

Carolyn Martindale. *The White Press and Black America*. (New York: Greenwood Press, 1986) 215 pp., \$29.95.

The White Press and Black America chronicles the many deficiencies of press coverage of black America. Martindale, an assistant professor of journalism at Youngstown State University, has worked as a newspaper reporter and section editor and has published articles in several scholarly journals. She is to be commended for her compelling and informative book.

The book is divided into ten chapters and is well organized and easy to read. It begins with exploring reasons why racial coverage should be studied and ends with the last two chapters focusing on how to improve racial coverage.

The first few chapters are concerned with the media's role in race relations, difficulties of covering racial news, and past deficiencies in coverage of racial news. The author is clever in her ability to utilize previous studies dealing with the coverage of racial news in order to present her beliefs about the press coverage of news dealing with blacks. In these chapters, the author is careful to look at some of the common causes of the failure of the press to cover news peculiar to blacks. For example, her analysis of studies and her own experience reveal that the news media spent too much time on the "who? what? when? and how?" of social protest and not enough time on the "why?" of racial conflict. She is quite astute in revealing how prejudice towards blacks in general is revealed in coverage of news dealing with blacks in particular. Her careful analysis of studies and newspaper articles dealing with issues peculiar to blacks reveals how little space is allotted for coverage of this news. She repeatedly reveals how most of the news dealing with blacks is concerned with conflict that usually paints an extremely negative picture of black people. Her analysis of articles dealing with blacks usually revealed that these articles tended to overemphasize the negative aspects of the black experience and deemphasize the positive aspects of the black experience.

The second part of the book deals with a study designed to answer many of the questions posed in the preceding chapters. The pertinent information was derived from the content of four newspapers: the *New York Times*, the *Boston Globe*, the *Atlanta Constitution*, and the *Chicago Tribune*. The study covered a 30-year period: the 1950s, the 1960s, and the 1970s. Some of the major findings were as follows:

1. During the 1970s all the newspapers examined provided more, and more realistic, coverage of black Americans than they had during the 1950s or even by some measure, during the 1960s. (The author considers the above the most significant finding of the study.)

2. Explanation of causes of black protest was largely ignored by the papers examined.

3. News about the everyday experience of black Americans was largely

ignored.

In the final two chapters the author presents some excellent suggestions for improvement:

1. Reevaluate traditional news values and practices of gathering news.
2. Increase reporting of black activities as a normal part of everyday life.
3. Involve more black Americans.
4. Hire more minority journalists.

This is a scholarly study on the subject of press coverage of black Americans and should be read by people in general and blacks and journalists in particular.

—Allene Jones
Texas Christian University

Julio A. Martinez and Francisco A. Lomeli. *Chicano Literature: A Reference Guide*. (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1988) xiv, 492 pp., \$50.95.

The editors in attempting to cover Chicano literature written since 1848 by Americans of Mexican descent have done a fine service for all students of American literature whether they are specialists or generalists, tyros or scholars. The work in more than one way provides a comprehensive reference guide.

Martinez and Lomeli have certainly succeeded in giving readers and users of the work a “representative cross section of pertinent subject matter in the literature.” No small accomplishment has been their success in enlisting the work of many scholars whose contributions are lucid, perceptive, and informative. The arrangement of the format of all the articles is a fortunate one whether on such writers as Luis Valdez, Ricardo Sanchez, Abelardo Delgado, or Estela Portillo or on broader subjects covering eras, genres, or criticism. It is unfortunate that the editors did not include articles on younger poets such as Lorna Dee Cervantes and Tino Villanueva, but they do express their regret for these omissions and promise to rectify this shortcoming later.

The bio-critical articles on authors provide important biographical data with excellent summaries of outstanding works, critical statements that are insightful and at times provocative. Normally brief summaries are included at the close of entries of outstanding critical articles. For each writer there is also a “Selected Bibliography” of works and secondary sources.

In the case of poets, such as, for example, Alurista, the article’s author,