LARRY R.
FAULKNER
*President Emeritus
University of Texas
at Austin*

Foreword

There are, in our lives, places and people, institutions and experiences, that loom very large, that impress us indelibly and become part of our identity. The most powerful foster a distinct culture into which we are drawn, sometimes repeatedly, through decades. Even after long disengagement, the relationship can resume with unexpected familiarity and feeling. Such has been my experience with the University of Texas, and I know it also to have been the experience of countless others.

"Do not think you can escape them," one sings in "The Eyes of Texas." For me, these words have come to be the anthem's most prophetic. I rarely speak them now without wondering over them, at least fleetingly.

My personal journey with "The University" now spans five decades. I was a graduate student in the '60s, a faculty member in the '80s, president in the '90s and into the '00s, and now I enjoy "senior status." But in those years, I was away more than I was in Austin. I came and went, and came and went, and came, not ever to leave fully again.

For me, the University has always been powerful, energetic, and irresistibly lively—a place of dreams, ambition, spirit, and imagination. Though only a part of Texas, it seems to make all of Texas still bigger and more significant. The University is an institution, a distinct culture, that keeps moving on, ever subsuming and incorporating, transforming and enabling.

Human in origin and manifestation, it is, to be sure, imperfect and even occasionally irrational. It can disappoint, and it can fail to live up to its own ideals and standards. Yet it abides, broadly valued for its deep relevance to the lives and futures of individual people and to their society. Of course, every great institution manifests both remarkable powers and clear shortcomings. Despite the weaknesses, a signal feat in human history has been the evolution of working examples that can inspire and deliver on their promises for centuries. There is satisfying evidence that the University of Texas has risen to hold a place among those of our time.

What is at the core of an institution like that? How did it come together? How does it cohere? How does it keep growing and adapting through changing times and people? My sense is that the answers to such questions cannot be found by analysis. The essence of the University of

Texas seems to be one of those fascinations that just dissipate if one looks too closely. One cannot capture it by detailing its parts. But one can illuminate aspects of it by using essays and stories—about people who passed through, who became a part of the culture, and of whom the culture, in turn, became a part—about bits of history that underlie the culture.

Such is the concept that led to this book, *The Texas Book Two*, and its predecessor, *The Texas Book*. In this volume, David Dettmer has assembled a fascinating anthology of profiles, historical pieces, and reminiscences. Each can be read alone, and the collection can be read in any order. Apart, the pieces can be seen as individual threads of the University's fabric. Taken together, they provide a loose reweave, depicting more of what the institution has been over the years and what it has come to be.

The concept of the first *Texas Book* grew largely from the imagination of Susan Clagett, an associate vice president of the University. Over the past twenty years, Ms. Clagett has been the principal figure in charge of major events, including commencement, which she redesigned dramatically in the 1990s, with remarkable and lasting success. She later established wonderful additional occasions, such as Explore UT, the yearly University-wide open house; Gone to Texas, the annual welcome for new students; and UT Remembers, a ceremony honoring members of the community who died in the preceding year. A common theme through all her work is what I sometimes call "symbolic communication." She and her team are masters of the varied and powerful symbols—sites, images, music, verse and prose, allusions to people, places, and events—evoking and expressing the heritage and attributes of the University of

Texas and its community. Drawing upon these elements, Ms. Clagett and her colleagues seem consistently to imbue their big and small events with just the right significance and tone.

The first *Texas Book* was conceived in the same vein, except that the collected elements were to be essays and stories. Taken separately and together, they would generate an experience of the University and would help the reader see into the core of the place and the basis for its influence.

Susan Clagett raised the idea with me early in my presidency, probably in 1999. I encouraged her to pursue it and drew her attention to *The Harvard Book*, which had been assembled decades earlier by William Bentinck-Smith toward a similar end for a different community. Ms. Clagett pushed ahead. She was supported by Teresa Sullivan, then vice president and the dean of graduate studies, who helped to involve both Don Carleton, the director of the Dolph Briscoe Center for American History, and Joanna Hitchcock, the director of the University of Texas Press. They, in turn, recruited Richard A. Holland into the challenge of editing the book, which appeared in 2006. David Dettmer, the editor of this present volume, played a strong supporting role in that effort.

The success of the first volume and the availability of a great range of additional material encouraged further effort. David Dettmer interested Joanna Hitchcock in *The Texas Book Two* and agreed to edit it. This product, like the university that inspires it, is fascinating.

Savor these chapters, essay by essay, and all together. They will draw you toward the core of the great institution and, most likely, will connect you to your own past and future as they do.

THE TEXAS BOOK TWO

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK