Reviews

Enduring Legacy: Rhetoric and Ritual of the Lost Cause. By W. Stuart Towns. (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2012. Pp. xvii + 190, notes, bibliography, index. $37.50, cloth)

"Southerners are very strange about that war," Shelby Foote says with a sly smile in Ken Burns' PBS series on the Civil War. To those outside of the region, the commemoration of this period of American history often seems peculiar, and an interest in Confederate heritage is regarded with amused suspicion at best and outright suspicious vehemence at worst. Foote's observation comes to mind often when reading Stuart Towns' new book on the commemoration of the Confederacy. It features an iconic image on its cover as a four-wheel drive SUV flies a Confederate flag from its jury-rigged holder situated in its trailer hitch, and even the title *Enduring Legacy* may spark some potential readers to furrow their brows. But don't judge this book by its cover. Towns is a thorough researcher and a fine scholar. His history of rhetorical strategies that support the mythic images of the Lost Cause isn't revisionist history. Rather than exonerating the Old South, Towns explores how this imagery developed during Reconstruction, and he seeks to explain its persistence throughout time.

Towns is a retired chair of the Communication Studies Department at Southeast Missouri State University. His approach is to look at selections from commemorative speeches to craft a social history. This approach connects historians such as John Bodnar with rhetoricians like Walden W. Braden whom Towns sites as important influences for showing ways to study oratory and commemorative discourse in relation to social constructions of memory. These researchers emphasize the value of studying the epideictic genre of speechmaking, as these ceremonial speeches provide important primary documents for elucidating the central values that emerge in commemoration. The focus on scholarship on epideictic rhetoric, Towns demonstrates, can be sharpened by connecting theories of epideictic rhetoric with the anthropological and folkloristic scholarship on ritual and display. Towns provides special attention to the theories of Victor Turner, and he also explores how the public performance of ritual can provide clues for understanding the importance of commemoration, itself, as an important cultural value within the South.

Following an accessible introduction to his topic and rhetorical theory, Towns gives us five chapters that explore the rhetoric of the Lost Cause. Chapter One provides a context for ceremony and speechmaking in the Postwar South. Showing how commemorative events developed from 1865 into the 1920s, this chapter gives a context for understanding elements of the specific symbolism as well as the ardor for commemorating the Old South during this time period. Towns shows how the idea of the Lost Cause formed among competing and complementary visions of the region, and he shows how the symbolism resonated socially and psychologically within a vanquished people. Following this chapter, he organizes his book thematically. Chapter Three demonstrates ways that orators defended the Confederacy and the Old South during Reconstruction, and Chapter Four explores the rhetorical construction of individuals and groups who became martyrs and scapegoats of the Confederacy. The book's remaining chapters look at the rhetorical underpinnings and overt expressions of central values within the New South and the modern south. Towns demonstrates ways that southerners have

used rhetoric and rituals of commemoration not only to reconstruct and redeem the South but also to move toward attempts for reconciliation. The major impetus for reconciliation has not, however, been focused on resolving the deep racial divisions that are present in the discourse about the Civil War but rather a reconciliation that reaffirms and rearticulates southern identity within American nationalism.

Enduring Legacy offers a strong analysis of core values that are often invoked to validate beliefs that the Lost Cause was just and valorous. The importance of themes such as southern honor, a deep sense of duty, and a deep attachment to place and community have been well explored by numerous scholars, writers, artists, and others who seek to understand southern cultural history. Reading excerpts from actual speeches that foreground these values adds significantly to our understanding of social history. It is to Towns's credit that he moves deeply beyond simply showcasing the presence of these values in speeches. Rather, he explores how they also are connected to deeper historical patterns, including European colonialism, American beliefs in manifest destiny, patriarchal constructions of gender, and most significantly white supremacy. Although slavery is one of the deepest manifestations of white supremacism, the attempt to come to terms with its legacy is not simply a burden that southern descendants of slave-holders must bear. It's clear that all Americans need a deep understanding of the persistence of this ideology in American history, and it's not solely southern slave-owners and their descendants who have benefitted from its legacy.

