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## Book Reviews

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## Book Reviews

*Daniel Murphree, Book Review Editor*

*Digging Miami.* By Robert S. Carr. (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2012. Acknowledgments, illustrations, notes, maps, references cited, index. Pp. xiii, 352. \$29.95 cloth.)

In *Digging Miami* Bob Carr tells the stories of ancient southeastern Florida with the unique voice of Miami-Dade's first county archaeologist. Even today—over thirty years after Miami-Dade's watershed historic preservation ordinance—few counties and municipalities have their own archaeologist. This is unfortunate and *Digging Miami* demonstrates that strict local historic preservation ordinances really do help in identifying, studying, and preserving archaeological sites. For example, state environmental land and emergency acquisition funds have been used to acquire places like the Deering Estate, Snake Warrior's Island, and the Miami Circle—and Bob Carr was instrumental in the preservation of each of these locales. Don't get me wrong, *Digging Miami* is not a historic preservation textbook. It is a blend of historical research, larger than life characters, hard to believe events, and little-known artifacts and sites woven together in the best tradition of archaeological storytelling.

*Digging Miami* is divided into five parts that cover every time period and culture known from the region, ranging from ancient American Indians to the earliest European explorers, Bahamian "Conchs," the Seminole and Miccosukee, military outposts, and Miami's pioneer families. The book concludes with a discussion of urban archaeology, the Miami Circle, and some of the other sites found (often by Bob Carr) in the heart of downtown. Illustrations

are numerous and drawn from the collections of HistoryMiami (formerly the Historical Museum of Southern Florida), the Archaeological and Historical Conservancy, and Bob's personal archive.

Following a short review of archaeologists who have worked in the Miami area, readers are rewarded with an entire chapter dedicated to the Cutler Fossil site. The author was instrumental in the discovery, excavation and preservation of this early site, where human artifacts and remains were mixed with a tremendous number of fossil animal bones in a solution hole, perhaps reflecting some of the most ancient human residents of southern Florida. This chapter is important because a full-length report treating the archaeology of the site has not been available. A highlight is the information on the PaleoIndian lithic artifacts found at the site, which support the early radiocarbon dates. The subsequent discussion of the Archaic in southern Florida also is significant, since this period was poorly known when John Griffin prepared his monumental synthesis of Everglades archaeology in the 1980s (later published by University Press of Florida as *Archaeology of the Everglades* in 2002).

I found that some sections detracted from the book. For example, the discussions of American Indian artifacts known from the Miami area is interesting, but the descriptions of pottery types occupies over five pages—most of these descriptions could have been omitted here, as they are found in other works on the area (the aforementioned *Archaeology of the Everglades*). More space could have been dedicated to some of the author's really interesting discoveries, like the bird or turtle effigy adorno on a Surfside Incised sherd from Marco Island. Other weaknesses are the typographical errors and minor factual errors. For example, on page 15 archaeologist John M. Goggin's year of death is given as 1964—he actually died May 4, 1963, before the publication of *Indian and Spanish Selected Writings*, prepared by his friends Charles Fairbanks, Irving Rouse, and William Sturtevant.

Despite the author's extensive work with ancient American Indian sites, well-represented in the first part of *Digging Miami*, the treatment of the early pioneers, soldiers and sailors, fisher folk, and Seminole and Miccosukee Indians is really where the author hits his stride. Throughout his career, Bob Carr has elevated historical archaeology in southern Florida and he knows how to weave stories of the recent past with that of our quotidian world. Bob's parsing of the Black Caesar legend, including a graphic from a 1940s



restaurant menu, is a good example of the microhistories found throughout *Digging Miami* and the way that the illustrations contribute to the stories. This happens again when the author takes us on a tour of Miami in the early nineteenth century and the archaeology of arrowroot flour manufacture, specifically the search for the remnants of the Ferguson brother's mill on the north fork of the Miami River. Carr articulates the value of telling these stories when he says that historical archaeology is valuable for reaching an understanding of a community's recent past—sometimes “uncovering artifacts associated with specific families or individuals that reach beyond the written record to provide a glimpse of a family's past or a long-lost secret” (215).

*Digging Miami* will find a home on the bookshelves of those archeologists and historians who continue to ask questions and look for answers below parking lots and in flower beds in southern Florida where remnants of our past still persist. I think this book, however, will find its greatest audience among those who want to connect with the little-known ancient and recent past of the Magic City.

Ryan J. Wheeler

Robert S. Peabody Museum of Archaeology

*Heaven's Soldiers: Free People of Color and the Spanish Legacy in Antebellum Florida.* By Frank Marotti. (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2013. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. Pp x, 176. \$39.95 cloth.)

A very detailed book on a subject often neglected in Florida history is unusual. Frank Marotti's book, *Heaven's Soldiers*, is just such a book. He covers free people of color during the four decades of the antebellum period before the U.S. Civil War. Marotti includes effects on both slave and free caused by wars, turmoils, and changes in political, legal, and economic spheres as far away as Africa and Europe. Five pages of photographs and illustrations add more interest.

Florida had long been known as a sanctuary for people of color, as illustrated by extensive and continuing research on Fort Mose, the free town established in Florida in the First Spanish Period. Yet attention to free men during and after the Second Spanish Period had also been slighted. Marotti covers this as well.

Marotti begins his book with a gracefully written introduction of 1821 as a base line for the antebellum period when Spanish culture and religion endured for some years after the U.S. Territorial Period. The Catholic Church's attitude toward slave and free African Americans allowed baptism and full membership in the Church. Slaves, as Marotti explains, were allowed to sue their masters over mistreatment and negotiate contracts, including those on installments, to buy their freedom, which both parties theoretically were obligated to honor. Aside from the Church, the white hispanic culture was permeated with this acceptance of the rights of African Americans as fully human.

Marotti highlights the other principal group living in the region during most of the first decade of the antebellum period—the Minorcans: white hispanic, previously indentured servants, who had fled the British New Smyrna Plantation in mass and retreated to St. Augustine. They enjoyed a generally positive relationship with the African Americans in their midst, sometimes even serving as godparents as Minorcans were only just above people of color within St. Augustine society. At the time, the environs of St. Augustine extended many miles down the Florida peninsula until the next town. Towns, in the Spanish tradition, were sanctuaries for those in need. Thus, both slave and free, although technically in U.S. territory, enjoyed the benign influence of Spanish culture to their great advantage.

After 1830, the situation began to deteriorate for African Americans as the customary Anglo attitudes prevailed, which were prejudicial and repressive. Slaves were treated harshly; some were moved to plantations. The number of manumissions, which had previously been high under Spanish influence, was dropping precipitously. Attempts were even made, with a certain success, to re-enslave some of the freedmen. Florida gradually became similar to other slave states, such as Georgia.

After Chapter 1, which is actually a continuation of the introduction, the next six chapters consist of exceedingly well-researched and dense case material showing the extensive adaptive strategies by those individuals who were “quasi free” as well as legally free. Marotti covers the legal, family, manumission, and property ownership of those cases selected. Several white family dynasties—Kingsley, Clark, and Sanchez—also had black families. In some cases, individual African Americans were managing family businesses or plantations, though still technically slaves. The read-



er may find Marotti's extensive case treatment rather daunting, but perseverance is well worth the effort to digest this fuller history.

Noted is one mistake on the pages 40 and 41 where two Jack Smiths are confused. One was born in Africa and was a Methodist; the other was born in Georgia and was a Baptist. This one lapse is unfortunate because of the great discordance between the two Jack Smiths, resulting in the questionable character of the Georgian Baptist impinging upon the good character of the African Methodist.

Marotti emphasizes the gradual erosion of the positive Spanish influence. By the last decade, the situation for people of color was so bad that most of the black population—both free and slave—could do little except try to escape. Flights to freedom took many forms. Individual attempts were often frustrated by white captors. More successful were runaways to Seminole Indian towns, where the African Americans were allowed to live in separate villages.

In one rather humorous incident, Marotti relates how seven slaves, later joined by two others, stole a 25-foot whale boat in an attempt to reach the Bahamas. Because of storms and turbulent water, they were forced to play cat and mouse with their pursuers up and down the Florida coast. Eventually, they came into the hands of the British, aided by abolitionists, and the incident became international. The case dragged on but was finally closed to the advantage of the runaways.

The last chapter of the book outlines statistics from the last antebellum decade. The freedmen were few, and those with property lost their land. African Americans were mostly living in rural areas; some lived on plantations. Furthermore, St. Augustine was in recession and enduring bad economic times. Property grabbing was the order of the day. Only those people of color who had white ancestors or patrons were able to make sales of any of their property. Families endured and flourished, however, in spite of everything.

Clearly, the message of Marotti's book is that the situation was confusing, so confusing that some African Americans thought they were free when they weren't and others who were free thought they were slaves. Thus, much is to be admired in Marotti's use of discerning concepts, such as "quasi slave" and "degrees of freedom." These phrases served throughout the book to bridge the often unclear divisions between the conflicting and confusing states experienced by African Americans in St. Augustine and its environs

during the antebellum period. Published material that meets this need has been scant. Another book is Jane Lander's 2010 volume *Atlantic Creoles of Colour in the Age of Revolution* with its emphasis on the Atlantic Ocean Basin. Other writing is now coming to the fore. However, Marotti has mined this field well. His book is extensive in its research and documentation and, thus, is a worthy addition to the historiography of Florida.

Patricia C. Griffin

Saint Augustine, Florida

*Populism in the South Revisited: New Interpretations and New Departures.* Edited by James M. Beeby. (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2012. Acknowledgements, notes, index. Pp. xxi, 229. \$60.00 cloth.)

Perhaps owing to the political climate of our own time, scholarship on the Populists has experienced something of a renaissance in the last few years. Charles Postel's prize-winning *The Populist Vision* (2007) takes the broadest view, but numerous other studies, including a number by authors in the collection at hand, have asked new questions and opened new vistas for studying one of American history's great puzzles: the rapid rise and equally precipitous fall of the most significant third-party challenge since the Civil War. In this book, James M. Beeby, whose own recent monograph, *Revolt of the Tar Heels: The North Carolina Populist Movement, 1890-1901* (2008), is among those that have broken new ground in our understanding of the politics of Populism, brings together significant contributions from a number of leading younger scholars of Southern Populism to demonstrate that the topic still has much life in it.

Taken together, the essays elucidate three major themes about the Populists. The first is their historical context. Matthew Hild's essay on the Knights of Labor in Georgia maps the connections between worker protests in the 1880s and the critique of the Bourbon political order offered by the Populists in the subsequent decade. In Hild's estimation, the Knights were not direct predecessors of the Populists, but they did "set a precedent and an agenda for advocates of 'workingmen's democracy' for decades to come," (37). Similarly, but on the other side of the timeline, Jarod Roll argues that the demise of the People's Party did not kill the agrar-



ian producerist worldview that animated the Populists. Instead, the ideas that animated support for the Populists can be found in the political visions of the Socialist Party and Marcus Garvey's Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA), organizations that offered white and black southerners two distinct vehicles for articulating their postmillennial Christian faith into a real-world critique of the dominant southern social order. While neither of these essays reduces the Populists to just another in a line of rural protest vehicles—indeed, the relative powerlessness of the groups that came before and after the 1890s tends to reinforce uniqueness of the Populist revolt—they do force us to think about what it was that made the Populists different.

One of those differences, of course, was its attempt to win elections with biracial coalitions. Leading Populists sought to organize southern whites and blacks along economic lines. While they were able to win offices in some states, their success proved fleeting. Historians have long sought to explain the Populists' failure to build a sustainable challenge to Democratic Party hegemony. None of the historians here offers a unified theory, but taken together the essays offer important insights. Lewie Reece argues that we should not become jaded by the Populists' failure to bring whites and blacks together and instead should see the transformative power of political activism in the lives of everyday Populists. Indeed, James Beeby shows that national political failures, especially the presidential election of 1896, did not dissuade North Carolinians from organizing at the grassroots, which they did to some effect until the disfranchisement of black voters in 1901. Other essayists are less sanguine, however. In his study of Grant Parish, Louisiana, Joel Sipress argues that historians would be better served to examine the operation of politics rather than the personal racial ideas of individual Populist leaders if they hope to understand the failure of coalition politics. David Silkenat, in his essay on white and black North Carolinians' perceptions of debt and credit, demonstrates that historians should pay closer attention to how cultural differences created barriers to bi-racial coalitions. Omar Ali pushes this idea further in his essay on Black Populism, showing that the movement, long depicted as an adjunct to white political activity, really must be understood as a distinct, organic political movement rooted in the experiences of black rural people, a fact that white Populist organizers failed to recognize in their attempts to emphasize the shared condition of white and black farmers.



