



### [Sabotaged: Dreams of Utopia in Texas by James Pratt](#)

2020 Texas Old Missions and Forts Restoration Association (TOMFRA) Book Award

Alongside the various people moving into and through the nineteenth-century Texas frontier was a group of European intellectuals bent on establishing a socialist utopia near the hamlet of Dallas. Their inspiration, French philosopher Charles Fourier, envisioned a society in which basic human ambitions would be expressed and cultivated, tied together by the bonds of emotion. Fourier's self-appointed disciple Victor Considerant led the establishment of La Réunion in 1855, organized under a Paris stock company. James Pratt weaves together the dramatic story of this utopia: the complex tale of a diverse group of Europeans who sought a new society but were forced to face the realities of life in nineteenth-century Texas.

Considerant's followers endured a long ocean voyage with Spanish gunboats following in their Caribbean wake. They brushed blooming magnolias through Buffalo Bayou between Galveston Bay and Houston—so narrow a channel that two ships could not pass simultaneously. They walked for three weeks across barren country, came into conflict with the Texas legislature over land, and had to buy their stolen horses back from Chief Ned, a famous Delaware Indian living in Texas. They were buffeted in the rising political winds of abolition, and droughts ruined their crops. In the end, however, it was their flamboyant leader Victor Considerant who sabotaged their dream.

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### Top review from the United States



Leland L. Coggan

★★★★★ **Sabotaged: Dreams of Utopia in Texas by James Pratt**

Reviewed in the United States on November 9, 2020

Sabotaged: Dreams of Utopia in Texas by James Pratt earned the Texas Old Missions & Forts Restoration Association 2020 Book Award. The book is a comprehensive study of the French influence coming to Dallas, Texas to form the La Reunion Colony. It's a definitive work on each aspect of French culture in Texas in 1855. The book is well researched and recommended for further insight into understanding why the Socialistic form of association did not prevail at that time in Texas.

Pat Coggan, TOMFRA Book Award Chairman