

Review of *Thin Men of Haddam* by C.W. Smith in *Publisher's Weekly*

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THE THIN MEN OF HADDAM.

C. W. Smith. Grossman, \$7.95 Although centered on the experiences of Chicanos, this haunting novel explores the ambiguity of living between two cultures. The main character Mendez, a laborer and almost a college graduate, "has the dubious gift of seeing as an Anglo—of being up to a point—an Anglo." On one hand, he wants to start a cooperative for his people and have his son speak Spanish; on the other, he is steeped in Western culture and is married to a native American who respects his ideals but wants the advantages of middle-class status for her family. This conflict eventually brings the crisis of his life; Mendez must choose sides as he rushes to join a posse hunting his cousin Manuelo, an embittered man driven to robbery to *feed* his children. Throughout the story, Smith beautifully evokes the Southwest. In rich flashbacks and interior monologues, he somehow makes this bleak landscape into a convincing correlative for his characters' gnawing despair. [*December 31*]