



J. Frank Dobie: A Liberated Mind (Charles N. Prothro Texana Series)

Steven L. Davis

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The first Texas-based writer to gain national attention, J. Frank Dobie proved that authentic writing springs easily from the native soil of Texas and the Southwest. In best-selling books such as *Tales of Old-Time Texas*, *Coronado's Children*, and *The Longhorns*, Dobie captured the Southwest's folk history, which was quickly disappearing as the United States became ever more urbanized and industrial. Renowned as "Mr. Texas," Dobie paradoxically has almost disappeared from view—a casualty of changing tastes in literature and shifts in social and political attitudes since the 1960s.

In this lively biography, Steven L. Davis takes a fresh look at a J. Frank Dobie whose "liberated mind" set him on an intellectual journey that culminated in Dobie becoming a political liberal who fought for labor, free speech, and civil rights well before these causes became acceptable to most Anglo Texans. Tracing the full arc of Dobie's life (1888–1964), Davis shows how Dobie's insistence on "free-range thinking" led him to such radical actions as calling for the complete integration of the University of Texas during the 1940s, as well as taking on governors, senators, and the FBI (which secretly investigated him) as Texas's leading dissenter during the McCarthy era.

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