

BOOK REVIEWS

□ SOCIAL SCIENCES □

Anthropology & Customs

Lindsay, Charles. **Mentawai Shaman: Keeper of the Rain Forest; Man, Nature, and Spirits in Remote Indonesia.**

Aperture. 1992. 120p. photos. LC 92-71039. ISBN 0-89381-520-9. \$39.95.

ANTHRO

This beautiful book includes 80 color photographs and journal entries by Lindsay, an ethnographic photographer who has spent considerable time among the traditional people who inhabit the rain forest on the island of Siberut in Indonesia. Lindsay's friendship with a local shaman provided an opportunity for an intimate study of the customs and rituals of a people whose way of life is threatened by logging and modernization. Shamanic initiation and the duties and practices of traditional shamans on Siberut are carefully detailed. The photographs present a vivid, compelling ethnographic portrait. An essay by Reimar Schefold (cultural anthropology, Leiden Univ.) provides historical and cultural information about shamanism on Siberut. A fascinating look at an endangered culture. Highly recommended.—*Elizabeth Salt, Otterbein Coll. Lib., Westerville, Ohio*

Biography

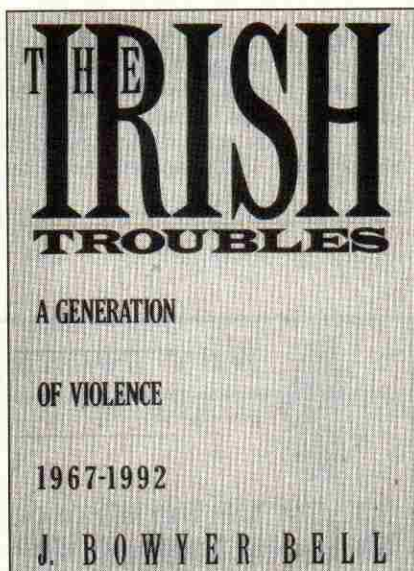
Blaise, Clark. **I Had a Father: A Post-Modern Autobiography.**

Addison-Wesley. May. 1993. c.240p. ISBN 0-201-58128-0. \$19.95. AUTOBIOG

This unusual memoir focuses on the author's attempt to understand his dead father. Blaise, a prize-winning novelist (*Lusts*, LJ 7/83) and director of the University of Iowa's International Writing Program, combines fragments of memories, mostly concerned with locations, as he circles around the story of his difficult, much-married father, a French Canadian/American traveling salesman. Like many people who had a problematic parental relationship, Blaise tried to lead a life radically different from that of his father: he became a writer, stayed married to one woman (the novelist Bharati Mukherjee), and endeavored to create a stable environment for his children. The book's strength lies in the author's skillful amalgamation of a patchwork of experiences to reconstruct his life as well as that of his progenitor. A thought-provoking work for all seeking insights into the father-son relationship.—*Nancy R. Ives, SUNY at Geneseo*

Chisholm, Anne & Michael Davie. **Beaverbrook: A Life.**

Knopf. 1993. c.592p. photos. index. ISBN 0-394-56879-6. \$30. BIOG
The remarkable career of Max Aitken,



A factious place finds order in a tapestry of words, p. 177

Lord Beaverbrook, is chronicled in this scholarly, well-researched work. Basing their work on official British and Canadian papers, memoirs, and other archival sources, the authors restructure the extraordinary life of this statesman and newspaper magnate. Born in 1879, the son of a New Brunswick minister, Beaverbrook accumulated a small fortune before arriving in England in 1910. The old-boy network served him well as he quickly established himself as a member of Parliament. Highlighted are his relationships with Rudyard Kipling, the Mountbattens, and Winston Churchill. His role in Soviet relations throughout his lifetime and his contributions to the war cabinet in World War II are particularly noteworthy. An excellent supplement to A.J.P. Taylor's *Beaverbrook* (LJ 8/72), this book is highly recommended to academic libraries collecting in modern European history.—*Mary Hemmings, Univ. of Calgary Law Lib., Alberta*

De Bruhl, Marshall. **Sword of San Jacinto: A Life of Sam Houston.**

Random. Mar. 1993. c.416p. illus. maps. index. LC 92-50513. ISBN 0-394-57623-3. \$25. BIOG

March 2, 1993 marks the 200th anniversary of the birth of Sam Houston, and this is the second major biography to celebrate that occasion, after John Hoyt Williams's *Sam Houston: A Biography of the Father of Texas* (LJ 1/93). Both biographies cover the same ground with the same emphases, but while De Bruhl does not provide quite as much detail, he shows more of Hous-

ton's skill as an orator. Although there are no notes, De Bruhl, like Williams, has thoroughly examined the available sources, including a recent find of Houston letters, and has produced a well-written narrative that enables the reader to come to grips with the complex personality of Houston. De Bruhl views his subject favorably but does not hide Houston's faults in presenting a portrait of the whole man. Of the two biographies, academic libraries will prefer Williams's scholarly approach while public and school libraries should first look to De Bruhl's well-written and lively account; specialized collections will need both. [Previewed in Prepub Alert, LJ 11/1/92.]—*Stephen H. Peters, Northern Michigan Univ. Lib., Marquette*

Fried, Stephen. **Thing of Beauty: The Tragedy of Supermodel Gia.**

Pocket Bks. Apr. 1993. c.384p. photos. ISBN 0-671-70104-5. \$24. BIOG

One of the biggest "whatever happened to...?" queries in the fashion world gets answered here, as Fried, a writer for *Philadelphia* magazine, details the rise (cover of *Vogue*) and fall (death by AIDS) of Gia Carangi, a sultry young beauty who shot to prominence—and shot heroin—during the 1970s disco heyday. It's also a big "what if" story: if Gia had not died, Cindy Crawford (dubbed "baby Gia") may not have become the overexposed supermodel she is today. Fried obviously means Gia's harrowing life to be partly a cautionary tale for all those young girls who wish to be models. However, Gia had many problems (broken home, drug use, confused sexuality) even before she stepped in front of a camera. Fried deridingly describes a 20/20 segment on modeling as "a report meant to detail 'the dark and anxious' side of the modeling business but manages somehow to make the whole enterprise seem extremely glamorous anyway," yet his saga, packed with juicy scoops about other models and photographers, has the same effect. In other words, this book will have a tremendous appeal to a general audience. For all public libraries.—*Judy Quinn, formerly with "Library Journal"*

James, Lawrence. **The Golden Warrior: The Life and Legend of Lawrence of Arabia.**

Paragon House. Feb. 1993. c.440p. illus. maps. bibliog. index. LC 92-31944. ISBN 1-55778-579-1. \$24.95. BIOG

The only thing more surprising than the number and flow of T.E. Lawrence biographies is the Rashomon-esque quality to the works. From early hero worship to the most foul denigration to a more moderate, modern view of this gifted, tortured man,