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## Book Review: *American Myths, Legends, and Tall Tales: An Encyclopedia of American Folklore*

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*American Myths, Legends, and Tall Tales: An Encyclopedia of American Folklore.* Edited by Christopher R. Fee and Jeffrey B. Webb. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2016. 3 vols. \$310 (ISBN 978-1-61069-567-1). E-book (978-1-61069-568-8) available, call for pricing.

Compilations of American folklore are constantly being rewritten to reflect the increasing diversity and variety of American culture. Many readers grew up with Benjamin Botkin's classic collection *A Treasury of American Folklore* (Crown 1944), which featured a foreword written by Carl Sandburg and stories about Pecos Bill, Johnny Appleseed, Brer Rabbit and other popular myths, legends, and tall tales. Today, new legends are entering the folklore lexicon to reflect the influence of urban myths, historical events, science fiction, conspiracy theories, and mass media. This three-volume set offers a fascinating look at both traditional and newer folklore, including "Internet Hoaxes," the "John Lennon shooting," "Roswell," and "Slender Man."

Entries in the encyclopedia are arranged in alphabetical order, with a table of contents listing all entries in the front of each volume. Volume 3 contains a thorough and well-constructed subject and name index, as well as a list of editors and contributors. Each of the nearly five hundred entries gives an overview of the myth or legend, a brief bibliography, and cross references as appropriate. Special features include a brief time line of significant events in the world of folklore, transcripts of primary documents, numerous images, and sidebars from the editors offering interesting related topics. Entries cover not only individual stories, but also key people in the study and history of folklore and broad topics such as "Women in Folklore," "Fakelore," and "Racism in Urban Legends." In addition, particular emphasis is paid to cultural traditions that have received somewhat less coverage in other studies, including Asian and Pacific American, African American, Native American, and Hispanic American legends.

In addition to its well-researched and clearly written material, this set's easy-to-use indexes, table of contents and topic listings make it a good resource for high school students and early undergraduate researchers. *American Myths, Legends, and Tall Tales* is a useful addition to public and college library reference collections.—Jennifer A. Bartlett, *Head of Reference Services, University of Kentucky, Lexington, Kentucky*

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