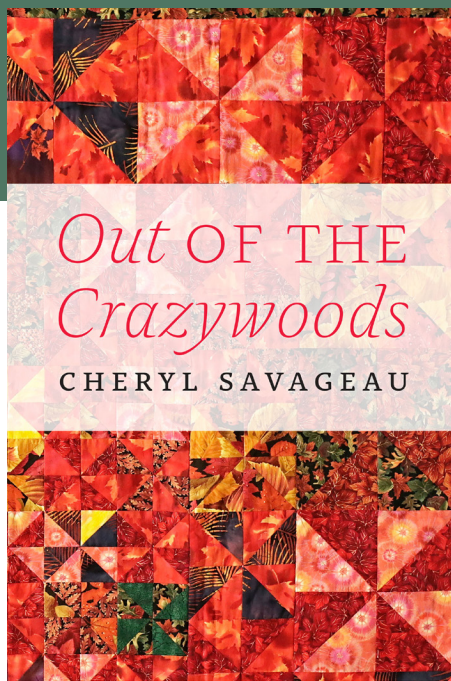
“John Sibley Williams, with his new collection, winner of The Backwaters Prize in Poetry, plunges readers into the heart of a seething memory-scape where everything feels fraught and perilous, but darkly gorgeous, too.”

—Danielle Vermette, *Oregonian*

“Throughout the pages of this mesmerizing book John allows us time to ponder about the concepts he places into poems—grief, loss, death and dying, identity, tragedy, awakening to some greater aura of being. The poems are grounded in reality, all the more available to enter our philosophy into the stages John creates. . . . There is no doubt that John Sibley Williams is a major voice in poetry today.”—*San Francisco Review of Books*

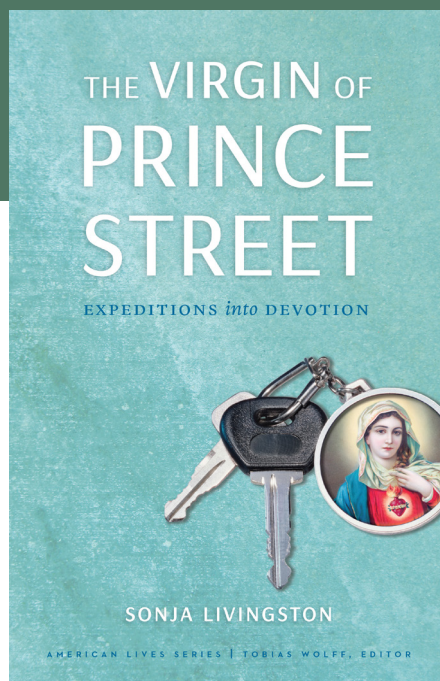


The September 23, 2019, issue of *The New Yorker* published the poem “Before Winter” by Kwame Dawes from his UNP book ***Nebraska: Poems***. On the December 17, 2019, edition of NPR’s “All Things Considered” in a feature entitled “A Book of Poetry for Everyone,” poet Tess Taylor chose the same book as one of her favorite poetry collections of the year, sharing her thoughts about it and reading one of the poems from the book, “Loneliness.”



Out of the Crazywoods
by Cheryl Savageau

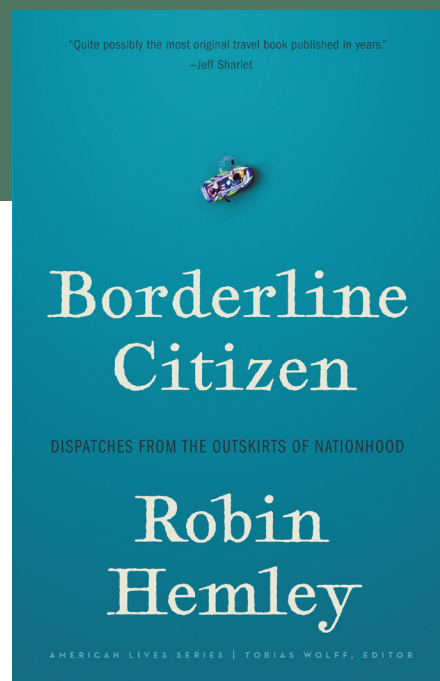
“In this unique and poignant memoir, Abenaki/French Canadian poet Cheryl Savageau describes her bipolar disorder in lyrical, clear and candid prose.”—*Ms. Magazine*



***The Virgin of Prince Street:
Expeditions into Devotion***
by Sonja Livingston

“Livingston’s invitation to her expeditions is pitch perfect. She is skilled at laughing at herself, gently poking fun at the tradition that she’s returning to with new eyes, and drawing us toward the mystery that ultimately cannot be spoken.”—Amy Frykholm, *Christian Century*

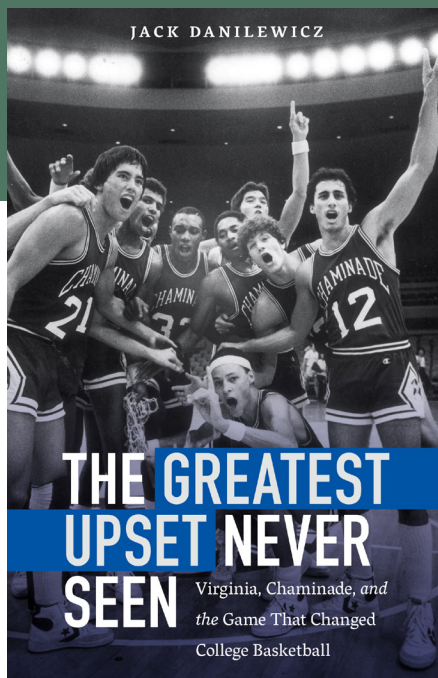
“As Livingston moves through the pews of her memory and her present, the authenticity of her pursuits captivates.”—James M. Chesbro, *America Magazine*



***Borderline Citizen: Dispatches
from the Outskirts of
Nationhood*** by Robin Hemley

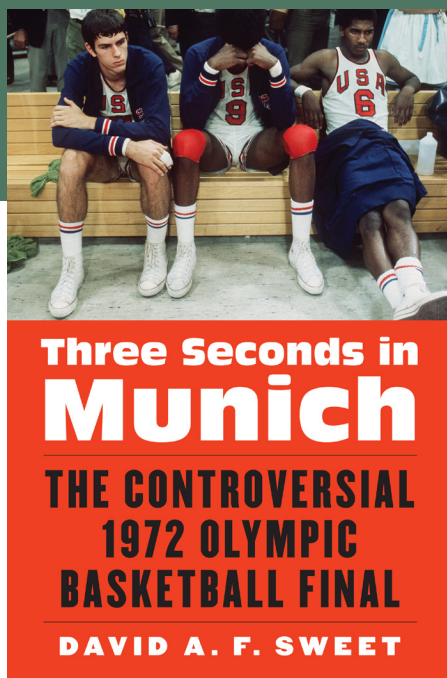
“Engaging bits about intriguing lands, all in service of trying to ‘understand the complexities of the world.’”
—*Kirkus*