The book's third theme deals with the other groups Populist leaders failed to connect with: urban workers. Historians have tended to view attempts to organize rural people and urban workers as the great failure of the Populists and have largely blamed labor union leaders for failing to join with farmers. Two essays in this collection complicate that view. Alicia Rodriguez shows that urban workers in Dallas played a critical role in building support for the People's Party in Texas. Michael Pierce, meanwhile, argues that it was the overt hostility of southern Populist leaders, especially Tom Watson, to urban laborers that prevented the building of bridges between the two.

This excellent collection provides us with new insights and new incentive to shake up our lectures and seminar discussions about the late nineteenth century. Beeby's ability to bring the works in this collection together is praiseworthy. While each stands well on its own, the essays both complement and argue with each other in ways that should make this a great book for the classroom.

Evan P. Bennett

Florida Atlantic University

*Beyond Blackface: African Americans and the Creation of Popular Culture, 1890-1930.* Edited by W. Fitzhugh Brundage (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011. Illustrations, index. Pp. v, 373. \$65 cloth.)

Many cultural histories have chronicled the profound influence of African Americans on emerging American popular culture of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Often, as is indicated by their titles, the subject of their focus is blackface performance. William J. Mahar's *Behind the Burnt Cork Mask: Early Blackface Minstrelsy and Antebellum American Popular Culture* (1998); Robert Toll's *Blacking Up: The Minstrel Show in Nineteenth-Century America* (1977); and Eric Lott's *Love and Theft: Blackface Minstrelsy and the American Working Class* (1993) are examples. It is praiseworthy that such performance is being recognized as the popular art form that it is, and even more praiseworthy that attention is being paid to the complex intertwining produced by cultural appropriation. However, the focus on blackface suggested by these titles risks the perhaps unintended consequence of masking, if I may, the vast diversity of African American popular culture that existed amidst

the phenomenal popularity of blackface minstrelsy. As *Beyond Blackface*, the title of W. Fitzhugh Brundage's edited collection, suggests, African American popular culture was larger than minstrelsy and was a vital component of American mass culture.

Brundage opens the collection with the introductory essay "Working in the 'Kingdom of Culture': African Americans and American Popular Culture, 1890-1930." The selection provides the work's overall rationale—that the rise of American mass culture and black popular culture are inextricable. The book is divided into four main sections: "Representations of Blackness in Nineteenth Century-Culture," "The Marketplace for Black Performance," "The Meanings and Uses of Popular Culture," and "Spectacle, Celebrity and the Black Body." The sections mirror cultural scholarship's move from material analyses of African American culture to more postmodern interpretations of spectacle and black body imagery. Between each section Brundage places a "coda" that contextualizes the set's cultural significance. This arrangement is effective in giving the whole cohesion and continuity.

The essays range widely in the contemplations of the challenges inherent in maintaining proprietorship of indigenous culture in an environment both hostile to and desirous of that culture. Stephanie Dunson's "Black Misrepresentation in Nineteenth-Century Sheet Music Illustration" and David Krasner's "The Real Thing" investigate material culture and performance, respectively, and the subversive practices African American creators employed to face the conundrums of seeing one's work simultaneously condemned and appropriated. John Stauffer's "Creating an Image in Black: The Power of Abolition Pictures" delves into abolitionist visual culture and African Americans' desire to control their own image. Other essays venture into less explored territory. John Giggie in "Buying and Selling with God: African American Religion, Race Records, and the Emerging Culture of Mass Consumption in the South" interprets recordings of sermons chanted by black preachers against an accompanying background of congregational vocals as avenues to economic self-sufficiency. These records became both memorials to African American orality and commercial components of a consumer market that used modern methods of advertising to raise money for churches, schools, and newspapers, thereby sustaining African American life within a segregated world. Davarian L. Baldwin in "Our Newcomers to the City: The Great Migration and the



Making of Modern Mass Culture" seeks to complicate perceptions of African American movement from South to North in the World War I era by analyzing the cultural cross-fertilizations such as an exodus made possible. Various essays recount the experiences of artists surmounting relentless racism in their desire for self-expression—Bert Williams, George Walker, and Oscar Micheaux among them—while others consider the cultural products themselves, from dance, to music, to the black bodies of personas such as aviator Herbert Julian, "the Black Eagle," and boxing champion Joe Louis, as they were transformed into icons of freedom and self-definition. Some of the essays in *Beyond Blackface* are stronger than others, but as a collection the edition is an invaluable introduction to the emergence of African American popular culture during a time of unprecedented changes in the nature and conveyance of culture. Scholars who have read much in this area might find the essays less than avant-garde, but all the writers offer excellent footnotes with references to other studies.

Throughout the collection the creative synergy that characterized the late 1800s to the 1930s becomes evident and, more importantly, so does the immeasurable contribution of black culture to larger American mass culture. This latter point should not be interpreted as merely a Black History Month exercise, but rather as a counter to presumptions of cultural purity. It is a credit to the breadth of these essays that they leave their reader wanting more. Beyond artists, performers, and famous athletic figures, what other more subtle manifestations of African American contributions to popular culture exist? Might the work of black architects be mined to illustrate some of the issues raised in the book? That Paul Revere Williams, for instance, designed the headquarters of Music Corporation of America (MCA), which represented talent including Bette Davis, Joan Crawford, and Eddie Cantor; that he designed homes for celebrities such as Frank Sinatra, Bill "Bojangles" Robinson, Lon Chaney, and Tyrone Power, raises potentially interesting questions regarding African American impact on popular culture. But this is not a criticism, just an observation stimulated by a grouping of thought-provoking writings.

The 1890s through 1930s was a remarkable period, one which saw the rapid scientific and technological changes that contributed to altering the American cultural landscape, and African American artists were part of his dynamism. They took advantage of innova-

tions in the recording and film industries, while making inroads in sports, aviation, and performance to forge unique expressive modes. *Beyond Blackface* goes further than recovering lost histories. It illuminates the social and intellectual history of African Americans within an expanding cultural universe.

