



The Complete History of New Mexico: Stories

Kevin McIlvoy

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"Compelling and complex . . . Strange and wonderful."

?The New York Times Book Review, in praise of McIlvoy's previous fiction

I am going to write about the state of New Mexico and put in some maps and stuff from the encyclopedia. My theme is the Don Juan Onate trail and the Jornada Del Muerto. But I might write some other important things which as it turns out my stepmother got angry about and said she wouldn't type this until my Dad said "Dammit now it is history" and told her maybe there weren't commas in those days.

"The Complete History of New Mexico" is no ordinary research paper, and this is no ordinary collection of short stories. Eleven-year-old Chum's "history" unfolds over three distinctive and increasingly disturbing sections. He writes that "Coronado explored around and found Santa Fe in 1610"; that "William Becknell was tracking wagons over everyplace in 1821"; and that every day his best friend, Daniel, is afraid to go home.

Kevin McIlvoy intersperses the title novella with equally distinctive stories set in New Mexico. Laura, a plain, overweight nurse, encounters a terrified young man on his way to the Vietnam War and takes matters into her own hands. Zach spends time with his "white-trash" relatives and finds love's terrible and true face.

The Complete History of New Mexico is a stunningly original collection that will further McIlvoy's growing reputation.

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