

2015

## Booklover--Asturias

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### Recommended Citation

Jacobs, Donna (2015) "Booklover--Asturias," *Against the Grain*: Vol. 27: Iss. 6, Article 26.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7771/2380-176X.7239>

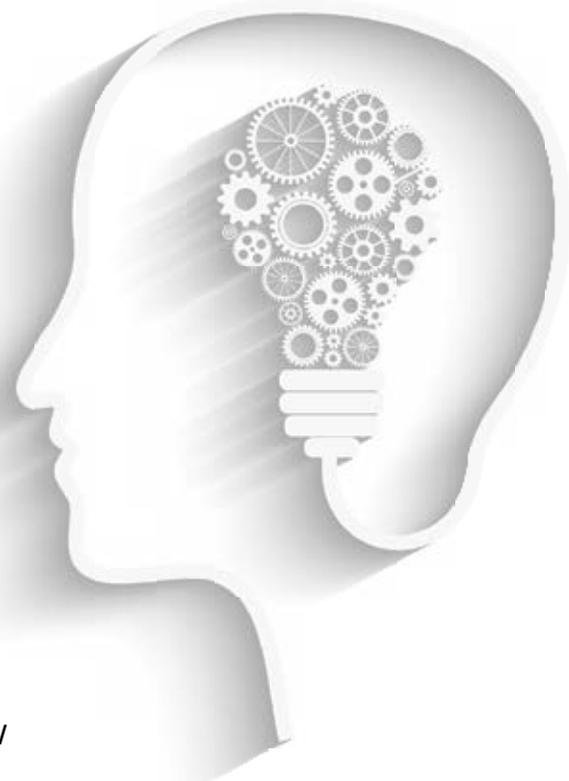
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## Book Reviews from page 36

The volume concludes with an essay on “Digital Convergence” by **Dalbello**. It is an exceptionally clear survey of the history of modern information technology, concluding with thoughtful subsections regarding various topics of interest to librarians since 2005. In keeping with the volume’s focus, the perspective is that of Western libraries, but deals, too, with the impact of increasing globalization on the management of information. This need for an expanding global purview for all libraries is particularly well-stated in the “Epilogue” to the last chapter, describing the modern Egyptian Bibliotheca Alexandrina’s online presence as “an active ‘third place’ offering a social space for cultural dialogue.” The chapter ties the modern library world well to the ever-present tensions described in the introduction.

This volume will serve students and scholars well as a reference for the modern history of libraries in the West, and may also be useful for some courses in library and information science, possibly even as a textbook. I highly recommend it, too, for librarians interested in the history of their profession. It is a valuable addition to the literature. 🌱

## Booklover — Asturias

Column Editor: **Donna Jacobs** (Retired, Medical University of South Carolina, Charleston, SC 29425) <[donna.jacobs55@gmail.com](mailto:donna.jacobs55@gmail.com)>

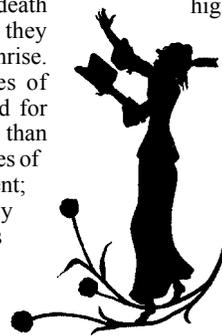
“The Zany fled through the narrow twisting streets of the suburbs, but his frantic cries disturbed neither the calm of the sky nor the sleep of the inhabitants, who were as alike one another in their simulation of death as they would be different when they resumed the struggle for life at sunrise. Some lacked the bare necessities of life and were forced to work hard for their daily bread, others got more than enough from the privileged industries of idleness: as friends of the President; owners of house-property (forty or fifty houses); money-lenders at nine, nine-and-a-half and ten percent a month; officials holding seven or eight different public posts; exploiters of concessions, pensions, professional qualifications, gambling hells, cock-pits, Indians, brandy distilleries, brothels, bars and subsidised (sic) newspapers.