Valerie Babb

*University of Georgia*

***My Work Is That of Conservation: An Environmental Biography of George Washington Carver.*** By Mark D. Hersey. (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2011. Acknowledgements, map, photographs, notes, index. Pp. xv, 306, \$24.95 paper.)

Tenant farming dominated the Southern landscape that George Washington Carver entered when he landed at Tuskegee Institute in 1896, recruited by Booker T. Washington to head that institution's farm program and teach courses in agriculture. In his 2011 book, *My Work Is That of Conservation*, Mississippi State University historian Mark Hersey has ably anchored Carver's story in the agricultural reform movement of the Progressive Era, along the way dispelling the childhood myths that constrained many previous readings of Carver to the flat, stereotypical "Peanut Man." While doing so, Hersey has helped in the ongoing endeavor to document the strong place of African American thought and practice in the history of U.S. environmental thought and environmentalism, alongside such books as Kimberly Smith's *African American Environmental Thought* (2007) and Dianne Glave's *Rooted in the Earth* (2010). This text is part of the University of Georgia's acclaimed series on Environmental History and the American South, with a foreword by series editor Paul Sutter. The book expands on Hersey's essay in *Land and Power: Sustainable Agriculture and African Americans* (2007), an edited volume from the Black Environmental Thought Conference held at Tuskegee in 2007.

As the quotation from Carver that forms the title of this book suggests, Carver consciously thought of his work in the mainstream of conservation. While not forcing Carver into the origin story that traditionally has centered on the preservationist-conservationist debates that engaged John Muir and Gifford Pinchot, Hersey clearly links Carver to the trends in ecology and nature study of the period. The book does not aim to be a comprehensive rewrite



of Carver's biography, only to outline Carver's intellectual and practical work as regards nature. "Carver's appreciation of nature," Hersey writes, "along with his understanding of the foundational principles of ecology, convinced him that black farmers could find succor from the political and economic vicissitudes they endured by turning to the natural world" (98). A fierce commitment to science and reverence for a divine presence in nature fueled Carver's prodigious life's work.

Born in southwestern Missouri in the mid-1860s, Carver's energy and obvious talents yielded fortuitous connections that led him to study conventional scientific agriculture at Iowa State Agricultural College at Ames. The academic training ill-prepared him for what he would find in Macon County, Alabama, at the eastern end of the state's Black Belt region. Widespread poverty and illiteracy in the Cotton Belt hampered the tenant farmers' success. The stranglehold of Jim Crow racism on the lives of African American sharecroppers and the intense demands of farm labor were hardly conducive to active participation in agricultural reform. White suspicions of black expertise meant that Carver and his apprentices had to take great care in their advocacy (157). Hersey documents also the opposition Carver's reform spirit encountered from his colleagues at Tuskegee. Moreover, most of the school's students saw their Tuskegee education as a route away from the harsh farm life they had recently abandoned, not toward it. Still, with Macon County as his laboratory and utilizing a pedagogy that respected the knowledge of local farmers, Carver nurtured a corps of students as devoted to him as he was to them. His influence was not limited to farming. One of Carver's assistants, Clinton Calloway, helped establish forty-six one-room schoolhouses for black children across Macon County that became the model for the Rosenwald Schools throughout the South (150).

Hersey outlines the ways in which Carver's teachings attempted to reshape approaches to farm management in the South as his views about agriculture evolved to meet the conditions he encountered in his investigative travels among the black tenant farmers and small landholders who produced the bulk of the region's cotton. Through frequent farm bulletins, Carver advocated sustainable practices, building up the soil both physically and chemically with mast and muck gathered from forest and swamp, manures, and compost, seeking approaches possible for African American

subsistence farmers with very little cash for commercial fertilizers and pesticides. His techniques for conserving the soil by drawing upon nature's processes may have seemed "backward looking" as Hersey writes, but they were also "subversive" (145).

Hersey assesses Carver's contributions to agricultural science, urging the reader not to overrate Carver's scientific findings, nor to minimize them. Through his writings, invited public lectures, and congressional testimony, Carver won increased national and international recognition. Washington's death in 1915 enhanced Carver's role beyond Tuskegee as a symbol of black achievement and an advocate of improved racial relations (168). Carver's work on crop diversification and wartime conservation during World War I brought additional notice. His 1921 testimony before a congressional committee in support of a proposed tariff on peanuts, the source of the Peanut Man "caricature," Hersey writes, catapulted Carver into heightened fame, even as his celebrity status blunted his effectiveness as an agricultural reformer (164, 178). The increased national presence provided new opportunities for research but took him away from his early work with black farmers, a development Carver later regretted (164). His concern about the impact of chemical-based farming on the human body put him at odds with agricultural modernizers of the period, anticipating Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* by more than twenty-five years (173). This well-written reconsideration should find a welcome audience not only among scholars of environmental history and African American thought and culture, but also among advocates seeking environmental justice and sustainable practices today.

Ellen Griffith Spears

*University of Alabama*

*River of Interest: Water Management in South Florida and the Everglades, 1948-2010.* By Matthew C. Godfrey and Theodore Catton. (Washington, DC: Published for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Jacksonville District, by the Government Printing Office, 2012. Acknowledgements, abbreviations, illustrations, bibliography, biographical information, index. Pp. xiii, 330. \$89.00, cloth.)

*River of Interests* is an ambitious attempt to tell the history of water management in southern Florida. The book's narrative



begins in earnest with the advent of the Central and Southern Florida Flood Control Project (C&SF Project) in 1948 and ends with an analysis of the uneven implementation of the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP) between 2000 and 2010. The central theme of this book is that the Everglades, and the broader Kissimmee-Lake Okeechobee-Everglades (KLOE) watershed, has been affected by a large number of often conflicting interests. Agricultural, urban, and environmental interests, among others, collectively shaped the distribution and quality of the area's water.