“A thought-provoking work that troubles the complexities of nationhood.”—Wendy Hinman, *Foreword Reviews*



The Greatest Upset Never Seen: Virginia, Chaminade, and the Game That Changed College Basketball by Jack Danilewicz

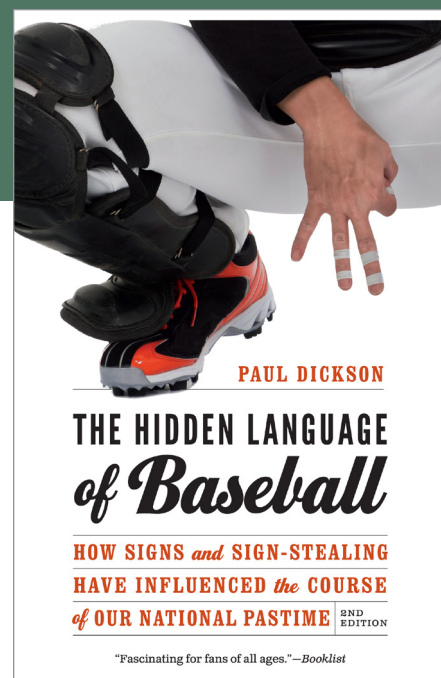
“Entertaining, carefully researched. . . Mr. Danielwicz has it right: The ‘sun has never set’ on Chaminade’s glorious win. Chances are, it never will.”—Fred Barnes, *Wall Street Journal*



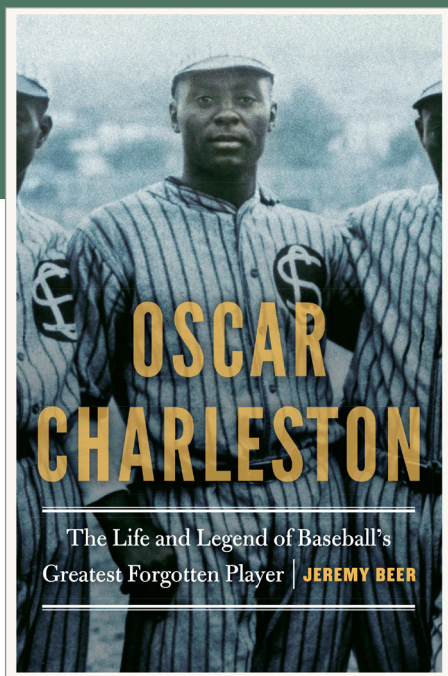
Three Seconds in Munich: The Controversial 1972 Olympic Basketball Final by David A. F. Sweet

“Sweet does a stellar job of pulling emotional strings and revealing how ‘encountering the evil of terrorism and suffering an excruciating, unjust’ loss in only a four-day span continues to affect the players.”—Lauren O’Brien, *Shelf Awareness*

The book was excerpted in the *New York Daily News* on January 19, 2020.



The Hidden Language of Baseball: How Signs and Sign-Stealing Have Influenced the Course of Our National Pastime, by Paul Dickson, received mention in a January 3, 2020, *New York Times* article about the Houston Astros’ cheating scandal.



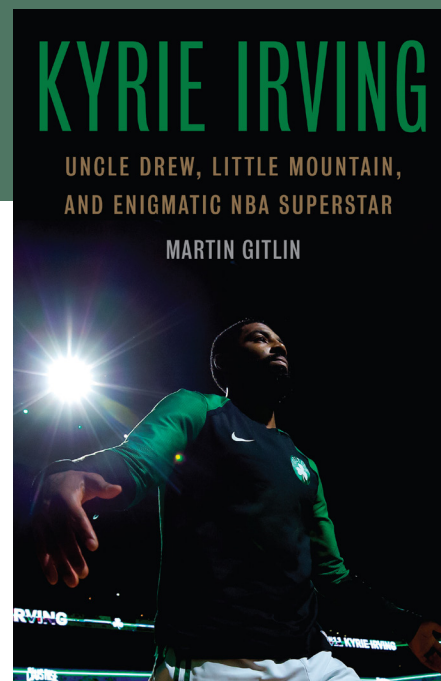
Oscar Charleston: The Life and Legend of Baseball's Greatest Forgotten Player by Jeremy Beer

“In this thorough account, Beer has created a definitive work on Charleston’s life and accomplishments. The result is a fascinating story and an important piece of sports history.”—Gus Palas, *Library Journal*, starred review

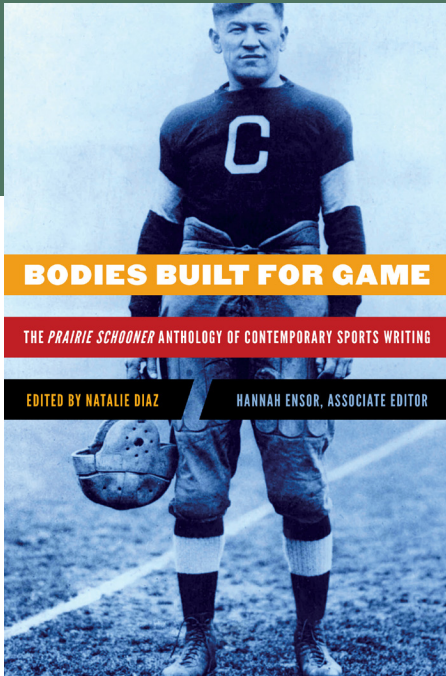
“[Jeremy Beer] has managed to construct a portrait of Charleston that clearly establishes him as a great baseball figure and a pioneer whose career paved the way for many who followed him. . . . An invaluable contribution to baseball history.”—Wes Lukowsky, *Booklist*

“Beer’s evenhanded narrative makes a convincing case for Charleston as the greatest baseball player who never played in the majors. This is a solid hit for baseball historians and fans alike.”—*Publishers Weekly*

The book was excerpted in the *New York Daily News* on November 24, 2019.

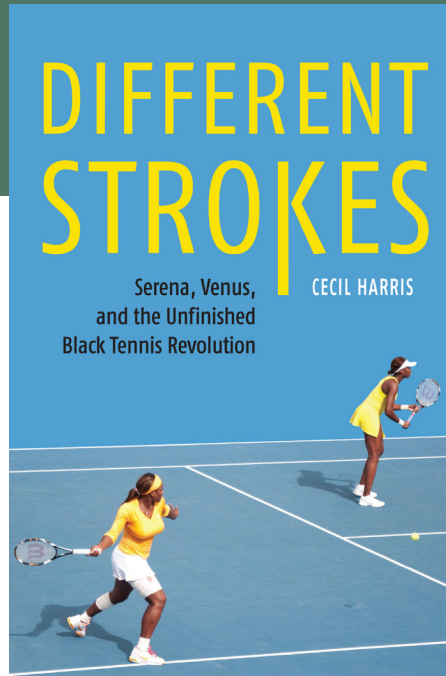


The *New York Daily News* carried an excerpt of *Kyrie Irving: Uncle Drew, Little Mountain, and Enigmatic NBA Superstar*, by Martin Gitlin, in its October 27, 2019, edition.



