



Branding Texas: Performing Culture in the Lone Star State

Leigh Clemons

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Ask anyone to name an archetypal Texan, and you're likely to get a larger-than-life character from film or television (say John Wayne's Davy Crockett or J. R. Ewing of TV's *Dallas*) or a politician with that certain swagger (think LBJ or George W. Bush). That all of these figures are white and male and bursting with self-confidence is no accident, asserts Leigh Clemons. In this thoughtful study of what makes a "Texan," she reveals how Texan identity grew out of the history—and, even more, the myth—of the heroic deeds performed by Anglo men during the Texas Revolution and the years of the Republic and how this identity is constructed and maintained by theatre and other representational practices.

Clemons looks at a wide range of venues in which "Texanness" is performed, including historic sites such as the Alamo, the battlefield at Goliad, and the San Jacinto Monument; museums such as the Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum; seasonal outdoor dramas such as *Texas!* at Palo Duro Canyon; films such as John Wayne's *The Alamo* and the IMAX's *Alamo: The Price of Freedom*; plays and TV shows such as the *Tuna* trilogy, *Dallas*, and *King of the Hill*; and the *Cavalcade of Texas* performance at the 1936 Texas Centennial. She persuasively demonstrates that these performances have created a Texan identity that has become a brand, a commodity that can be sold to the public and even manipulated for political purposes.

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