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A BEHIND-THE-SCENES LOOK AT STEINBECK AND FRIENDS

A REVIEW OF BENSON'S LOOKING FOR STEINBECK'S GHOST

—By Dr. Leroy Thomas

LOOKING FOR STEINBECK'S GHOST by Jackson J. Benson is a 1989 publication of the University of Oklahoma Press (1005 Asp Avenue—Norman, OK 73019-0445); this attractive hardcover book contains 239 pages and 25 illustrations. The book sells for \$24.²⁵.

At first thought, the reader may wonder why it's appropriate to review in a Western Oklahoma journal a book about a Californian (Steinbeck was from Salinas) by a Californian (Benson was born in San Francisco).

Some of the reasons are obvious. For example, Steinbeck always dealt with universals in his works. Another reason is that he knew our area of the state of Dustbowl Days because he met and wrote about the Joads in *THE GRAPES OF WRATH*.

Other reasons are revealed by Dr. Benson within the pages of this charming book.

LOOKING FOR STEINBECK'S GHOST contains never-before-published interview material and personal information about Steinbeck. The editor perceptively says, "It [the book] is an attempt to sift through all the testimony, all the contradictions, all the prejudices, favorable and unfavorable, to find out just who, at bottom, John Steinbeck was and what he left to us as his legacy."

Benson's biocritical work is one that Steinbeck scholars and general readers alike will enjoy owning. *

Design and Illustrations by Sandra Fischer