Bodies Built for Game: The Prairie Schooner Anthology of Contemporary Sports Writing
edited by Natalie Diaz, Hannah Ensor, associate editor

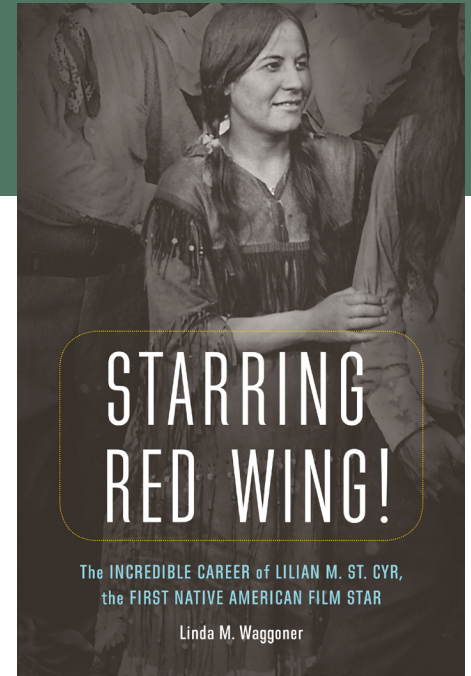
“Whether addressing a wounded sense of identity that comes with injury or illness, exploring the ways in which sport can create family, or reckoning with the violence and oppression that is built into athletics, *Bodies Built for Game* poses the question: What is sport, and is it really so benign?”—*BuzzFeed*



Different Strokes: Serena, Venus, and the Unfinished Black Tennis Revolution by Cecil Harris

“An important contribution to sports collections.”—Brenda Barrera, *Booklist*

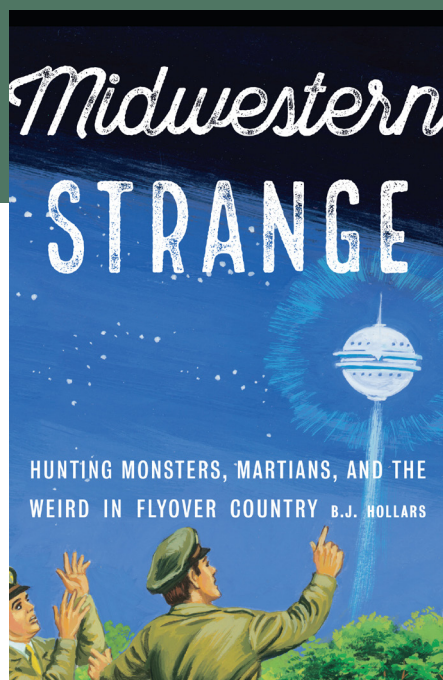
“Cecil Harris has written an exhaustive, multifaceted look at tennis through an African American lens. He expertly details how the sport—despite producing the remarkable Williams sisters—still faces struggles in overcoming its troubling history regarding black folks.”—Deron Snyder, sports columnist for the *Washington Times*



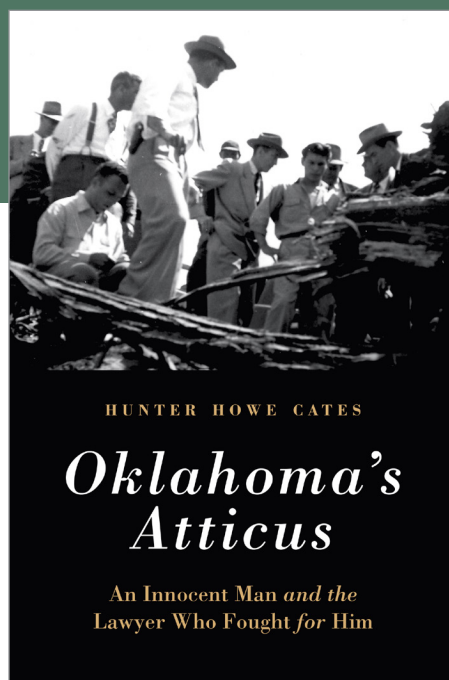
Starring Red Wing! The Incredible Career of Lilian M. St. Cyr, the First Native American Film Star by Linda M. Waggoner

“This lively biography pays long overdue tribute to a forgotten star of the silent era while celebrating Native American contributions to the motion picture industry.”—*Kirkus*

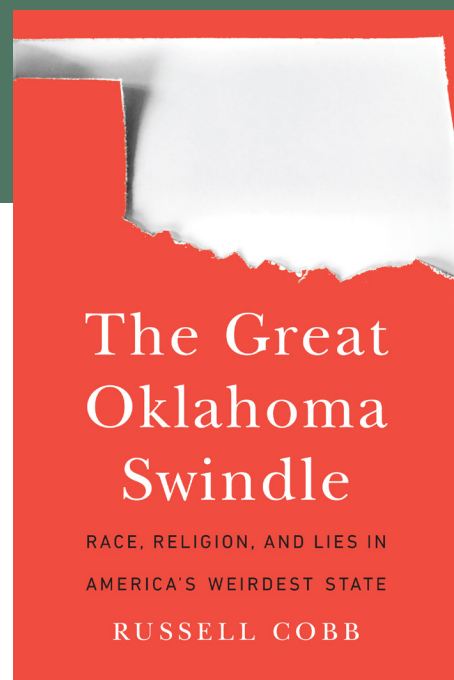
“Too few people know St. Cyr’s name—Waggoner rectifies that wrong, training a spotlight on an icon of early film who broke through barriers.”—*Library Journal*



Midwestern Strange: Hunting Monsters, Martians, and the Weird in Flyover Country and its author B.J. Hollars were featured on “Inside Edition” on October 21, 2019. The book was also selected by the Midwest Independent Booksellers Association as one of four titles on its Midwest Connections Picks for October 2019.



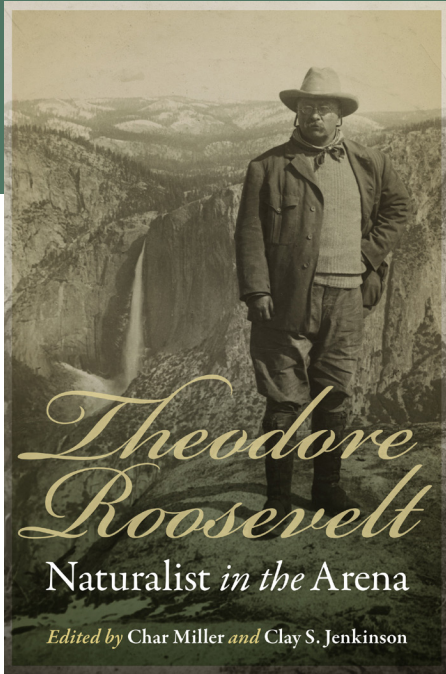
The November 17, 2019, edition of *Tulsa World* included a feature article about *Oklahoma's Atticus: An Innocent Man and the Lawyer Who Fought for Him* by Hunter Howe Cates.