Throughout the book, Towns's own ethos emerges as a writer with great sympathy for the sacrifices made by individuals and families, and he shows how the deep emotions evoked in the aftermath of the Civil War become reconfigured in a variety of ideologies and rhetorical positions. His writing on rhetorical attempts to justify the validity of the cause is especially compelling in this respect. Revisionist explanations of the root cause of the Civil War—that the conflagration stemmed from the issue of states' rights rather than from slavery—emerged soon after Appomattox. Towns shows how this rhetorical strategy emerged in relation to conflicting values within the era of Union occupation. There's an irony, here, that could have been better explored. Namely, Confederate apologists and sympathizers hold onto the affirmation of the Constitution in articulating the importance of states' right over federalism. The logical inconsistency, however, is that affirming states' rights—as enshrined in the Constitution—also affirms the legitimacy of national government. When speakers referenced American Constitutional Rights to exonerate Confederate leaders and followers as patriots, they usually engaged in a considerable twisting of logic. Their attempts to cast Confederate leaders and their followers as patriots defended them from charges of treason, but the idea of American national identity precludes their idea of the Confederacy as a nation-state.

Perhaps our 21st-century vantage point allows contemporary readers to take a more critical view of the rhetorical strategies used to justify the Lost Cause. Nevertheless, it is challenging to believe that even 19th century audiences accepted the specious claims proffered in these speeches. It doesn't take a great deal of critical thinking to separate the reality from the rhetorical flourishes in many of these claims. Ordinary soldiers were portrayed as paragons of masculine virtue, passionately devoted to the southern sense of honor and duty. Southern women were venerated as genteel belles or as self-sacrificing matrons who willingly sacrificed their sons on the stone altar of the Lost Cause. Robert E. Lee and Stonewall Jackson were cast as demigods, cited by a number of orators as the greatest generals in American history and enshrined with Achilles as epic heroes. The apotheosis of Lee was revealed in imagery that cast him in Messianic terms, cloaking him as a Christ-like martyr who gave of the South so that others might live. Although Towns offers

little historical evidence to counter these claims, his exploration of these themes shows how they actually persist in some elements in our contemporary imagination. The work of debunking them is less that task of a rhetorician who wishes to explore the representation of history and more the task of the orthodox historian, and *Enduring Legacy* provides ample examples of dubious claims that will provide useful fodder for historical inquiry.

The book's strength is in its breadth of research, its relevant and engaging examples of oration, and in the overall presentation. Historians and scholars of commemorative discourse and ritual will find excellent resources for further study. One compelling line of research would be the connections between the Lost Cause rhetoric and ritual and the formation of political ideology. The primary cause of the Civil War clearly was slavery and its attendant beliefs in white supremacism within nationalist ideology. Other writers have explored how the majority of soldiers were not slave-owners and how many of these soldiers appeared to accept the value of individual and states' rights as justifying their participation in the conflict. It would be worthwhile to further examine how epideictic rhetoric and public rituals specifically contributed to the ideological constructs that justified both the immediate conflict and postwar beliefs in the Lost Cause. Elements of this ideological foundation have been used throughout American history for a range of political machination. Towns's book shows how various articulations of the ideology have been evoked in the early 20th century to support the Ku Klux Klan and other terrorist organizations, and his writing provides an important analysis of Lost Cause rhetoric and its role in the speeches of those who opposed the Civil Rights movements. Understanding the rhetoric within the wider context of ideological formation may also help to suggest ways to question the values that emerge in commemorating not just the Civil War but war, in general. This type of study may provide further insight into ways to understand and preserve history without venerating heritage solely in an uncritical and overly celebratory manner.

--Gregory Hansen

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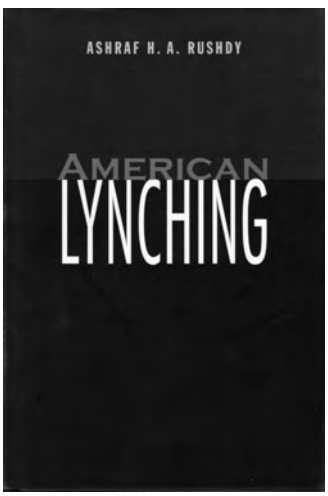
American Lynching. By Ashraf H.A. Rushdy (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012. Pp. xvi + 212. preface, acknowledgements, notes, bibliography, index. $35, cloth; $25, paper)

A cover blurb on Ashraf H.A. Rushdy's *American Lynching* calls it "a point of entry for anyone interested in the tragic and sordid history of American lynching." Rushdy is seeking cultural wellsprings of lynching's proliferation, from Revolutionary-era punishment to the 1998 Texas dragging of James Byrd, Jr. Indeed, Mr. Byrd's murder prompted Rushdy to explore others' conclusions about lynching and to consider the word's evolving meaning.



