



Comfort and Glory: Two Centuries of American Quilts from the Briscoe Center (Focus on American History)

Katherine Jean Adams

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Quilts bear witness to the American experience. With a history that spans the early republic to the present day, this form of textile art can illuminate many areas of American life, such as immigration and settlement, the development of our nation's textile industry, and the growth of mass media and marketing. In short, each quilt tells a story that is integral to America's history.

Comfort and Glory introduces an outstanding collection of American quilts and quilt history documentation, the Winedale Quilt Collection at the Briscoe Center for American History at the University of Texas at Austin. This volume showcases 115 quilts—nearly one-quarter of the Winedale Collection—through stunning color photographs (including details) and essays about each quilt's history and construction. The selections span more than two hundred years of American quilting and represent a broad range of traditional styles and functions. Utility quilts, some worn or faded, join show quilts, needlework masterpieces, and "best" quilts saved for special occasions. Texas quilts, including those made in or brought to Texas during the nineteenth century, constitute a significant number of the selections. Color photographs of related documents and material culture objects from the Briscoe Center's collections—quilting templates, a painted bride's box, sheet music, a homespun dress, a brass sewing bird, and political ephemera, among them—enrich the stories of many of the quilts.

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