The Great Oklahoma Swindle: Race, Religion, and Lies in America's Weirdest State by Russell Cobb

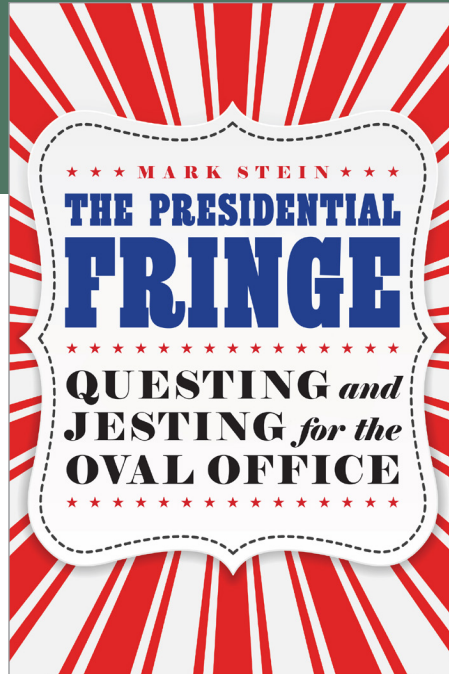
“This unflinching look at Oklahoma’s singular past helpfully fills in lesser-known aspects of the historical record.”—*Publishers Weekly*

“*The Great Oklahoma Swindle* shows that Oklahoma’s story is all-American in a compressed timeline. That Cobb stands toe to toe with his state and never blinks makes this project a compelling read.”—Matt Sutherland, *Foreword Reviews*



Theodore Roosevelt, Naturalist in the Arena edited by Char Miller and Clay S. Jenkinson

“This is a fine look at a complex man which brings attention to both his tragic demerits and valuable legacy.”
—*Publishers Weekly*, starred review

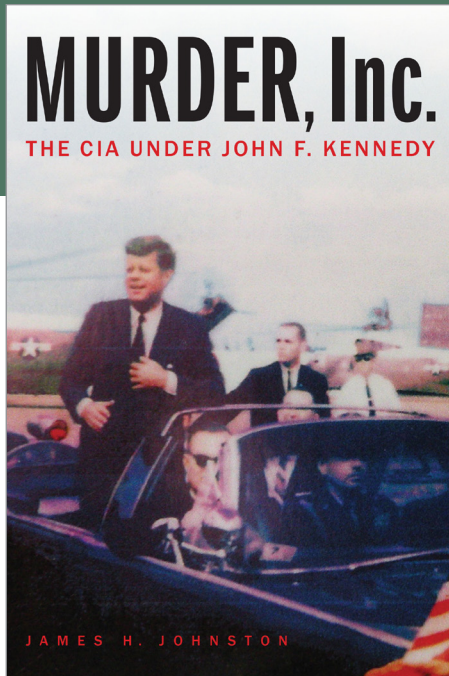


The Presidential Fringe: Questing and Jestin for the Oval Office by Mark Stein

“As Mark Stein makes clear in *The Presidential Fringe*, his amusing and strangely inspiring chronicle of little-known candidates in American history, there are presidential hopefuls who really do give their all with no hope of glory.”—Dave Shiflett, *Wall Street Journal*

“In this one-stop history of third-party presidential candidates, Stein (*Vice Capades*, 2017) details how these outliers have provided a politics-weary populace plenty of distraction, much of it comic. . . . With a clear and discerning eye, Stein writes of all these questers as he invites readers to take underlying concerns for a free and democratic society seriously.”—Mark Knoblauch, *Booklist*, starred review

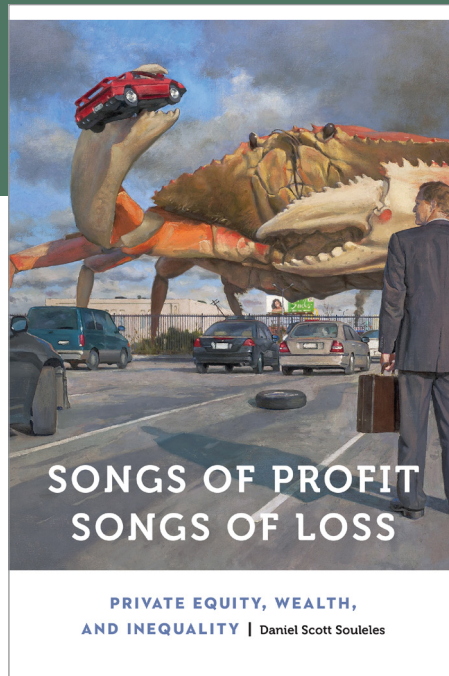
“Informative and entertaining, forcing American readers to take some glances into what at times is an unflattering mirror.”—*Kirkus*



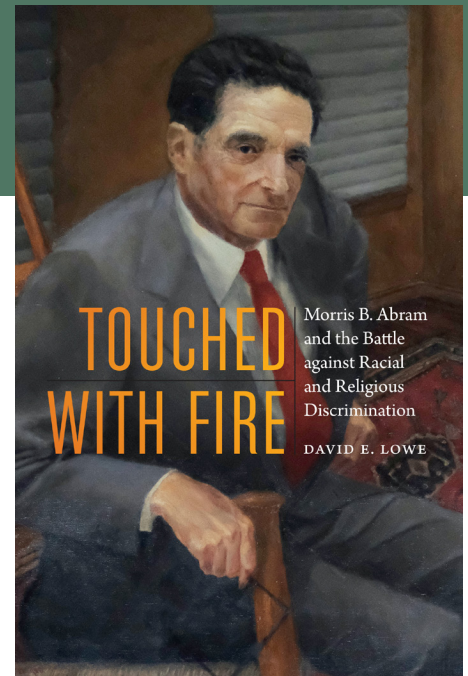
***Murder, Inc.: The CIA under John F. Kennedy* by James H. Johnston**

“We likely will never know for sure exactly what happened, but Johnston has built a firm foundation to argue that the U.S. government’s own efforts to kill Castro may have backfired in the most tragic way imaginable.”

