

Texas-type humor found only in Texas

By JAMIE AITKEN

On the cover of this magazine I was given a poem about a good old boy, a Texan, who set his horse up playing black jack with bar girls. The horse "was pretty good, held the cards with his hooves real articulate like and could add fastern most humans recall."

There's just something about the straight-faced drawl of Texas humor that is amiss anywhere else in the world. The homespun quality of Texas literature, itself, is the sole product of the fellows who

Review

make up the good old boys of this state. In many ways backward, but in others very progressive, the subculture of the good old boy interuses the entire range of Texas. The name of the magazine I was given is "Quartet", and its special emphasis lies in Texas.

"It's true what you say. I haven't tried long enough, heart hot with knives, to find you Texas, your fretful luck, your miles and miles of blundering love, your blushing

middle-aged brides, the wily stares slow chewing, your very own Jesus."
— Leonard Neufeldt, "Desire"

"Quartet" operates on the Texas A&M University campus and is owned and published by English professor Dr. Richard H. Costa. The publication appears quarterly but the current issue is a 100-page combination of summer, fall and winter, 1975-1976.

Costa bought the magazine while a doctoral student at Purdue University in 1968. Before moving to Texas, Costa published "Quartet" at Syracuse University in New York. The magazine is listed as a nonprofit, tax-exempt literary quarterly and is supported by gifts, grants and subscriptions to various libraries, including Oxford University, Cambridge University and the British Museum.

"Quartet" may be considered a library in itself, containing works that encompass the extremes of Texas culture: humor, tragedy, determination, resignation and understanding. It is a synopsis of Texas, written by Texans; a literary analysis of what makes Texas something more than just another state in the union.

"Bullriders drop hard and fast on a ton of exploding brute like straw men punchdrunk with flopping legs and arms thrown high." — Terri Johnson, "Rodeo"

Chosen for presentation in "Quartet" are 38 poems and seven short stories selected from more than 30,000 manuscripts submitted since 1974. Featured writers and artists include Cynthia Thornton, a 21-year-old A&M senior; Terri Johnson and Eva Jane Johnson, both graduate students in English. Also included in the publication are A&M faculty members Dr. Paul Christensen and Dr. Jack Hardie, poetry; and Dr. Jerome Loving, review.

Since its beginning at Purdue in 1961, "Quartet" has sought national content. With the Texas Writers' Special issue, Costa plans a more regional magazine. The majority of works in the current issue are just that. Costa's only qualification for authors was a period of Texas residency.

"Aside from two or three, the writers in this issue are just beginning to have their work published," Costa said. "But I believe in a few years many of them will be heard from."

"We raced around to the Baptists' parking area and gave each member of their team and several of their rooters a victory balloon, as a sign of our good will and best wishes... then waved at our conquerors as they climbed into their cars and buses and headed back to Waco with their collection of rapidly deflating condoms." — Ernest W. Speed, Jr.; "The Coach Who Didn't Teach Civics"

Included in the Texas issue, which is carried by the A&M Bookstore, are a small number of works written by non-Texans, but encompassing similar themes.

The shooting spree of Charles Whitman from the tower at the University of Texas 10 years ago is explored by James R. Giles in a documentary-fictional short story. At the other end of the spectrum is Ernest W. Speed's "The Coach Who Didn't Teach Civics". Of Speed's piece, Costa claims, "Your roommate will probably kick you out of your room for laughing so hard." My roommate read it and laughed until the neighbors banged the walls. He kept reading, and I haven't seen my copy of "Quartet" for two days.

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A&M oil fund contains \$800,000

Texas A&M has more than \$800,000 earned from the sale of oil and gas leases in two funds which the General Land Office in Austin maintains.

James A. Amis, the system attorney for Texas A&M, explained Wednesday how the oil and gas leases deeded to the University are handled.


Leases are not offered for sale until someone (usually an oil company representative) asks for it. If the Board of Regents, which has jurisdiction over the leases, decides to sell, a public auction is held.

The person who requested the sale must submit a cashier's check to guarantee the minimum bid. This bid must cover the cost of advertising the public auction. Advertisements are then placed in at least two general circulation newspapers and one oil trade magazine, usually "The Oil and Gas Journal" in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

The auction is held the day preceding the next meeting of the Board of Regents. Bids are made orally. Amis said that sometimes the bidding gets quite spirited. Several years ago, the Board required a minimum bid of five dollars on a particular lease. It seemed to be a promising lease and it sold, after much bidding, for nearly \$100.

If the person who originally requested the sale does not win the bidding, his check for the advertising is returned to him, and the cost of the advertising is deducted from the proceeds of the sale. If he does win, he submits a check for the difference. The Board retains the right to reject any bids.

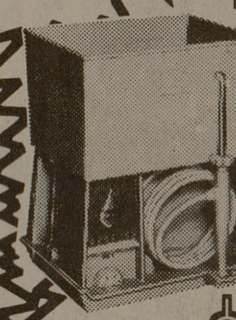
— Richard Chamberlain



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