This book primarily examines the actions of the Army Corps of Engineers, although federal and state actions outside the purview of the Corps are examined as well. Any discussion of the Corps among environmentalists or environmental historians is bound to elicit strong emotions and wide divergences of opinions. The authors attempt to explicitly avoid engaging in arguments about the nature of the Corps, however, they do present the Corps in three different ways. The authors acknowledge that the Corps had been a destructive force, but argue that the Corps has more recently embraced environmentalism. The Corps is also presented as an agency that has largely been afflicted by "innocent ignorance" (ix). In this formulation the Corps' destructive tendencies are explained away by the law of unintended consequences. Finally, the Corps is implicitly presented as an organization that, like the Everglades itself, has been shaped by a multitude of interests. The Corps merely responded to the forces that acted upon it and either sought to control the areas' water for certain interests or, responding to other interests, pursued restoration.

*River of Interests* was actually commissioned by the Corps and printed by the US Government Printing Office, raising questions about bias and subjectivity. The authors admirably try to navigate the treacherous waters in which they have found themselves, yet their overall approach towards the Corps' actions is ultimately unsatisfying. To deal with this problem the authors commonly employ an authorial voice that derives from notions of journalistic 'balance.' For example, when the authors examine why the Modified Water Deliveries and C-111 projects designed to deliver water to Everglades National Park were delayed, they provide quotations from Army Corps officials that lay blame on park officials, then provide evidence from environmentalists that lay the fault at the feet of the Corps. Ultimately, the authors conclude that

different interests had different values, thus leading to delays, yet the authors draw no real conclusions about why these delays happened, nor do they draw meaningful conclusions about the motivations of the Corps. The authors are in a difficult situation and certainly write the best history they possibly could under the circumstances. Ultimately though, historians reading this book will be frustrated by the lack of real explanatory power that this 'balanced' approach provides. Likewise, environmentalists reading the book will find that the book's criticisms of the Corps do not go far enough.

What the book lacks in explanatory power, it makes up for with an abundance of information concerning the human alterations of the KLOE watershed between 1948 and 2010. The book provides an excellent and detailed narrative concerning not only the Corps' actions, but also those of the large number of state agencies and organizations that played important roles in the Everglades. *River of Interests* examines the Corps' flood control efforts and the later CERP proposals, but it also includes chapters on the fight over the Everglades Jetport and the Cross-Florida Barge Canal, the Everglades National Park's fights over Everglades water, the herculean efforts of Bob Graham to acquire Everglades' land, the legal history of Everglades water policy, and the restoration of the Kissimmee River.

*River of Interests* fills an important gap in the history of the Everglades. Although David McCally's excellent *Everglades: An Environmental History* (2000) examined drainage and the C&SF Project, no comprehensive historical account of the enormous multiplicity of water projects in the KLOE watershed had been written until *Rivers of Interests*. Likewise general histories of the Everglades, like Micheal Grunwald's *The Swamp* (2007), and Jack Davis' *An Everglades Providence* (2009), were unable to focus specifically on these larger water projects and on the political, economic, and social interests that complicated and shaped them. The authors of this book have synthesized an enormous amount of complex and controversial history into a beautifully illustrated book. The story of Everglades restoration is far from complete, but this book provides an excellent start in understanding the complex relationships that the United States and Florida have had with the Everglades and the larger KLOE watershed.

Chris Wilhelm

College of Coastal Georgia



*The Years of Lyndon Johnson: The Passage of Power.* By Robert A. Caro. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2012. Acknowledgements, illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. Pp. xix, 605. \$35.00.)

Robert Caro and his epic biography of Lyndon B. Johnson have become legends in the author's own lifetime. With the publication of *The Passage of Power*, Caro's work now stands at more than three thousand pages and will exceed four thousand pages with the projected final volume. This is a monumental accomplishment.

The reception of *The Passage of Power* has been overwhelmingly favorable. The *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* have printed glowing stories about the book and the author. Opinion makers from George Will to Gary Wills have lavished praise on Caro. Meanwhile, former President Bill Clinton wrote an essay for the *Times* applauding the book and Lyndon Johnson, maintaining that even in his days protesting the Vietnam war he did not hate LBJ. Naysayers are few.

*Passage of Power* deserves praise for its story of Lyndon Johnson from the beginning of his bid for the Democratic presidential nomination in 1958 through the passage of the tax cut legislation and the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Lyndon Johnson's use of power is the overriding theme. Caro argues that Johnson's understanding of power was far superior to that of John F. Kennedy and made possible the landmark legislation. The author, though, is not an unabashed admirer. He emphasizes Johnson's tortured personality and his abuse of power that manifested itself in the maltreatment of people around him and in various financial machinations. In fact, Caro suggests that in November 1963 the vice president's political position was disintegrating. With his chief lieutenant Bobby Baker facing prosecution and other investigations into LBJ's nefarious business activities gaining momentum, Johnson appeared to be on the brink of political ruin. The assassination of JFK, Caro suggests, saved Johnson from ignominy.

If Johnson's personal behavior and ethics were repulsive, he had one great redeeming virtue—his commitment to social justice. However, the realities of Texas politics constrained him. To escape the confines of Texas politics was the major reason, the author indicates, that he was willing to abandon his position as Senate majority leader for the vice presidency. Thus, Caro's LBJ is a great paradox—a vicious, self-aggrandizing politician without scruples who at the same time was inspired by a vision of social justice that he

produced as president. Caro argues that Johnson with his flawed character overcame his worst tendencies in the aftermath of the Kennedy assassination. He not only "held the country steady during a difficult time" but also "set it on a new course, a course toward social justice" (605). Caro concludes, "In the life of Lyndon Baines Johnson, this period stands out as different from the rest, as perhaps that life's finest moment, as a moment not only masterful but, in its way, heroic" (605.)

This volume also emphasizes Johnson's relationships with John and Robert Kennedy. JFK, according to Caro, did not have the commitment to racial justice, did not know how to move legislation through the congress, and would not have succeeded as LBJ did with his legislative program in 1964. On the other hand, Caro gives credit to the Kennedy brothers for their superior 1960 campaign and for JFK's handling of the Cuban Missile Crisis. He alternately praises and condemns RFK, but by the end of the book seems to agree that Robert Kennedy was becoming a noble figure.

*Passage of Power* has two great strengths. The first is the author's writing. Caro writes, tells stories, and creates character portraits as well or better than any contemporary American historian. His characterizations are brilliant. He takes small incidents and uses them to illustrate larger themes. The conflict between LBJ and RFK revolves around three such vignettes—the first meeting of the two men in 1953, a second incident in 1963 in which RFK humiliated the impotent vice president, and a final occasion in 1964 when the new president got his revenge and humiliated the attorney general.

