

New & Noteworthy Books and Reports: January 2021

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1. Essentials of Texas Firearms Law

By Massad F. Ayoob

Reviews the use of firearms and the constitutionally protected rights of gun owners in Texas. Details both federal and Texas firearms laws, licensing practices, federal court cases revolving around the Second Amendment, civil liability, and places where firearms are prohibited.

State Bar of Texas, 2020, 333 pages

363.33 ES74F 2020

2. Gerrymandering Texas

By Steve Bickerstaff

Recounts the history of redistricting and gerrymandering in the state of Texas, with emphasis on the role legislative apportionment played in political and demographic power shifts across the state. Comments on key redistricting cases at the state and federal level, with some personal notes on cases worked by Steve Bickerstaff during his long career in Texas politics. Makes recommendations for redistricting Texas in 2021 and for the reduction of gerrymandering practices. Includes an extensive bibliography of Texas redistricting cases broken down by decade.

Texas Tech University Press, 2020, 247 pages

328.73073 B472G 2020

3. The Merit Myth: How Our Colleges Favor the Rich and Divide America

By Anthony P. Carnevale

Argues there are extreme inequities in American higher education and that the policies of elite colleges are contributing to the educational divide among students. Addresses bias in testing and admissions, merit-based aid, affirmative action, and how colleges are evaluated. Proposes an assortment of measures to make higher education more fair and provide academic opportunity for all students, including guaranteeing a public K-14 education.

The New Press, 2020, 302 pages

378.1 C217M 2020

4. The Starting Line: Latina/o Children, Texas schools, and National Debates on Early Education

By Robert Crosnoe

Studies a large urban school district in Texas to determine how early education programs result in varying degrees of success and failure for children from socially and economically disadvantaged environments. Focuses on the complex connections between classrooms, schools, families, and communities. Examines programs specifically serving Latinas and Latinos to discuss the broader topics of income inequality, academic opportunity, and the changing demographics of the United States.

University of Texas Press, 2020, 167 pages

371.829 C884S 2020

5. The Sum of the People: How the Census Has Shaped Nations, from the Ancient World to the Modern Age

By Andrew Whitby

Recounts the history of census taking, with an emphasis on how the collection of quantitative population data has changed the relationship between individuals and the state. Includes chapters on the misuse of population records by the Nazi regime, the connection of censuses to population control strategies, and problems caused by undercounting. Concludes with a discussion of the controversy surrounding the "citizenship question" on the 2020 U. S. census.

Basic Books, 2020, 356 pages

310.9 W581S 2020

6. Texas vs. California: A History of Their Struggle for the Future of America

By Kenneth P. Miller

Examines the rivalry between Texas and California as "the leaders of Red and Blue America," both populous and economically powerful states with oil wealth and large Latino populations. Describes how each state constructed opposing, comprehensive policy models, one progressive and the other conservative, through a focus on five areas – tax, labor, energy and environment, poverty, and social issues. Includes a brief preface on the effect of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) on the two states.

Oxford University Press, 2020, 372 pages

306.20973 M615T 2020

7. The Trillion Dollar Revolution: How the Affordable Care Act Transformed Politics, Law, and Health Care in America

By Ezekiel J. Emanuel

Compiles the opinions of academics, policy-makers, and doctors on the Affordable Care Act (ACA) ten years after its passage. Includes essays by Democrats and Republicans, as well as legal, financial, and health policy experts. Examines how the ACA has affected the three-trillion-dollar health care sector and the economy, its interaction with the courts, and its influence on American politics. Looks ahead to how the ACA may continue to impact health care reform, including the right to care and drug pricing regulation.

Public Affairs, 2020, 449 pages

368.382 EM11T 2020