



Sleuthing the Alamo: Davy Crockett's Last Stand and Other Mysteries of the Texas Revolution (New Narratives in American History)

By James E. Crisp

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In *Sleuthing the Alamo*, historian James E. Crisp draws back the curtain on years of mythmaking to reveal some surprising truths about the Texas Revolution--truths often obscured by both racism and "political correctness," as history has been hijacked by combatants in the culture wars of the past two centuries. Beginning with a very personal prologue recalling both the pride and the prejudices that he encountered in the Texas of his youth, Crisp traces his path to the discovery of documents distorted, censored, and ignored--documents which reveal long-silenced voices from the Texan past. In each of four chapters focusing on specific documentary "finds," Crisp uncovers the clues that led to these archival discoveries. Along the way, the cast of characters expands to include: a prominent historian who tried to walk away from his first book; an unlikely teenaged "speechwriter" for General Sam Houston; three eyewitnesses to the death of Davy Crockett at the Alamo; a desperate inmate of Mexico City's Inquisition Prison, whose scribbled memoir of the war in Texas is now listed in the *Guinness Book of World Records*; and the stealthy slasher of the most famous historical painting in Texas. In his afterword, Crisp explores the evidence behind the mythic "Yellow Rose of Texas" and examines some of the powerful forces at work in silencing the very voices from the past that we most need to hear today. Here then is an engaging first-person account of historical detective work, illuminating the methods of the serious historian--and the motives of those who prefer glorious myth to unflattering truth.

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Editorial Review

Review

"Crisp packs plenty into his little 197-page book."--*Greensboro Record*

"An incredibly engrossing book that reveals the truth behind the Alamo myth. Crisp, a master historian, relates how he researched that truth and in doing so gives us a model of how to let the legend remain just that while revealing historical truth."--*Gannett Newswire*

"This well-written, surprisingly intimate book is indispensable for all who would truly remember the Alamo.... 'Sleuthing the Alamo' details Crisp's adventures, including chasing down documents, checking translations and grilling a handwriting analyst.... 'Sleuthing the Alamo' is at least as intriguing for the insight it gives into the historian's craft and the ease with which mythology can prevail over the straight story."--Sam Hodges, *Charlotte Observer*

"A fine place to start if your Alamo knowledge is a little rusty..... A first-person account of one historian's detective work. Moreover, the author is an engaging personality--nothing stuffy about him--and his conversational tone here is convincing and reassuring."--*San Antonio Express-News*

"An illuminating account of Crisp's attempt to get to the bottom of not only de la Peas allegations but also the frenetic emotional response to them."--*Virginian-Pilot & Ledger Star*

"Others have written history as detective tale, but none more engagingly or instructively than James Crisp. He nails both the story of the Alamo and the story behind the story. The former is grand tragedy, the latter subtle mystery, and each, in Crisp's telling, is terrific."--H. W. Brands, author of *Lone Star Nation*

"Rarely has a historian uncovered such fabulous mysteries, worked so tenaciously to solve them, or told of his pursuits with such clarity and grace. *Sleuthing the Alamo* is as absorbing as the best fictional detective stories, but it is true!"--David J. Weber, author of *The Mexican Frontier* and other award-winning books on southwestern America

"Jim Crisp takes us on an intriguing and fascinating historical adventure, bringing his inquiring intellect to bear on such tried and true topics as Sam Houston, racism and the Texas Revolution, the de la Peña diary,

and David Crockett's death. Weaving this complex historical narrative into a wide-ranging discussion of cultural change in Texas over more than a century and a half, Crisp shows us how little we know about such familiar events and personalities and suggests challenging implications for his new findings." --Ron Tyler, Texas State Historical Association, University of Texas at Austin

"Far more than a tour de force of Texas history, Crisp's narrative is eloquent, sophisticated and totally engrossing. It is a superb example of how to practice history, as well as a must-read for all Americans interested in the significance of race and culture in our past and present." --Linda K. Salvucci, Trinity University

"A fascinating glimpse into the intensely personal work of a dedicated historian. This is not just another book about the Alamo. Rather, it is a journey into the nitty-gritty world of historical research, set against the backdrop of one of our most mythologized episodes." --Gregg Cantrell, Texas Christian University

"As a case study, this engaging book should find a place in undergraduate libraries, but it is also recommended for any library with an interest in the history of Texas and the West."--*Library Journal* (starred review)

About the Author

James E. Crisp is Associate Professor and Assistant Head in the Department of History at North Carolina State University.

Users Review

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Alan Williams:

As people who live in typically the modest era should be change about what going on or information even knowledge to make all of them keep up with the era which is always change and move ahead. Some of you maybe can update themselves by reading books. It is a good choice to suit your needs but the problems coming to a person is you don't know what kind you should start with. This Sleuthing the Alamo: Davy Crockett's Last Stand and Other Mysteries of the Texas Revolution (New Narratives in American History) is our recommendation to help you keep up with the world. Why, because book serves what you want and want in this era.

Joshua Canfield:

This book untitled Sleuthing the Alamo: Davy Crockett's Last Stand and Other Mysteries of the Texas Revolution (New Narratives in American History) to be one of several books which best seller in this year,

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