He opens with competing, turn-of-the-twentieth-century visions in the Thomas Dixon, Jr. books on which D.W. Griffith based *The Birth of a Nation*, and in "The United States of Lyncherdom" by Mark Twain. "Lynching," Rushdy proposes, "is not an aberration in American history . . . but a result of the fundamental contradictions that faced the nation at its origins"(p. xii): enslavement and freedom.

Lynching was "a practice that helped define the boundaries of the nation," so he asks: "Is lynching American, then?" (p. ix) Rushdy blames structures that gave rights to some but not others. Historians of lynching agree that seeds of lynching's proliferation grew from white insecurities over African American independence, and those lynchings that punished rapes only took place if white men were offended (p. 99).

Because specific definitions and popular connotations evolved over time, Rushdy proposes a "capacious definition" that identifies "the rudimentary elements that make an event a lynching and distinguish it from another sort of act" (p. 5). He laments the lack of an ironclad definition encompassing antebellum murders of enslaved individuals, Reconstruction-era spectacle lynchings, Western "popular justice," deaths in race riots and town-wide racial "cleansings," and Civil Rights-era murders like Emmett Till's. Rushdy wants an accurate death count without seeming to realize the practice of history is not so simple. He criticizes foundational lynching historians for privileging existing data—however imprecise—over speculation, but oddly does not mention the likely thousands of lynchings that never appeared in newspapers or in Tuskegee University and NAACP statistics.

An English professor, chair of the African American Studies Program, and director of the Center for African American Studies at Wesleyan University, Rushdy attended Cambridge University and University of Alberta. He previously has published books on John Milton, slave narratives, African American fiction, and *The End of American Lynching*, also in 2012. Yale University Press calls *American Lynching* a "meticulously researched and accessibly written interpretive history." *Kirkus Reviews* says it is "triumphant," and it won The Hurston/Wright Foundation's Legacy Award 2013 in Nonfiction.

Using *American Lynching* as an entrée would be useful to readers knowing little about lynching; he looked at most of the foundational sources and scholars. But depending on this work to understand lynching's historiography may muddy the waters. Rushdy believes historians paint lynching with a too-broad brush: "Let us now trace some of the problems that have emerged in particular from historians' use of . . ." (p. 9) and "the definitions . . . used by scholars of lynchings are problematic to the extent that . . ." (p. 17). He laments "tunnel vision in even the most astute historians" who use political economist James Elbert Cutler's 1905 *Lynch-Law: An Investigation into the History of Lynching in the United States* (p. 13). Cross-disciplinary interpretation is extremely valuable—in history, as in Rushdy's own fields—but his not infrequent critical refrains may be off-putting.

Imprecisions and omissions also will disappoint historians and others. He names the "Association of White Women to Prevent Lynching" (pp. 113–114). Is this Jesse Daniel Ames's Association of Southern Women for the Prevention of Lynching (ASWPL)? He uses historian of religion Donald Mathews, but misspells his name (p. 131ff.) and omits him from the bibliography. He quotes Jacquelyn Dowd Hall on lynching photographs as "folk pornography" (p. 75), but ignores Amy Wood's *Lynching and Spectacle: Witnessing Racial Violence in America* (The University of North Carolina Press, 2009), which revolves around photographs and popular connotations. Nor does he use anti-lynching champion *The Chicago Defender*, the African American newspaper founded in 1905. He calls a handful of newspaper articles "a concerted media effort" (p. 32), and quotes the *Portsmouth Journal of Literature and Politics* (p. 30). Is that New Hampshire or Virginia? Rebecca Latimer Felton, he says, was the first woman to become a Senator (p. 117), technically true, though misleading (a recess appointment, she was sworn in and served twenty-four hours). First elected, serving thirteen years was Senator Hattie Caraway of Arkansas.

Rushdy's *American Lynching* is an impas-

sioned plea for the many thousands who died by vigilante violence borne of early American values. Is lynching American, then? The many distractions almost bury his resounding "yes."

--Stephanie Harp

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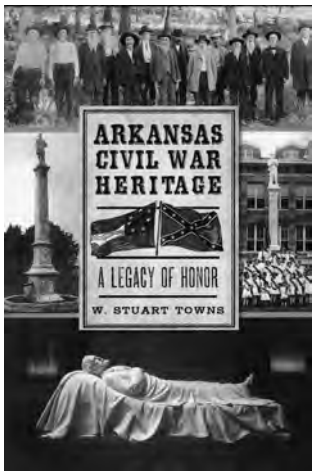
Arkansas Civil War Heritage: A Legacy of Honor. By W. Stuart Towns. (Charleston, SC: The History Press, 2013. Pp. 160, acknowledgments, appendix, notes, index. $19.99, paperback)