The blood-red juice of dawn was staining the edges of the funnel of mountains encircling the town, as it lay like a crust of scurf in the plain. The streets were tunnels of shadows, through which the earliest workmen were setting out like phantoms in the emptiness of

a world that was created anew every morning; they were followed a few hours later by office workers, clerks and students; and at about eleven, when the sun was already

high, by important gentlemen walking off their breakfasts and getting up an appetite for lunch, or going to see some influential friend, to get him to join in the purchase of the arrears of starving schoolmasters’ salaries at half price. The streets still lay deep in the shadow when their silence was broken by the rustle of the starched skirts of some townswoman, working without respite — as swine-herd, milk-woman, street-hawker or offal-seller — to keep her family alive, or up early to

do her chores; then, when the light paled to a rosy white like a begonia flower, there would be the pattering footsteps of some thin little typist, despised by the grand ladies who waited till the sun was already hot before they left their bedrooms, stretched their legs in the passages, told their dreams to the servants, criticised (sic) the passers-by, fondled the cat, read the



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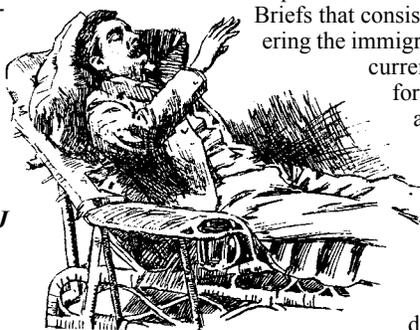
## From the Reference Desk

newspaper or admired themselves in the looking-glass.”

These opening two paragraphs of Chapter III — “The Flight of the Zany” from **Miguel Ángel Asturias’ *El Señor Presidente*** is a perfect illustration of why I study word craft, admire word craft, and particularly the word craft involved with the surreal imagination of Latin American authors. Once again, the translator is inspiring. **Frances Partridge** provided the English version of **Asturias’** Spanish word craft. This novel is centered around the influence of a dictator on the people of an unnamed Latin American country. **Asturias** was a native of Guatemala and though he never identified his country in the story, the character of “Presidente” exhibits similarities to **Manuel Estrada Cabrera**, who reigned from 1898-1920 in Guatemala.

**Miguel Ángel Asturias** was born in Guatemala City, Guatemala in 1899, and died in Madrid, Spain in 1974. In between he traveled extensively; studied abroad; worked as a journalist, novelist, playwright and poet; was elected to the Congress; served as the Guatemalan ambassador to France and was awarded the **Nobel Prize in Literature** in 1954 “for his vivid literary achievement, deep-rooted in the national traits and traditions of Indian peoples of Latin America.” **Asturias’** biographical information includes discussions on the novel *El Señor Presidente*. The critically acclaimed work was finished in 1933 but it took until 1946 for it to be published and released privately in Mexico. He penned the work while living in exile in Paris. The influence of the Surrealist movement, his passion for his country, the influence of the Mayan culture, and his concerns about life under a dictator all provided the rich material for this novel. 🐼

**Sidebar reflection:** *There is a developing awareness from my goal of reading one work from each of the Nobel Laureates in Literature. Very tough, often difficult, sometimes minute, and many times intense thought provoking subjects and realities are presented to the reader with such beauty that sometimes a few sentences go by before the joy of the word craft meets the ugliness of the subject and the reader is left with his awareness and thoughts. — DJ*



by **Tom Gilson** (Associate Editor, *Against the Grain*, and Head of Reference Emeritus, College of Charleston, Charleston, SC 29401) <gilson@cofc.edu>

***Issues in U.S. Immigration*** (2015, 978-1-61925-708-5; \$295) is a second edition of a set originally published in 2006 by **Salem Press**. Once again edited by **Carl L. Bankston III** and **Danielle Hidalgo** of **Tulane University**, this updated two-volume set deals with a subject that seems to be perennially in the news. Consisting of 215 essays, this reference attempts to supply both historical context for a recurring theme in the American story as well as discussion of the contemporary issues that make it relevant today.

