the civil rights movement across five decades enables the reader to see it as a continuum where the dissenters overlapped as they passed the baton from one generation to the next in the struggle for equality. Stefani also takes issue with the reputation of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) for gender exploitation, finding SNCC a source of empowerment and a catalyst for personal growth.

_Unlikely Dissenters_ is extensively researched. Making use of oral histories and personal and organizational manuscripts, Stefani offers definitive examples to support her analysis throughout. Particularly telling are the comparisons she draws between the women’s personal correspondence and their public statements as they came to recognize the intersections between racial, gender, and class discrimination.

The book will serve as a valuable resource for anyone studying white southern women, women’s civil rights activism, and women’s activism across race, region, and time. Stefani presents her arguments logically and persuasively, although at times the book becomes tedious in repeating its overall thesis. Nevertheless, Stefani demonstrates a grasp of southern racism and womanhood to rival that of people who lived their entire life in the South.

University of Houston

Debbie Z. Harwell


This edited collection seeks to add to the literature on the Mexican American generation by collecting biographical sketches of some of the most prominent individuals associated with Mexican American civil rights activism in the decades before the rise of the Chicano movement in the 1960s. While focusing primarily on Texas (which is certainly warranted) and the usual suspects who created and emerged from the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) and the American GI Forum, the authors brought together by Anthony Quiroz provide a good introduction to important individuals and their efforts to achieve full democratic rights for Mexican Americans.

None of the individuals profiled in this collection are surprising or out of place. Almost all came from Texas, and most worked with either LULAC or the American GI Forum (with a few notable and important exceptions). Still, clear similarities emerge across the chapters that highlight the broad outlines of the historiography of the Mexican American generation. Emilio Zamora uses the autobiographical writings of José de la Luz Sáenz to draw out the searing reality of anti-Mexican racism and the demands for full citizenship rights that animated the leadership of LULAC, seen most clearly in Sáenz’ s account of serving in World War I. Similar perspectives emerge from Carl Allsup’s essay on Héctor Pérez García, Patrick J. Carroll’s essay on the Félix Longoria controversy, and Thomas H. Kreneck’s sketch of John J. Herrera. While these essays do not break any new historiographical ground in covering the major figures and events of the institutional Mexican American civil rights movement, they do implicitly point toward the commonality of effort.
and perspective of these individuals grouped together by historians into the so-called Mexican American generation.

Several of the essays also illustrate the growing importance of activist networks that existed alongside the institutional reach of the prominent Texas-based civil rights organizations. The essays on civil rights lawyers Gus García (by Anthony Quiroz) and Ralph Estrada (by Laura K. Muñoz) address the extended activist networks that existed among, within, and beyond LULAC and the American GI Forum. The depth and breadth of these activist networks, and their ability to move the federal government to act on demands for change, emerge even more clearly in Michelle Hall Kells’s examination of Vicente Ximenes and in Kenneth C. Burt’s essay on the career of Edward R. Roybal. Vicki L. Ruiz and Julie Leininger Pycior broaden these networks even further in their essays on the transnational labor activism of, respectively, Luisa Moreno and Ernesto Galarza. More than just individual biographies, these essays help map out the circuits of civil rights activism over several decades, fleshing out the individual stories but also contextualizing the national and international arena of their activities.

The diversity of these biographies, however, also points toward one of the common critiques of the generational model. Do Alonso S. Perales, Luisa Moreno, and Edward R. Roybal—to take just three of the individuals covered in this book—easily fit into a coherent categorization? Their politics, their goals, and their perspectives cannot easily fit into a single definitional scheme, generational or otherwise. Do we gain anything by collapsing their activities that stretched over decades and across state and national boundaries into a single generational model? Despite the introduction’s defense of the generational approach, a more critical investigation of these debates could have added to the historiographical heft of this volume, though such analysis would admittedly have been difficult to shoehorn into individual biographical sketches.

Taken together, these biographical sketches do provide a good introduction to a number of prominent Mexican American officials and activists, even if the generational schema itself is only vaguely explained and rarely interrogated as a heuristic. To be fair, though, that was not the intention of this collection. Instead, Quiroz and the other authors investigate these individuals as entry points into the exploration of the history of Mexican American activism in the decades before the 1960s. They succeed in producing a sympathetic but rigorous collection of individual histories that could be used to introduce these issues to students, especially at the undergraduate level.

Old Dominion University

John Weber


Histories concerning space flight and the American quest to reach the moon tend to focus on the technological and engineering achievements that propelled the Mercury, Gemini, and Apollo programs. Overlooked are the backstories behind the National Aeronautics and Space Administration’s