

Letters From the Horse Latitudes, C.W. Smith (Texas Christian University Press, \$19.95). The novelist in Smith makes the characterizations in this, his first published collection of short stories, humane and instantly familiar. *Horse Latitudes* is billed as a work that wrestles with the issues of race, class, and culture, but the best of the stories track what could be seen as one man's evolution—from a child whose innocence is all but lost ("Tickler") to an adolescent who faces hard moral choices ("Plantation Club") to a soldier who forfeits his innocence forever in a Vietnam-era boot camp ("Letter From the Horse Latitudes") to a father who struggles to respect his morally reckless son ("Plane"). Vivid and emotionally honest, these stories are a joy to read. R.D.