The second great strength is the extraordinary interviewing that Caro has done. Caro talked at great length to LBJ's closest associates—Walter Jenkins, George Reedy, John Connally, Harry McPherson, Horace Busby, Abe Fortas, and James Rowe Jr., to name just the most prominent. Only Bobby Baker and Bill Moyers refused the opportunity to talk. Caro also managed to interview important members of the Kennedy entourage. Theodore Sorensen, Ted Kennedy, Arthur Schlesinger Jr., and a number of aides of Robert F. Kennedy confided the Kennedy side of the story to the author. In his note on sources, the author lists more than 330 individuals he interviewed himself. That number speaks for itself.

While there is much to praise in *Passage of Power*, there are also shortcomings and weaknesses. To start, the book is repetitious with excessive, annoying references to past volumes, the volume to come, and various obsessions of the author such as the question



of Robert Kennedy's "ruthlessness." The prose is magnificent, but not the editing.

More significantly, the book mishandles important subjects. For example, the first section of the book about the 1960 campaign is too brief and superficial. There is an excellent account of LBJ's acceptance of the vice presidential nomination and a good analysis of the November vote in Texas, but otherwise the treatment is disappointing. The author tells us nothing new about LBJ's bid for the nomination or about the general election campaign in which LBJ played a major role. Caro indulges in careless assertions (e.g. that William Knowland was a leading Republican presidential candidate in 1958 and that Ted Kennedy was responsible for delivering western state delegates for JFK), half truths (e.g. that Kennedy "carried" Alabama in the election), and dubious assumptions (e.g. that LBJ could have won the nomination and the election). Any reader interested in a comprehensive account of LBJ and the election of 1960 should look elsewhere.

Caro's flawed narrative of 1960 is the product of a disregard for new research on the election. Theodore White and his 1961 account seem to be the final authority. This disinterest in recent historical writing becomes glaring when he gets to the Cuban Missile Crisis. On this subject there is little indication in Caro's inadequate and slippery end notes that he has mastered the major works of the past twenty years. Instead, he is content to rely largely on the memoir of Robert Kennedy and the histories of Arthur Schlesinger Jr. and Theodore Sorensen.

Even Caro's greatest strengths raise issues. His stories and characterizations embellish his master narrative, but whether they serve any purpose beyond that is open to question. Overwhelmingly, the depictions of major characters beyond LBJ and the two Kennedys either lack life or reduce individuals to presidential puppets. Powerful senators such as Harry Byrd and Everett Dirksen are reduced to dupes of the president. Meanwhile, other national figures such as Dwight Eisenhower, Richard Nixon, and Barry Goldwater are little more than cardboard figures on Caro's and Johnson's stage. Republicans, in fact, count for almost nothing in Caro's version of US history between 1958 and 1964. In the end, Robert Caro has fashioned a flawed masterpiece that offers us a brilliant portrayal of Lyndon Baines Johnson and little else.

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*The Beast in Florida: A History of Anti-Black Violence.* By Marvin Dunn. (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2013. Acknowledgements, notes, bibliography, illustrations, index, Pp. xi, 336. \$29.95 cloth.)

*The Beast in Florida: A History of Anti-Black Violence*, authored by Marvin Dunn, is first-rate scholarship. A former chairperson of the Department of Psychology at Florida International University, the author uses the disciplines of psychology and history in a masterful way to lay out the dark underside of Florida's past in regard to white racial violence against blacks.

Perhaps the deepest scholarly roots of Dunn's book can be found in the 1980s in Pensacola at the University of West Florida history department. When resident historian James R. McGovern published *Anatomy of a Lynching: The Killing of Claude Neal* in 1982, the modern scholarship of American lynchings was born. Moreover, over the last three decades—nurtured and inspired by Harvard-trained historian of the South, W. Fitzhugh Brundage [*Lynching in the New South* (1993)] and John Jay College of Criminal Justice's Michael J. Pfeifer [*Lynching and American Society* (2004)], among many other able researchers and writers—lynching scholarship has grown into a major academic industry. In this context, Dunn's beautifully-written and well-designed analysis adds a unique contribution to this field of study.

Undeniably, Dunn—like McGovern, Brundage and Pfeifer—offers readers a thought-provoking description and examination of the archetypal form of American aggression that we call lynching. *The Beast in Florida* also reflects the author's profound grasp of the secondary literature and associated theories in this field.

To be sure, Dunn understands white violence against African Americans in the southern state of Florida better than any scholar I know. He clearly demonstrates that this southern domain, with its sunshine, beaches, and palm trees, has long been troubled by mob violence. In the way of historical background, we should remember that Florida (a slave state) seceded from the Union along with the Deep South after Lincoln's election and was a stalwart member of the Confederate States of America.

What is the "beast?" As a psychologist and historian, Dunn recognizes that the "beast" in Florida's and America's past is much more than historical manifestations of Sigmund Freud's "Id": the animal evolutionary past that is the core of the human personality.



It is also more than a Jungian archetype of the collective unconscious. Rather, the “beast” is a powerful and accurate historical metaphor for the white racial hatred fostered by the long shadow of centuries of slavery.

Indeed, the author profoundly comprehends the overall history of lynching in Florida, the South and the nation. He realizes that lynching is the practice of killing people by extralegal methods and occurred in the United States chiefly from the late eighteenth century through the 1960s. Lynchings took place most frequently in the southern United States from 1890 to the 1920s, with a peak in the yearly toll in 1892. As a Floridian himself, Dunn lived amidst some of the occurrences depicted in this volume. As an insider, he has added new details to the historical record. This author offers a complete, balanced examination of racially driven violence and exposes the darkest aspects of Florida history. In the process, he has covered all the bases: Rosewood, Claude Neal, Harry and Harriette Moore, Willie James Howard, the Newberry Six lynchings, and many more white racist killings. The outcome is an interracial landscape of enthralling human narratives that instructs the reader as to the history of the “beast” in American history.

Dunn probes the depth and breadth of white racial hatred as the brutality, savagery, and barbarism that it is. Like historian Winthrop Jordan, he understands that white racism and slavery grew up together as they mutually reinforced each other. He also understands that the historical implication of this condition is that white America places little value on black life in contemporary affairs. The following statistics illustrate this historical fact: the Tuskegee Institute has recorded that 3,446 blacks were lynched between 1882 and 1968.

