

***Albuquerque Remembered.* By Howard Bryan. (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 2006. Paperback, Pp. 296, \$19.95)**

Although New Mexico is among the most recent states admitted to the Union, it has a rich history that predates the earliest New England colonial settlements. In 2006, the state's largest town, Albuquerque, celebrated its 300th anniversary. In his detailed history of the Duke City, *Albuquerque Remembered*, Howard Bryan leads the reader through the 400 years of tumultuous events that shaped the city now adorning the Rio Grande. In a way that only a newspaper reporter of forty-two years can convey, Bryan tells Albuquerque's many stories through the personalities and events that make the city all that it is today.

Present-day New Mexico is heralded for its cultural diversity; a direct result of the chapters of history through which the pueblos, then the territory, and now the state have traveled. Bryan's lineage begins in the mid 16th Century, when Spanish conquistador Francisco Vasquez de Coronado first explored the Native American civilizations residing in the American Southwest, in search of Cibola: the Seven Cities of Gold. Amid a series of brutal racial wars between the Spaniards and the native Pueblo Indians, European culture took root in Santa Fe, and later Albuquerque, spread by the work of Catholic missionaries. As power changed hands, Spanish flags were replaced with the Star-Spangled Banner, and Catholic missionaries gave way to the racy cultures of the Wild West. Through wealthy merchants and civic-minded benefactors, Albuquerque became an economic engine for the state and the Southwest, and grew into the cultural center it is today.

Bryan's journalistic style provides for a detailed, unbiased perspective of the rough history of New Mexico and Albuquerque. His book is an important account of the unique and multi-faceted culture of the American Southwest. The photos Bryan includes save the reader a trip to the Albuquerque Museum and tell intricate stories about the economic activities and civic leaders that transformed Albuquerque from a Spanish villa, to an American railroad town, to its present day cultural center. Although some accounts seem superfluous, Bryan pulls the multitude of stories and events together to provide a larger picture of Albuquerque's evolution. Bryan's descriptions explain many of the Duke City's prized attributes, including the introduction of hot air ballooning by Park Van Tassel, the development of a city around a railroad station, and, of course, the events of the annual state fair (which began as a territorial fair).

Albuquerque, Remembered gives residents, and tourists alike, a context with which to explore the current city. Traces of New Mexico's varied ancestral influences can be found today in the pueblos surrounding Albuquerque, in Albuquerque's Old Town, and at the annual International Balloon Fiesta. The city is inviting and intriguing, but before you visit, read the story behind the city.

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