



MAILBAG

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Anaya a big hit in Europe

I particularly enjoyed reading your review of Rudolfo A. Anaya's *Elegy on the Death of César Chávez*. Its final words—"César Chavez is not the only role model to be found in this slim but energetic book"—is right on target.

I doubt that many New Mexicans realize the extent to which Rudolfo Anaya reflects the highest level of spirit in the art of the Southwest. His novels and essays are well-known across Europe, and his skillful conjoining of European with Chicano literary conventions is especially appreciated by Europeans interested in following the development of emergent literatures in the United States.

Many of us have journeyed to New Mexico with the sole intention of meeting and talking with Anaya, and he has always given his time and attention. Those of us who have had the pleasure of visiting him—and we are many—are struck with his and his wife Patricia's hospitality and generosity.

In his travels to our continent he has been an exemplary ambassador of American literary culture, and particularly of his New Mexico.

Professor Paul B. Taylor
Université de Genève
Genève, Switzerland

What about Caplin?

I want to compliment your staff on the wonderful photo essays in your July issue. As a new subscriber, I'm pleased each issue with the variety of subjects from various areas across your glorious state.

A few years ago I recall your publication had an excellent piece about the New Mexico photographer Harvey Caplin, whose career spanned more than 40 years photographing a variety of subjects in the post-World War II Southwest.

Recently I have seen his work in several galleries across the Southwest. With so many great photographers in your state, I'm sure it was hard to choose the few for your space, but your issue failed to even mention this great photographer.

Lou Mallory
Flower Mound, Texas

(Editor's note: Indeed it was painful to have to leave out so many of our great photographers due to space, and we wanted to get

some in this issue that we've never featured before. That said, check out our July 1997 issue for a 10-page tribute to this important artist.)

Parochial ideas unappreciated

Born a native New Mexican in Grant County, I was raised in Santa Fe and Tesuque, a sleepy little town six miles north of the Plaza. My childhood was a magnificent montage of friends, teachers and experiences in a quiet pueblo inhabited by famous authors/artists in the shadow of the Sangre de Cristos.

Santa Feans were a close-knit bunch even with the inevitable, yet transitory, rivalry between St. Michael's and Santa Fe High schools. ...

Sadly, non-natives of Mr. Kennedy's ilk bring their parochial ideas of the history of the Land of Enchantment and scurrilously supplant the unique culture of my native state. His statement on Page 57 of the July 2001 issue reflects his ignorance of truth. One of many examples was the relationship of "Doc" Defendorf, my ninth-grade drama teacher, and his adopted son, Tony White Cloud, the world-renowned hoop dancer. Anyone aware of New Mexico history knows this father/son relationship flies in the face of Kennedy's opening statement. Johnny Candelario had it right when he exposed "those who made a career off their ethnicity."

Jimmy B. Pickens
Abilene, Texas
Via e-mail

Westphall an inspiration

I was so glad to see the article on Victor Westphall. My husband and I remember him well. We met him in the summer of 1971 right after the completion of the Vietnam Memorial Chapel. Our three kids and we were on our way to Black Lake to see relatives and stopped to see the memorial. He was outside clearing out weeds and leveling dirt, so we stopped to talk to him. He took us to the chapel and as we looked around, he explained why it had been built.

We were saddened by his son's death but not overly affected by a war so far away and also so controversial.

It wasn't until 13 years later when our son joined the Marine Corps did we real-