Serious scholars of Florida history, the history of American violence, and the history of U.S. race relations will welcome this tome as a major achievement. Dunn’s splendid book finds white violence endemic to Florida’s past and, more generally, pervasive in American culture. He clearly demonstrates in exploring the Sunshine state’s racial barbarities—lynchings, race riots, and hate crime murders—that white violence against people of color and immigrants was the basic instrument whites have used to control blacks and other marginalized people. Filled with detailed indictments, the book shows how white violence burst forth in the Southern state of Florida over the past century and a half, and how such violence occurred with the knowledge and complicity of the authorities. In the case of African Americans,

this ever-present reality forged black solidarity and commitment to achieving racial justice. Dunn's disquieting compilation will enlighten and stir complacent readers. Well done, Professor Dunn.

Walter T. Howard

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***A Mess of Greens: Southern Gender and Southern Food.*** By Elizabeth S.D. Engelhardt. (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2011. Acknowledgements, notes, illustrations, bibliography, index. Pp. xi, 248. \$24.95 paper.)

In this aptly titled book, American Studies scholar Elizabeth Engelhardt chronicles five "moments" in her exploration of southern food and southern gender at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century (focusing on the period between 1870 and 1930). Exploring seemingly disparate topics like moonshine, cornbread vs. biscuits, tomato canning clubs, and curb markets, Engelhardt argues that together they show the entwined relationships of food, gender, and region. *A Mess of Greens* should be read in the context of recent studies on food, race, and gender like Psyche Williams-Forsen's *Building Houses Out of Chicken Legs: Black Women, Food, & Power* (2006) and Rebecca Sharpless's *Cooking in Other Women's Kitchens: Domestic Workers in the South, 1865-1960* (2010), as well as studies on southern foodways like Frederick Douglass Opie's *Hog and Hominy: Soul Food From Africa to America* (2008) and Marcia Ferris Cohen's *Matzoh Ball Gumbo: Culinary Tales of the Jewish South* (2005). Engelhardt's work is a welcome addition to this illustrious body of scholarship in that she brings a critical eye to the contested and socially-constructed nature of "white" identities, femininity/womanhood, and place in the United States.

Engelhardt takes us through a stimulating search for the often hidden stories imbedded in the production and consumption of food in the South. Positioned at the cross-roads of Critical Food Studies (a field which she has been engaged in defining), Feminist Studies (particularly utilizing a race/class/gender analytical frame), and American Studies (especially its interdisciplinarity) she engages not just disparate stories, but also reads disparate "data" sources: archival materials, letters, diaries, literature, photographs, government records, song lyrics, and cookbooks. Engelhardt is mostly successful in her endeavors, weaving a



series of narratives which are convincing and build successively on one another.

*A Mess of Greens* begins in the first chapter with moonshine and the struggle to sort out the post-Civil War food terrain as both agriculture and industry in the southern states had been severely impacted. She argues that though moonshine is a food item that had recently been legislated outside the boundaries of propriety, its actual status on the borders of acceptability make it uniquely positioned to reveal the central tensions and anxieties surrounding food and womanhood at the start of the twentieth-century. Engelhardt traces this story, however, not primarily through historical record (of which there is scant material), but through a genre of literature popular at the time—novels, short stories, and magazine stories focused on the Progressive era's rhetoric surrounding the New Woman of the South and the moonshiner. Analyzing Lucy McElroy's novel *Juletty* (1901), George Creswell Gill's *Beyond the Blue Grass* (1908), and Catherine Frances Cavanaugh's nonfictional magazine report "Stories of Our Government Bureau" (1911), which posited moonshining as a serious option for women who had been left out of society's domestic safety net through, for example, widowhood. Engelhardt also uses Martha S. Giello's novella *Old Andy, the Moonshiner* (1909) and Sherwood Anderson's novel *Kit Brandon: A Portrait* (1936) to think through the possibilities of moonshine, commerce, and the development of the New Woman.

In the second chapter, "Biscuits & Cornbread: Race, Class, and Gender Politics of Women Baking Bread," Engelhardt expands upon the ideas of the New Woman of the South which were introduced in the first chapter. Here the center of the narratives is the relationship between southern women of different social locations—college educated, upper- and middle-class white women and poor women from the rural and mountainous areas of the south. The college women, who were developing their careers as teachers and activists (social reformers) and were at the center of the Progressive Movement of the time, ventured "deeper" into the south to educate women about proper womanhood. This work began (and ended for the poor women) in the kitchen—with cooking lessons. More specifically, these reformers engaged in instruction about the unsanitary nature of corn bread and the uplifting qualities of the beaten biscuit, lectured on proper kitchen layout, and identified the tools women would need to move into modernity. Engelhardt's writing in this chapter is clear and compelling and

brings into much sharper focus the ideas only hinted at in the first chapter. Focusing on reformers like Wellesley-educated May Stone and Katherine Petit, who kept copious journals of their work, and the resistances these women met from their students and the larger body politic, Engelhardt is better able to tell the story of how beaten biscuits, and the labor required to produce them, was becoming increasingly less viable.

By far the strongest chapter in this collection is the third one, "Canning Tomatoes: Growing 'Better and More Perfect Women'." The Tomato Clubs came into fruition out of women's work with bread, but approaches the question of social uplift not with a top-down moralistic tone. The women leaders (Jane McKimmon, Marie Samuella Cromer, Susie V. Powell, Ella G. Agnew, and Virginia Moore) organized poor girls throughout the region to grow, process, and sell tinned tomatoes. This movement, which had its nexus from about 1911 through 1920, offered girls opportunities to make money to use as they wished. Engelhardt's telling of this tale is made rich by the historical record left behind for her to study: not just the journals and diaries of the leaders, but many of the original scrapbooks of the girls themselves.

The story told in the next chapter is a perfect foil for the one about canning tomatoes. While the previous chapter is rooted in an exploration of the bounty of the land, of the use of girls' time for themselves and their families, and the possibility of commerce, this one focuses on hunger and disease. The rise of pellagra during a time of seemingly great productivity is creatively analyzed in "Will Work for Food: Mill Work, Pellagra, and Gendered Consumption." The mill workers' reliance on biscuits, cornbread, moonshine, and canned goods as the sole sources of nourishment led to great physical decline. Engelhardt draws from a variety of materials to tell this story, but most significantly novels, which portray the working lives of those who toiled many long hours and perished in the mill.