—*Star Tribune*

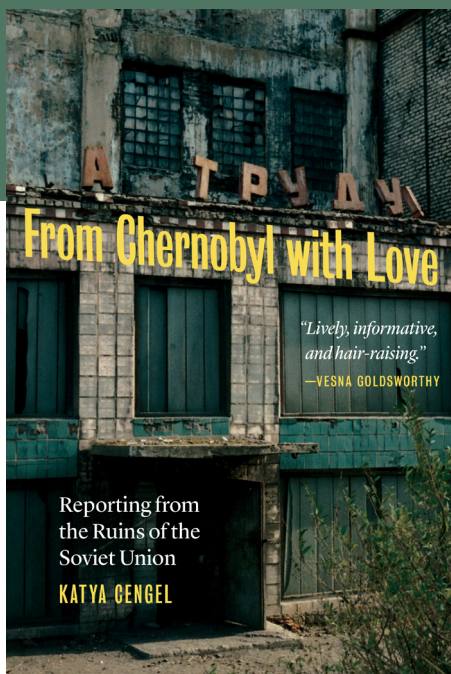


Daniel Scott Souleles was interviewed about his book *Songs of Profit, Songs of Loss: Private Equity, Wealth, and Inequality* on the Marketplace morning report, which aired on NPR’s “Morning Edition” on November 15, 2019.

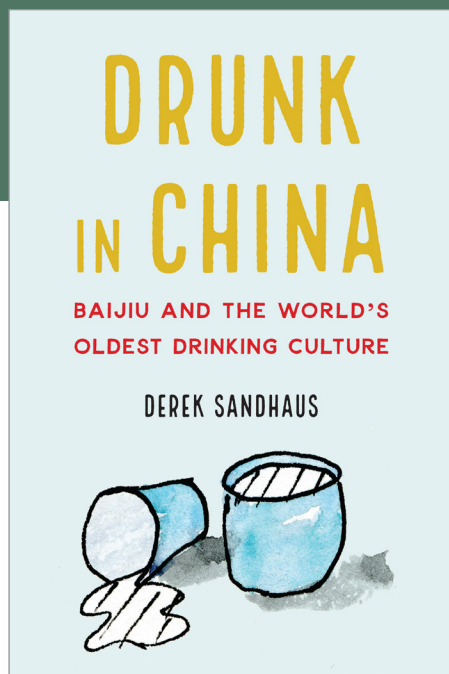


***Touched with Fire: Morris B. Abram and the Battle against Racial and Religious Discrimination* by David E. Lowe**

“An overdue celebration of a man of conviction and courage and a useful reminder that not so long ago ‘liberal’ meant something much better than ‘crazy leftist.’”—*First Things*



From Chernobyl with Love: Reporting from the Ruins of the Soviet Union by Katya Cengel was *Foreword Review's* "Book of the Day" on November 13, 2019.



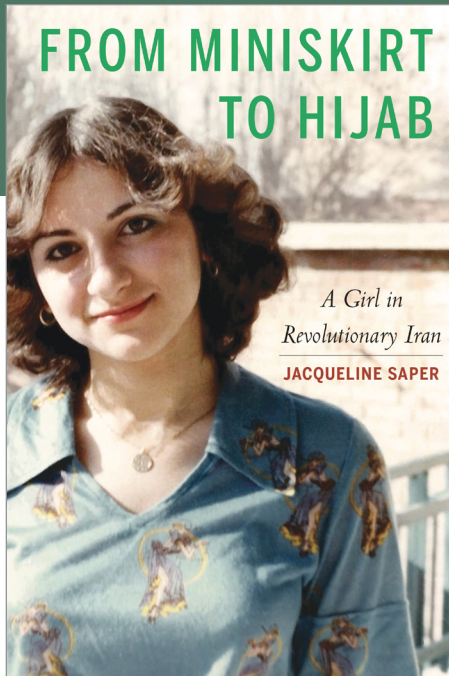
Drunk in China: Baijiu and the World's Oldest Drinking Culture by Derek Sandhaus

"Newcomers to China are usually horrified by their first encounter with *baijiu*, the fiery spirit consumed at banquets and family dinners, typically comparing it to jet fuel, paint stripper or drain cleaner. Even long-term expatriates often shudder at the stuff. So can foreigners learn to love *baijiu*? Derek Sandhaus proves it is possible. But it takes some work, as he describes in *Drunk in China*." —Hugo Restall, *Wall Street Journal*

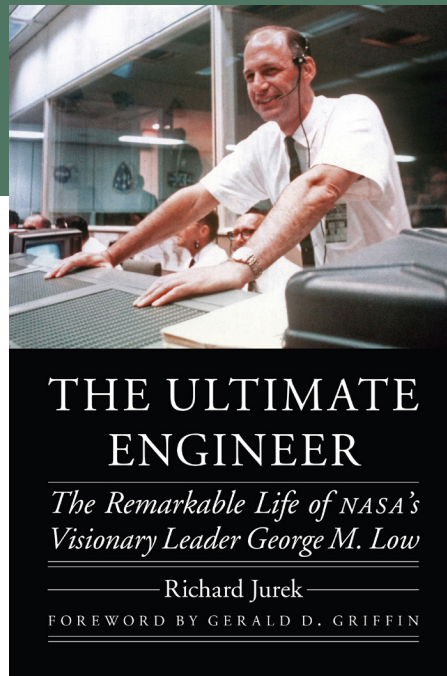
"Derek Sandhaus offers a rollicking, hard-drinking exploration of baijiu, China's national tippie." —Janet Brown, *Shelf Awareness*

"This is bound to become the go-to guide on how China's national drink is produced, consumed and marketed, charting its history, culture and effects." —Mike Cormack, *South China Morning Post*

The book was named by *Publishers Weekly* as one of "The Big Indie Books of Fall 2019" and was featured in the November 14, 2019, edition of the *Kansas City Star*.



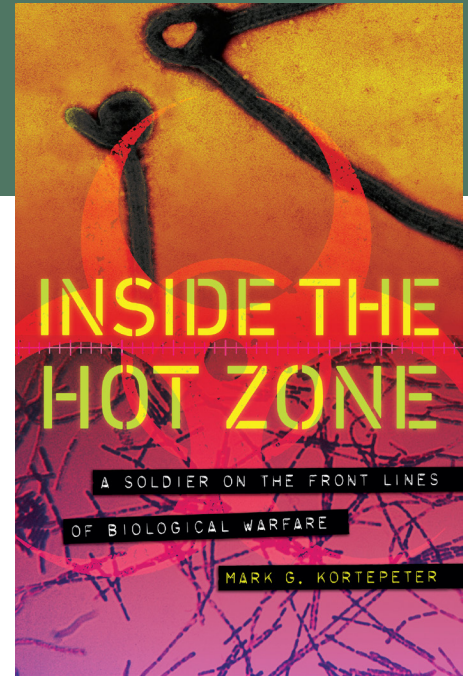
The November 3, 2019, edition of the *Chicago Sun-Times* included a feature-length article about *From Miniskirt to Hijab A Girl in Revolutionary Iran* by Jacqueline Saper.



