

reacting against the religious tradition in which they were raised, discovering the vast world around them across oceans and through time, and rediscovering beauty (and fear) in the physical, natural world around them. Lang very methodically and clearly shows these relationships.

Lang has a sophisticated command of the language and knows exactly what he wants to say. And his points are sound. The book itself is a slim volume of two hundred pages broken into six chapters, one for each author. It's a very dense read for two hundred pages, but offers some amazingly deep insights for those looking to see just how universal are the musings of the isolated Mountain South.

—Joseph Yamine, adjunct instructor of English, Ferrum College



Entsminger, Gary Lee, and Susan Elizabeth Elliott. *Ophelia's Ghost*. Montrose, CO: Pinyon Publishing, 2008. 281 pp. ISBN-13: 9780982156100. \$15.00 (softcover).

Virginia native Gary Entsminger and Susan Elliott have joined forces to write a promising first novel set in the American Southwest in the 1950s. *Ophelia's Ghost* begins with the disappearance of Eva Hail, an anthropologist doing solo fieldwork. From there the narrative takes readers into the rich family life of Joe Hill, a Hispanic tracker, horseman, and subsistence farmer who is steeped in the old ways passed down to him by the herbal healer Esperanza, his mother.

The story follows Joe as he is asked by Eva's parents to help locate her. After he gathers clues at Eva's last campsite, we meet Joe's daughter, Nina, and her boyfriend, whose time at Joe's trailer gives readers a loving look at the lifestyle of the indigenous people of the Four Corners country. Here it is

also revealed that Nina is playing the role of Ophelia in her college's production of *Hamlet*, and we are led to speculate about the spiritual concerns Shakespeare packed into his most widely staged work. Later, readers meet Eva Hail's parents and get a view of a couple who have come to the Southwest and adapted to its rhythms, weather, and culture. We are also introduced to Nina's director and professor as well as to a wealthy rancher and his headstrong daughter. Working through this complex mixture,

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and with help from Shakespeare and Native American mythology, Joe engages the mystery of Eva's disappearance.

The book's best quality is the striking depth of the portrayal of the characters and their interaction. Readers will easily identify with and develop concern for all the characters, particularly Joe and Nina Hill, but the novel has other aspects that will appeal to a variety of readers. The Southwestern setting, the focus on archaeology and Native American culture, the loving detail of life in the 1950s with special attention to the popular music of the era, the Shakespearian theme, and even the quiet emphasis on vegetarianism reach out to different groups of readers. While the unconventional ending may puzzle readers who are most comfortable with the rhythm and flow of bestsell-

ing whodunits, this is a rewarding read and a good beginning to a writing partnership.

—Cy Dillon, Hampden-Sydney College



Campbell, Julie A. *The Horse in Virginia: An Illustrated History*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2010. 296 pp. ISBN-13: 978-0-8139-2816-6.

Julie Campbell of Lexington, former editor of this book review column, has recently published the single most comprehensive study of the role of the horse in Virginia's history. The volume is illustrated with a striking collection of maps, photographs, and reproduced artwork carefully selected to support the meticulously researched text. The reproduction of nineteenth-century photography is especially crisp and detailed, as are the reproduced paintings such as *The Surrender of Lord Cornwallis at Yorktown* by John Trumbull. The variety and quality of the illustrations are both remarkable.

Beginning with the Jamestown colony, Campbell traces the development of breeds such as the thoroughbred and quarter horse and chronologically describes the role of horses in agriculture, commerce, sport, and war. It is almost impossible to exaggerate the scope and ambition of Campbell's effort, and it is especially impressive that the book holds together as a narrative. One of the features that the author uses to maintain her progress through the years is her creation of sections separated from the main narrative to cover, in a specialty encyclopedia format, such subjects as "Horse-Drawn Vehicles" and "Historical Veterinary Care."

With over twenty pages of notes and a twelve-page bibliography, *The Horse in Virginia* will be a book that fosters historical scholarship, sending serious readers to primary