

Three Book Reviews

Rand W. Gould

Firebrands: Portraits from the Americas, Justseeds Artists' Cooperatives, eds. Shaun Slifer & Bec Young, (Microcosm, 2010).

I found this book to be both an interesting read with enjoyable artwork, in the form of portraits of its biographical subjects, and an excellent teaching tool for those interested in the radical left in the Americas. The brief biographies of those who opposed the systemic oppression of the majority by a tiny, wealthy minority—i.e., the masters, or, as I like to call them, the Scum in Charge of the Kleptocracy (SICK)—was revealing even for me, in some cases, as an old radical from the 60s.

Edible Secrets: A Food Tour of Classified U.S. History, Michael Hoerger & Mia Partlow, illustrated by Nate Powell (Microcosm, 2010).

This book was not what I thought it was going to be, but it turned out to be an excellent recipe for exposing some of the more nasty secrets of the U.S. government's campaigns against the people on behalf of its capitalist corporate masters, i.e., the SICK, who pay it, therefore control it, and reap the benefits from its many wars and clandestine operations. If you weren't sure who the U.S. government worked for, now you know it ain't us but they sure make Coca Cola, Exxon Mobil, General Electric, et al, happy.

Crate Digger: An Obsession With Punk Records, Bob Suren, (Microcosm, 2015).

As the title makes clear, Bob Suren is obsessed with the minutiae of punk rock discography and, particularly, that of the punk scene in Florida. If you're into punk then this is the book for you as it covers a wide segment of punk history. I'd have preferred it if Bob went back to punk's origins in Detroit, Michigan, with bands like the MC5 and the Psychedelic Stooges, their effect on British punk scene, and, in turn, LA's and NYC's, but on the whole this is an excellent book written by a knowledgeable and obsessed punk. Kudos to Bob!

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