The Ultimate Engineer: The Remarkable Life of NASA's Visionary Leader George M. Low by Richard Jurek

"The result of Jurek's extensive research and careful use of detail is a comprehensive portrait of a figure vastly greater in significance than in name recognition."—*Publishers Weekly*

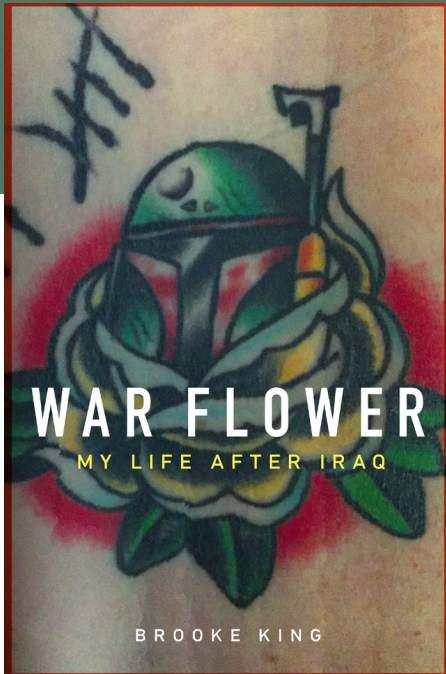
"This well-researched book is as much a history of NASA as a biography of George Low, and as such is an important contribution to the history of the agency. Jurek's detailed book will appeal to both fans and scholars of NASA and of the engineers like Low who make the agency's spaceflights work."—Sara R. Thompson, *Library Journal*



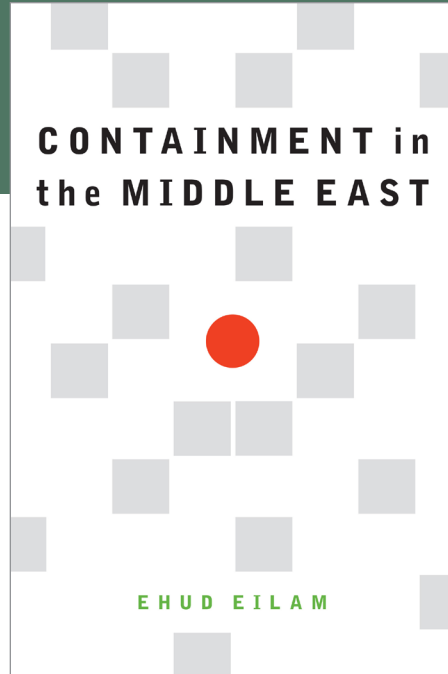
Inside the Hot Zone: A Soldier on the Front Lines of Biological Warfare by Mark G. Kortepeter

"To understand and appreciate the bravery of the scientists working to protect our nation from such bio-epidemics, as well as how the U.S. military goes about protecting its troops from such threats, *Inside the Hot Zone* is a terrifying, but indispensable guide."—Joshua Sinai, *Washington Times*

"I highly recommend this to all members of the military regardless of rank or branch of service."—Lt. Col. George Hodge, *Military Review*

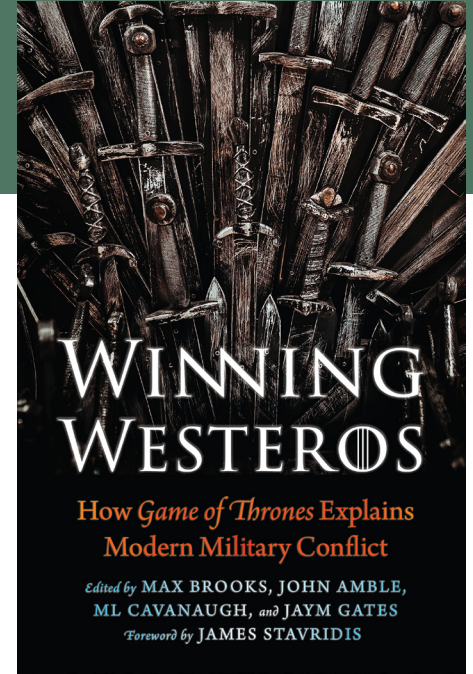


Kirkus named *War Flower: My Life after Iraq*, by Brooke King, as one of its “Best Memoirs of 2019.”



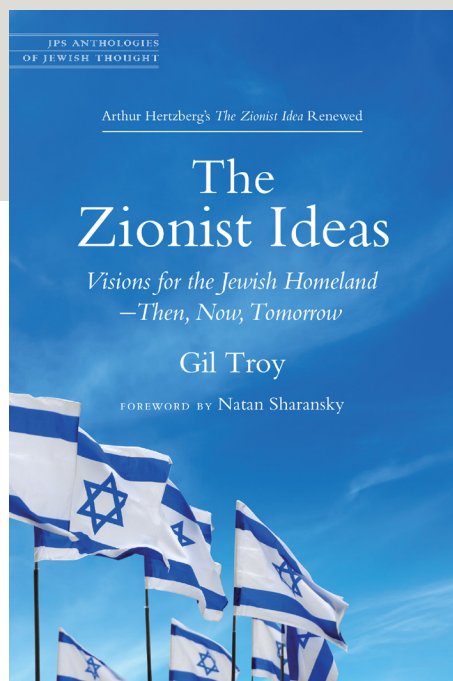
Containment in the Middle East by Ehud Eilam

“*Containment in the Middle East* may be the most comprehensive study of the Middle East and attempts by the United States, Israel, and Arab Gulf nations to contain Iran. It is a must read for policy makers and those with an interest in the Middle East.”
—Jesse McIntyre III, *Military Review*

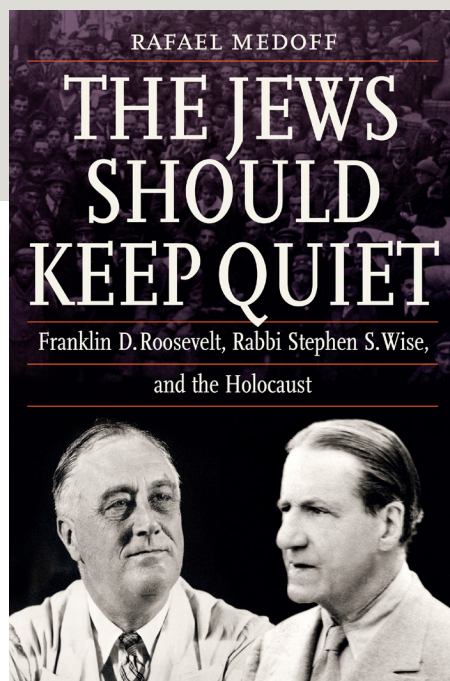


Jewish Journal recommended *Winning Westeros: How Game of Thrones Explains Modern Military Conflict*, edited by Max Brooks, John Amble, ML Cavanaugh, and Jaym Gates, as one of “15 Books Worth Adding to Your ‘End of 2019’ Reading List.”

JPS Awards and Select Publicity Highlights



The Zionist Ideas: Visions for the Jewish Homeland—Then, Now, Tomorrow, by Gil Troy, was a finalist for the National Jewish Book Award in the Anthologies and Collections category.



