



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

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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