

The Hispanic Presence in Florida: Yesterday and Today, 1513-1976.

Edited and with an introduction by JOSÉ AGUSTÍN BALSEIRO. Miami, 1976. E. A. Seemann Publishing. Tables. Index. Pp. 160. Cloth. \$8.95. Paper. \$5.95.

Since an estimated five percent of the U.S. population is of Spanish origin, there has been an increasing body of sound literature concerning the significance of the hispanic presence in our nation's history: Charles Gibson's *The Spanish Tradition in America: Documentary History of the United States*; Carlos M. Fernández-Shaw's *Presencia española en los Estados Unidos*; and this reviewer's sketch on "Influence of the Spanish" to appear in the forthcoming *Encyclopedia of Southern History*. Now, José A. Balseiro, former president of the International Institute of Ibero-American Literature, provides a poetic introduction to a "mixed-bag" of essays focusing particularly on the hispanic tradition in Florida, ranging from the 1513 exploits of Juan Ponce de León to a commentary on the "Cultural Presence of the Cuban Exile in Miami," by Rosa M. Abella of the University of Miami. Since the Cuban experience has affected contemporary Florida significantly, this may provide a basis for including Carlos Ripoll's essay on José Martí, who otherwise spent no apparent time at all in Florida. Charles W. Arnade's essay on "Florida during the American Revolutionary War" may offer an overview for hispanists, but it is not up to his usual excellent standards of research and is distinctly deficient when measured by recent books on the subject by J. Leitch Wright, Jr. and J. Barton Starr. This reviewer found William M. Straight's essay on "Medicine in Spanish Florida" an original, important and well-documented study which ranks with Vicente Murga's essay on Florida and Ponce de León as the most valuable in the volume. Distinguished folklorist Ralph S. Boggs demonstrates that Florida is a "Mosaic of Traditional Culture" in a thoughtful essay. There is sufficient substance in this small volume to justify its publication and to provide ideas for similar projects of greater scope and variety.

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