In many ways, the final two chapters read as an extended conclusion. In "Cookbooks and Curb Markets: Wild Messes of Southern Food and Gender and Market Bulletins: Writing the Mess of Greens Together," Engelhardt introduces the metaphor of "mess" and its uses in the context of southern food, politics, and culture. While it is a compelling metaphor (that may have been better introduced in the beginning of the book rather than its end), it also signals a messiness of the final two chapters which leave open many questions and avenues for exploration. There are



no pat conclusions or grand theories ... just a great deal of very provocative stories about southern food and southern gender. So while frustrating on some levels, it is also generative.

This is a challenging work which, though quite pleasurable to read, is I believe best suited for scholars and graduate students in the fields of History, American Studies, Cultural Studies, Food Studies, Literature, African American Studies, and Women & Gender Studies. Sections of the text would work in undergraduate courses (I intend to teach the "Biscuits and Cornbread" chapter in my undergraduate food studies course). However, those outside of the academy who have more than a lay-persons knowledge and interest in southern foodways would also find this book accessible.

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***The Florida Folklife Reader.*** Edited by Tina Bucuvalas. (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2012. Acknowledgements, appendices, bibliography, index. Pp. xx, 295. \$25 paper.)

Most everyone knows not to judge a book by its cover. An objective reviewer should likewise not form an opinion about a book by its introduction's third paragraph, but Tina Bucuvalas hooked me with this statement about Florida: "It was the most complex place I had ever been, it was a mess, and I have never been able to get enough of it" (xi). Her collection of fifteen essays on Florida folklife captures that complexity. What makes Florida distinctive is the diverse, vibrant mosaic of cultural traditions that the term "folk" includes.

An editor such as Bucuvalas, therefore, faces the hard task of choosing from a wealth of representative materials. To manage the "colliding and merging" of cultures, she organizes *The Florida Folklife Reader* geographically, beginning in the Keys, then moving north through the state and west through the Panhandle. Authors include folklorists, anthropologists, and ethnomusicologists—those tied to universities and public programs as well as those who work independently. Some essays focus on a subject: Martha Ellen Davis on Peruvian music in Miami, Anna Lomax Wood on Greek *tsambouna* in Tarpon Springs, Laurie K. Sommers on Sacred Harp singing in the Okefenokee. Other contributions explore a practice through a person: Michael Kernahan as pan, or steel drum,

performer (Stephen Stuempfle), Richard Seaman as fiddler and storyteller (Gregory Hansen). Some essays survey storytelling, foodways, and other folkways within a group: South Florida African Americans and West Indians (Joyce M. Jackson), Miami Nicaraguans (Katherine Borland), statewide maritime culture (Florida Folklife Program).

The results are uneven. The best essays explore ideas rather than convey information. Bucuvalas's own work on Cuban patronal festivals stands as a model. The piece succeeds not only because of its rich descriptive details, but also because of its broader point. Bucuvalas demonstrates how immigrants from the town of Vueltras have adapted festival customs, recreating and reimagining community despite the potential fragmentation of a new location. Other standouts include Jerrilyn McGregory's "The Rest is Up to You and Me," which studies Sunday Morning Band, Panhandle burial societies that assist members with proper internment and systems of mourning. McGregory links organizations of Sunday Morning Band to a larger "matrix of memory" (235), that of the African Diaspora, thus connecting her field work to a compelling thesis. Similarly, Martha Nelson's "Nativism and Cracker Revival at the Florida Folk Festival" probes a question connected to the book's title: what, exactly, does one mean by the term "folk"? For the non-profit organization Friends of Florida Folk, the word refers to an identity that is primarily white or Cracker. Academic and professional folklorists disagree, Nelson explains, preferring a definition that is "committed to furthering cultural democracy" (220). The implications for social policy are clear in Nelson's view of "folklore as public discourse about the spaces where the individual and society meet" (220).

The writing suffers in essays that do not consider larger connections and questions. Brent Cantrell's introductory survey of Upper and Middle Keys folklife attempts to cover traditions of fishing and trapping; boatbuilding; sail-, net-, and trap-making; sponging and scavenging; shell and monumental sculpture; foodways; music; and woodcarving—all in seven pages. In other words, the essay is too general to say anything of substance. Similar points can be made about short essays by Ormond H. Loomis on Seminole chickees and Stavros K. Frangos on Greek cemeteries. Conversely, the closing essay on statewide maritime practices offers many details at the expense of coherence. Multiple authors—each tackling a different subject from storytelling to boats, fishing gear, music, and



foodways—may prevent this potentially excellent piece from delivering on its promise. Nancy Michael, who wrote the introduction, makes an important point: “maritime folklife needs increased attention in efforts to maintain what is distinctive about the state” (239). But Michael’s point gets lost amid information overkill.

Despite a few setbacks, *The Florida Folklife Reader* is recommended reading for experts and general audiences alike. Those who know the field know Bucuvalas and most, if not all, of her respected contributors. The book provides a significant overview of contemporary Florida folklike. Supporting material helps to round out what the fifteen essays contained here can only survey. An extensive Bibliography points readers toward essential resources. Appendixes describe the work of key figures in early folklife research and of current state programs. As a faculty member in a Florida Studies program, I would recommend the book to colleagues in multiple disciplines. As a Florida resident, I like the book for different reasons—its various essays act as travel guides for wonderful one-tank trips, pointing me toward good Nicaraguan food in Miami, House of God churches for steel guitar in Central Florida, and so much more. As a parent, I appreciate the volume for its constant evocations of what is special about the place we call home: my eleven-year-old, our family fisherman, got many doses of wisdom from “Maritime Folklife.”

Both Bucuvalas (from California) and I (from Alabama) are transplants to the state. Before moving here, I shared the outsider’s perspective of Florida as beaches and Disney World—beyond that is the rural South, and past that lie big cities where retired people live. The variety of people, environments, cultural practices, and historical traditions continues to intrigue me. *The Florida Folklife Reader* foregrounds that variety: like that sentence in its third paragraph, the book lures readers in with the rich possibilities the state has to offer and continues to remind us why we stay hooked.

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