The Jews Should Keep Quiet: Franklin D. Roosevelt, Rabbi Stephen S. Wise, and the Holocaust by Rafael Medoff

“Readers with an interest in World War II, 20th-century political history, Jewish history, and the Holocaust should find this an incisive and insightful exploration of the leading figures of this period.”—*Library Journal*, starred review

“With meticulous detail, Medoff documents the entwined failures of an indifferent president and a sycophantic Jewish leader.”—Jerold Auerbach, *Algemeiner*

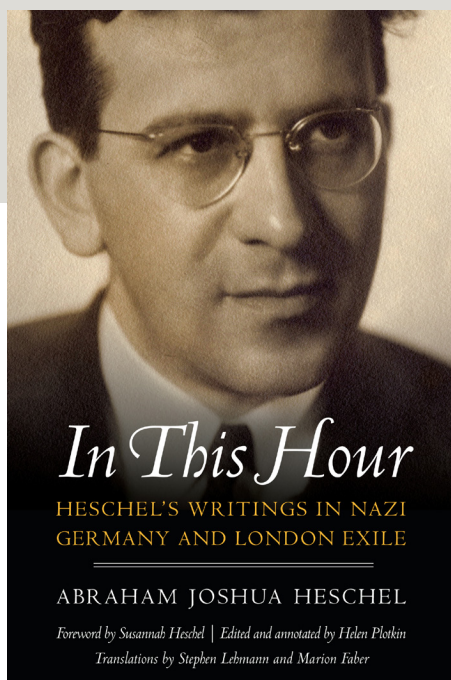
“This sad chapter in the history of American Jewry should serve as a

keen example to all in today’s Jewish community that we cannot assume that liberal, left-wing ideology is inherently pro-Jewish.”—Alan Jay Gerber, *Jewish Star*

“*The Jews Should Keep Quiet* is a historical accounting of lies, deceptions and subterfuge promulgated by Roosevelt and his administration on American Jews and their leaders together with the struggles of Wise, as a recognized Jewish leader, and the American Jewish community against the tide of growing anti-Semitism and a racially-biased president. Medoff, as a first-rate historian of the Holocaust, clearly communicates what my poorly educated immigrant grandmother instinctively recognized, ‘Roosevelt was a great president, except for the Jews.’” —Fred Reiss, *San Diego Jewish World*

“Rafael Medoff . . . has come closer than anyone before him to explaining the inexplicable.” —Sol Stern, *Tablet Magazine*

The Times of Israel on November 4, 2019, carried a lengthy article about the book.



In This Hour: Heschel's Writings in Nazi Germany and London Exile by Abraham Joshua Heschel, foreword by Susannah Heschel, edited and annotated by Helen Plotkin, translations by Stephen Lehmann and Marion Faber

"[An] admiring and detailed biography."—Adam Kirsch, *Wall Street Journal*

"The principal author of the definitive Heschel biography has distilled its two large volumes into one for a general readership. . . . Kaplan embeds Heschel's activism in his prolific writing career, affording a blazingly impressive portrait of what it means to be a public intellectual."—Ray Olson, *Booklist*, starred review

"Up until now, readers of Heschel have known relatively little about these years of uncertainty and upheaval in his life. Now, thanks to the efforts of Susannah Heschel (in whose graceful introduction we learn that Heschel helped his older friend Martin Buber work on his conversational Hebrew before he departed Germany for Jerusalem), Helen Plotkin, and the translators, a new door has been opened. . . . [*In This Hour*]

brings to the attention of the contemporary reader of English some of the least attainable yet most accessible of what Heschel wrote in that period of his life. . . . These essays represent an act of consolation through history, contemporary comment through deflection, and an affirmation of the Jewish propensity for recovery. . . . [They also strengthen] the idea that Heschel's politico-spiritual action of the 1960s is best understood in the context of these stirrings of spiritual resistance in the 1930s."—Michael Marmor, *Jewish Review of Books*

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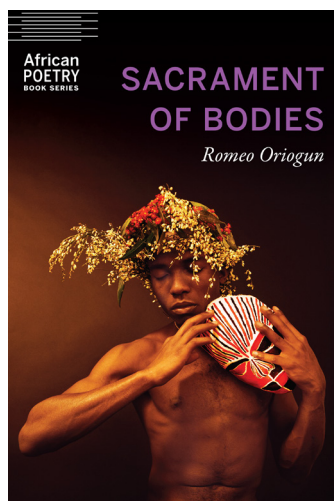
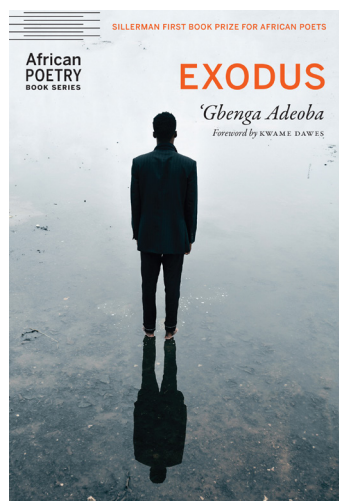
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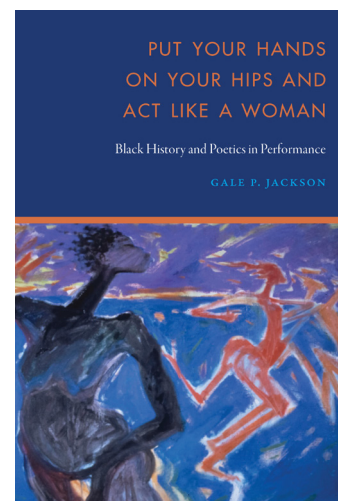
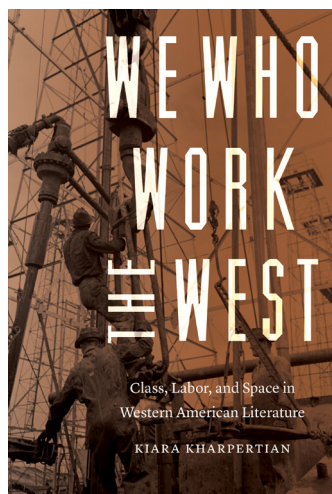
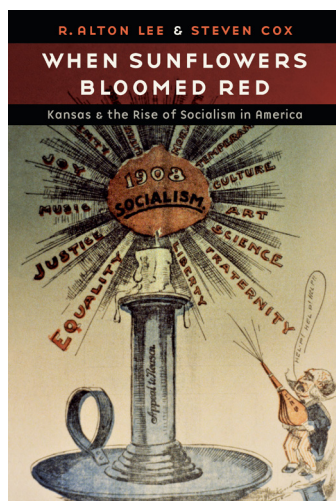
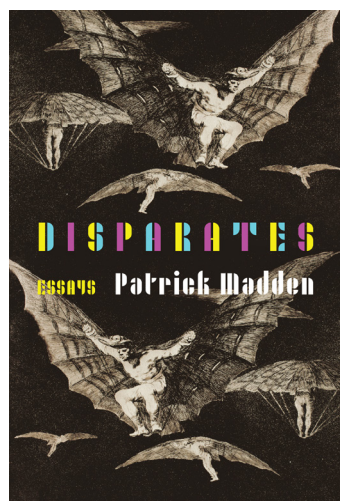
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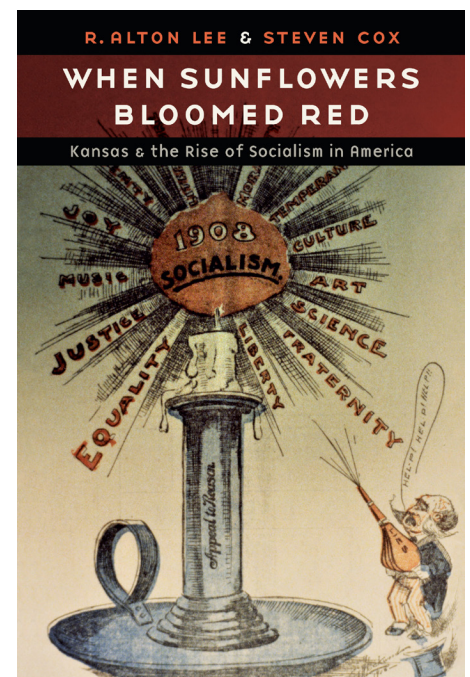
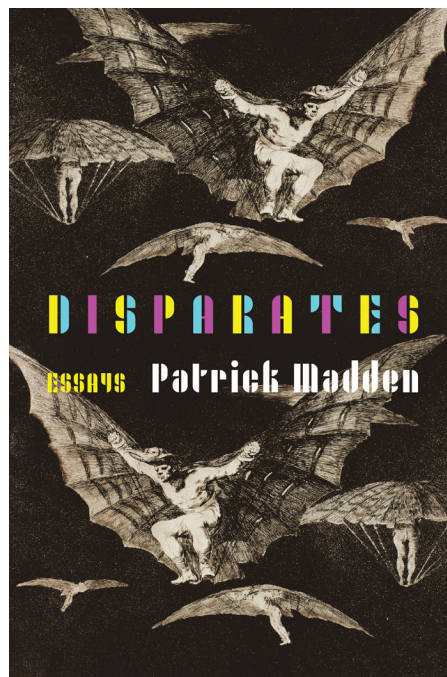
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The Friends of the University of Nebraska Press continues its commitment to support conversion of older UNP titles to electronic format so that readers may enjoy them either in print or as ebooks. In addition to that work, Friends directly underwrites the publication costs of several new books each year. In the Spring 2020 lineup, Friends is supporting two titles: *Disparates: Essays* by Patrick Madden and *When Sunflowers Bloomed Red: Kansas and the Rise of Socialism in America* by R. Alton Lee and Steven Cox.

