

researched profile of a singular land and its people. Using a sweeping interdisciplinary approach that combines archaeology, agronomy, geology, sociology, and zoology, professor and historian Kirby traces the South's metamorphosis from the pre-Columbian epoch of its Native American tribal inhabitants through the Civil War and Reconstruction to the culturally homogenized emergence of the so-called New South. Citing literary classics such as *The Yearling* and contemporary cinematic fare such as *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* Kirby ecumenically draws on cultural and historical references to ponder the ethics of human behavior and its effect upon a land that has suffered and survived abuses social and ecological. —*Carol Haggas*

Mai, Mukhtar and Cuny, Marie-Thérèse. In the Name of Honor. Tr. by Linda Coverdale. Oct. 2006. 192p. Atria, \$24 (1-4165-3228-5). 305.48.

Mai, a 32-year-old Pakistani peasant, was condemned by her village tribal council in 2002 to be gang-raped. The punishment was provoked by an accusation that her younger brother, 12 years old, had seduced an older woman. The accusation was untrue, but it still held the power to destroy the family honor. After her rape by four men, rather than disappear in humiliation or commit suicide—her first impulse—Mai fought to maintain her dignity and to protect other women from abusive traditions. She asserted humanity for herself and other women by suing the council before the supreme court of Pakistan, winning, and using the funds to start a school for girls. In this amazing collaboration with reporter Cuny, who specializes in covering women's issues and who recorded hours of conversation, Mai presents a portrait of determination in overcoming low caste status and stifling tradition. This inspirational story, which attracted international attention, is all the more powerful told in Mai's own words. —*Vanessa Bush*

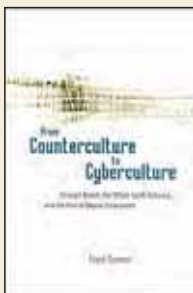
YA/M: *Unforgettable, raw narrative for teens concerned with international human rights.* GE.

Mencimer, Stephanie. Blocking the Courthouse Door: How the Republican Party and Its Corporate Allies Are Taking Away Your Right to Sue. Dec. 2006. 276p. Free Press, \$25 (0-7432-7700-7). 347.73.

By demonizing trial attorneys and exaggerating high-profile litigation awards—the famous McDonald's hot-coffee case—campaigns for limiting damage awards threaten to jeopardize the American right to civil jury trials guaranteed by the Bill of Rights. Investigative reporter Mencimer examines the Republican campaigns for tort reform that would protect large corporations from “frivolous lawsuits.” The campaigns carry the dual benefit of supporting the interests of corporations that are major Republican campaign contributors and hurting trial lawyers, who are part of the contribution base of Democrats. Mencimer criticizes the media for their lack of understanding about civil litigation, willingness to swallow reports of litigation abuses, and failure to understand

☆ **Turner, Fred. From Counterculture to Cyberculture: Stewart Brand, the Whole Earth Network, and the Rise of Digital Utopianism.** Oct. 2006. 360p. Univ. of Chicago, \$29 (0-226-81741-5). 303.48.

SOCIAL SCIENCES



In this unique, provocative work of cultural history, Turner teases apart the visions, myths, and rhetoric that have swept us into cyberspace. This concentration on the ethos of our digital enthrallment rather than on technology revolves around gifted entrepreneur and networker Stewart Brand. Inspired by Buckminster Fuller, Ken Kesey, and the back-to-the-land commune movement, Brand created the *Whole Earth Catalog*, an innovative interdisciplinary compendium that won the National Book Award in 1971 and, as Turner convincingly argues, generated the paradigm that led to the World Wide Web. Brand then declared that the computer was “the new LSD” and a “tool for transformation,” and, as a hippie turned cybermystic turned nimble businessman, he founded *Wired* magazine and the megaprofitable and conservative Global Business Network. Turner tells many an eye-opening tale and connects many dots in this avidly researched, keenly analyzed, and stunningly ironic chronicle of how counterculture ideals transmuted into corporate strategies. In conclusion, Turner assesses the myriad ways digital utopianism has changed the texture of our lives and incisively exposes the staggering hubris of the digerati and the complex social and environmental consequences of computerization. —*Donna Seaman*

that Republican tort reform will also limit the ability of news organizations to sue for information. Drawing on national data and scrutiny of individual cases, Mencimer defends the civil justice system and its reliance on jurors, average citizens who are the same people who vote. This is an eye-opening look at an important issue for readers concerned with the civil justice system. —*Vanessa Bush*

Nelson, Craig. Thomas Paine: Enlightenment, Revolution, and the Birth of Modern Nations. 2006. 378p. index. Viking, \$27.95 (0-670-03788-5). 320.51.

Shortly after arriving in the American colonies in 1774, Thomas Paine wrote the pamphlet “Common Sense,” which was instrumental in pushing the colonies to declare independence. After independence was declared, his “16 Crisis” papers helped keep up the morale of American soldiers. Yet Paine is rarely accorded the adulation or even respect given to those deemed our Founding Fathers. To a degree, that is a result of Federalist politicians; frightened by his devotion to democratic principles and his support for revolution in France, they took every opportunity to disparage him as a rabble-rousing atheist. Nelson admirably restores Paine and his ideas to a deserved place of prominence. Above all else, Paine was a man of the Enlightenment. He went to France in 1787, defended the revolution in its early stages, but strongly opposed the descent into bloody extremism. He barely escaped execution during the Terror and died in obscurity in New York in 1809. However, his ideas stressing the virtues of democratic republicanism and his optimism for the future of America remained influential. —*Jay Freeman*

Newton, Julianne Lutz. Aldo Leopold's Odyssey: Rediscovering the Author of A Sand County Almanac. Nov. 2006. 496p. illus. index. Island, \$32.95 (1-59726-045-2). 337.72.

Conservationist Aldo Leopold (1887–

1948) is revered for his gorgeous prose, deep appreciation for the beauty and “rightness” of the living world, and profound moral sense of how we should live on the land. But the story of how this Yale-educated midwesterner become one of the nation's first professional foresters and a groundbreaking environmental educator, and developed his commonsensical “land ethic,” has not been fully studied until now. Ecologist Newton offers not a biography but, rather, an exacting chronicle of Leopold's intellectual and professional odyssey. Leopold conceived of the land as “a fountain of energy” flowing through soil (soil conversation was a primary mission), plants, waterways, animals (Leopold was an avid hunter and the nation's leading wildlife expert), and humans. He knew that to sustain “land health” we needed to develop an “ecological conscience” and fend off the “industrial juggernaut.” Newton's compelling and elucidating close reading of Leopold's keystone works greatly enhances our understanding of his scientific rigor, philosophical valor, and abiding sense of wonder. If only we would take his conservation ethic to heart. —*Donna Seaman*

Ritter, Scott. Target Iran: The Truth about the White House's Plans for Regime Change. Oct. 2006. 288p. Avalon, \$25.95 (1-56025-936-1). 327.73055.

As a U.S. Marine officer in the Gulf War, Ritter served as a ballistic missile advisor to General H. Norman Schwarzkopf and then became a high-up UN weapons inspector in Iraq until 1998. Now he is a vociferous, controversial critic of the Bush II administration and the Iraq War. In his latest exposé, Ritter trains his inspector's eyes on Iran, meticulously analyzing the rhetoric about Tehran beginning with the first Bush presidency when Dick Cheney was secretary of defense, then skeptically parsing the protracted,

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