This is a fantastic exploration of culture by an author who normally shares his insights derived from thoughtful reporting and a muscular moral compass in ways that leave readers with compelling conclusions. In *God Save Texas* though Wright is reflective, almost meandering, at times like the Brazos River is, as it winds its way across Texas, muddy and turbulent, occasionally stormy and flooding, but always powerful and moving. It is not that he isn’t opinionated but rather that he lets the reader do more work in this book than usual and his conclusions are less definitive; this is a study of culture, its many facets, how history and myth meet reality and challenges, the way that Texans view themselves and the way they are viewed by others and maybe, most importantly, the paths forward to preserve the best of our heritage in a changing world.

Wright writes as a Texan but with some dispatch and distance when needed to understand Texas. At times he discusses Texas in comparison to California and the Eastern establishment; at other times he discusses how Texas is leading the U.S., for better and worse. He appreciates the uniqueness of Texas but he casts an unsparing eye on the problems in our midst.

In Chapter One, The Charms Such as They Are, what are Wright and his friend Steve doing in the course of exploring San Antonio? As he and Steve begin a conversation about Texas and its culture there is one word that Wright argues does not apply to Texas; what word is that? What word would apply to Texas then? What are a few of the distinctive features of Texas that surprised you? Any idea what Wright means by the title of the chapter?

In Chapter Two what are the three wells? Tell their story briefly? What qualities do we learn about Texas from the story of these three wells and of Texas more broadly? Why does he have this chapter so prominently up front in the book? It is important; why?

In Chapter Three, Wright explores Houston and the tension between big dreams and high-minded virtue, on one hand, and the reality and challenges, on the other hand, of the oil capital of the world born on the muddy banks of bayous in the midst of some swamps but with worldly ambitions. What are the touch points that he explores in Houston and what do we learn from his exploration? A hint: he starts with Sam Houston and ends with Hurricane Harvey.

In Chapter Four Wright offers a theory of cultural development. What are its three levels? What is the status of the myth of Texas today? What is the best way forward culturally according to Wright?

Who are the presidents from Texas discussed in Chapter Five? Wright has two vantage points when discussing these presidents, one local and the other about how they were perceived by those outside of Texas. What does Wright think these three teach us about Texas? How have they been viewed by those outside of Texas?

Chapter Six is about a cultural divide and one issue being tussled over between those on either side of this divide? How does Wright begin to explore this divide and what is the issue he explores in some depth? Name the person Wright discusses as prominent on one side of this divide who has authored and propagated many conspiracy theories? Is this person and their ideas a local phenomenon or a national one? Which side in this cultural struggle appears transcendent from this chapter?

Chapter Seven is about another city in Texas; what city is it and what tragedies does Wright discuss that Dallas “is destined to shoulder the burden of . . . that mark our path as a country.”? Who is Walker Railey and why is he relevant? What do we learn about Dallas from the Railey story? (By the way, Houston had one of these types of stories that shocked the sensibilities of Houstonians. It was the Candy Mossler-Mel Powers affair. Look it up!)

Chapter Eight is about what discipline? What does Wright mean by the title to the chapter? What is the old adage about sausage? In this chapter Wright discusses a political sea change in Texas; what was it? It happened in 2003? Discuss the conflict between the Lieutenant Governor and the Speaker of the House? Who are they and what are they fighting over according to Wright?

What is the city Wright explores in Chapter Nine, the city of the violet crown? What was Austin and what has it become according to Wright? As Willie goes so goes Texas. I lived in Austin for some years and I loved it then but not now.

Chapter Ten is more about sausage making. Why is the bathroom bill so important seemingly? What is the fate of that Speaker of the House discussed aback in Chapter Eight? What is the future of Texas look like as best you can tell from Wright?

Chapter Eleven explores Texas’s relationship with Mexico amidst the broader issue of immigration. What problem does Wright see in having a policy that treats every person in the country not a citizen as a criminal? This is one of the few places where Wright clearly betrays his views.

Where are the places in Chapters Twelve and Thirteen and what does Wright think are distinctive and noteworthy about each of them?