From now through September 2020, all new and renewing Friends members will receive a copy of this year's Friends Presentation Volume, *Oklahoma's Atticus: An Innocent Man and the Lawyer Who Fought for Him* by Hunter Howe Cates. Join today and support great reading from Nebraska!



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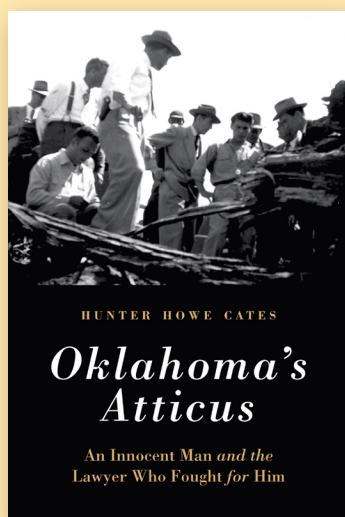
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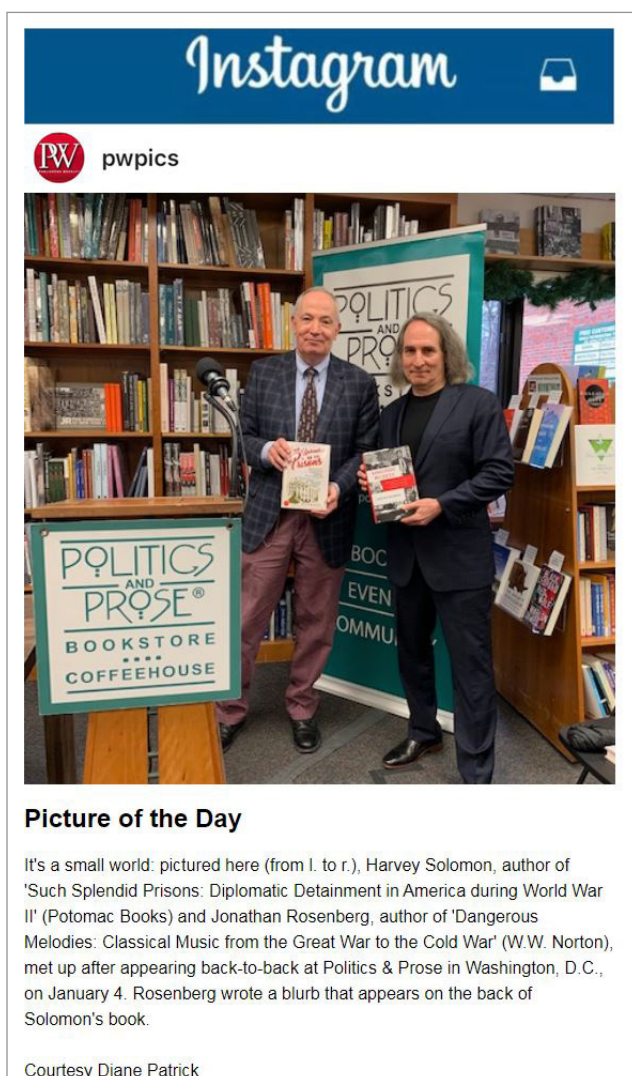
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Potomac Authors Featured at Influential D.C. Bookstore



Award-winning independent bookstore Politics & Prose in Washington DC hosted two UNP authors on consecutive days in January. The bookstore is well-known for hosting major author events and has a reputation for its astute audiences.

On Saturday, January 4, Harvey Solomon read from and discussed his new Potomac book *Such Splendid Prisons*. Here, Solomon is pictured with Jonathan Rosenberg, author of *Dangerous Melodies*, who provided a pre-publication blurb for Solomon's book and, coincidentally, had a book event on the same day at Politics & Prose. *Publishers Weekly* highlighted this photo in their daily newsletter on January 9.

On Sunday, January 5, David Lowe led a discussion about his new Potomac book, *Touched with Fire: Morris B. Abram and the Battle against Racial and Religious Discrimination*, which has since won the National Jewish Book Award for Biography.