As is typical of **Salem Press** publications each entry follows a similar structure starting with a definition of the topic, a list of the issues related to the topic, its overall significance followed by a discussion of relevant background and salient facts. Many of the essays deal with specific immigrant groups ranging from the earlier European immigrants like the Irish, German, and Italian to the more recent arrivals like the Hmong, Nigerian, Haitian, and Pakistani. Of course, there are also numerous entries that cover a variety of subjects from border control to nativism and family issues to racism as well as entries that discuss specific court cases, law enforcement concerns and demographics. As such, specific articles cover topics as diverse as bilingual education, citizenship, the DREAM act, European immigrant literature, Haitian boat people, international adoptions, machine politics, refugee fatigue, and undocumented workers.

Admittedly, in many ways ***Issues in U.S. Immigration*** is a compilation. As the editors acknowledge, a number of the essays have been drawn from other **Salem Press** publications but have been updated for this new edition as necessary. However, 75 of the entries are new to this set as is a 100 page, 41 table section of immigration statistics from the Department of Homeland Security. The essays are written in a style that is accessible to high school students as well as undergraduates while also appealing to the interested layman. The entries are concise and factual ranging in length according to topic relevance. Each has a useful bibliography and “see also” references while a number of black and white illustrations and photos complement the overall text. Access to specific subjects is provided by an alphabetical list of contents, a subject index and a detailed Category Index of Topics that list entries under one or more of 37 categories. Value-added features include a historic timeline and the 100 pages of statistics mentioned above, not to mention a separate section called U.S. State

Briefs that consists of entries covering the immigration history and current developments for each state as well as for New York City and Washington DC. These entries also include a brief statistical profile for the state being discussed.

***Issues in U.S. Immigration*** will be a welcome addition to high school and undergraduate collections as well as some public libraries where immigration is a topic of interest. Both upper level high school students and undergraduates will find it valuable as a background source on key issues as well as a useful tool for research paper topic selection. Lay readers will appreciate its brief and fact driven approach when becoming more familiar with topics of personal concern.

***Hispanic American Leadership: A Concise Reference Guide*** (2015, 978-0990730026, \$130) is another title in the leadership series recently published by **Mission Bell Media**. Edited by **Victor Rodriguez** of the department of Chicano and Latino Studies at California State, this book attempts to “provide accessible and accurate information about leadership issues and cultural competency related to Hispanic-Americans.”

As one examines this volume it becomes obvious that like the other titles in the series, it is not simply a how-to-manual on developing leadership skills. Rather, it is a reference that focuses on leadership issues and concerns as reflected in the Hispanic American experience. Admittedly, there are articles on topics directly related to leadership like those covering education for leadership, cultural diversity and leadership, and leadership in business. However, many of the articles treat broader topics that touch on leadership issues within the Hispanic American community, including those on assimilation and acculturation, the glass ceiling, stereotypes about Hispanic Americans, racial and ethnic discrimination and entrepreneurs. In addition, there are articles on numerous organizations and institutions ranging from the Catholic Church to the Lambda Theta Alpha sorority to the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund. And attesting to the diversity of the Hispanic American community itself, there are 16 entries that cover a variety of national origins and cultures from Argentinian Americans to Mexican Americans to Venezuelan Americans.

The articles are academic and informed by recent scholarship but reader-friendly and accessible offering a balance of factual description and solid analysis. As you would expect, each entry is signed and has “see also” references and a list of further readings. The volume also has a cumulative resource guide and an easy to use and well-designed general index. And, as in all of the other titles in this series, ***Hispanic American Leadership*** includes the 200-page ***Leadership Glossary*** edited by **Dr. Jeni McRay**. (This supplement has also been published separately under the title ***Leadership Glossary: Essential Terms for the 21st Century*** (2015, 978-0-9907300-0-2, \$29.95.)

***Hispanic American Leadership: A Concise Reference Guide*** is a title that should appeal to both academic and larger public libraries. It provides relevant information on a topic of growing interest in a well-designed, easy to navigate reference. It will not only fit in collections on leadership studies but should

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