The Civil War remains the nation's costliest conflict in American history with over 600,000 lives lost on both sides. The South in particular paid a tremendous price as the conflict was fought largely in its territory, and its losses were much higher than the North, given its much smaller population and its pool of available manpower. To cope with the magnitude of the loss and the scale of devastation, the survivors clung to the myth of the Lost Cause. In *Arkansas Civil War Heritage*, Stuart Towns analyzes how Confederate Memorial Day celebrations, monument dedications, and the activities of the United Confederate Veterans (UCV) and its offshoots, the Sons of Confederate Veterans (SCV) and the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC), helped to spread the Lost Cause narrative to generations of White Southerners.

In Chapter One, Towns lays out the three subjects of his book. He describes the impetus behind the celebration of a Confederate Memorial Day, or Decoration Day, and how it grew out of an earlier movement led by White Southern women to bury the remains of Confederate soldiers in cemeteries. The movement first began in Georgia, but coalesced into a general movement in the South for the observance of a Confederate Memorial Day. In addition, various monument associations were formed to commemorate the fallen. In many cases, these fundraising efforts were the work of women, especially members of the UDC, who held a variety of fundraising activities. Finally Towns looks at the evolution of Confederate veterans' organizations, particularly the UCV, as well as its affiliates, the SCV and the UDC.



But the real focus of the book is on Arkansas, and in the next chapter Towns explores the history of Confederate Memorial Day in that state. It started when various Ladies' Memorial Associations formed in different towns and cities, the most influential being the Southern Memorial Association (SMA) that formed in Fayetteville in 1872. The SMA's goal was to purchase land for a cemetery to intern the many Confederate soldiers in the area who fell in battle or died of disease. The success of their fundraising efforts led to the creation of the Fayetteville Confederate Cemetery, which is on the National Register and continues to be run by the SMA. Towns also examines other memorial associations in the state and provides a state-wide survey of the various Confederate burial grounds. We learn that most Confederate soldiers died not in battle, but from disease.

Chapter 3 is the longest and most comprehensive. It investigates the various Confederate monuments across the state. Towns found fifty-three Confederate monuments in the state: either classical obelisks or statues. He divides this chapter by region. He starts his journey in the northeast at Batesville, which was the first to build a monument in that region; he then proceeds to Jacksonport and Searcy, which feature

the more classic Confederate statues. Towns speculates that the absence of major monuments in the northeast might have something to do with its pro-Unionist sentiments. On the other hand, the southeast, the hot-bed of secession, contains "more of the traditional statuesque monuments" (p. 51), with Helena-West Helena having by far the most. Moving to the southwest, Towns states that Camden "claims the honor of erecting the first Confederate monument in Arkansas (1866)" (p. 66), while other major towns such as Washington, El Dorado, Hot Springs, and Arkadelphia erected monuments. Although Towns does not state a reason, perhaps the large number of monuments in this region has something to do with it being the last to surrender to the Union? In the northwest, Towns expected to find fewer monuments given the large numbers of Unionists, but he was surprised to find that it had even more Confederate monuments than the eastern regions of the state. He does not state the reason why, but it seems fairly obvious. Most of the important battles in the state were fought in the northwestern corner and the region has a large number of Confederate gravesites. Finally, Towns examines the monuments in Central Arkansas with the highest concentration being in the Little Rock area.

In Chapter Four, Towns explores the history of Confederate veterans organizations in Arkansas. By the end of the 19th century, their annual reunions became a common feature of the landscape. In 1911, the National Chapter of the UCV met in Little Rock. The event, described in detail by Towns, drew an astonishing 100,000 veterans and their families for a week long reunion and the grand parade an estimated 150,000 spectators. Little Rock would not host another UCV event until 1928 when slightly over a thousand veterans made the trip. Little Rock would also see a final UCV reunion in 1949, attended by only four veterans. Towns also examines the many local Confederate reunions around the state. Most were small affairs like the ones that met annually in Searcy from 1895 to 1929. A reunion at Prairie Grove in 1886 was unique in including Union veterans who fought in the battle.

The final chapter looks at Civil War heritage in the 21st century, particularly the efforts of the Arkansas Civil War Sesquicentennial Commission (ACWSC) to support a statewide effort to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the Civil War. Towns believes that the efforts of the veterans and their descendants have helped to lay the foundation for the current interest in the Sesquicentennial whose commission is committed to promoting a broader understanding of the Civil War, particularly of groups who have been excluded or marginalized by the Lost Cause narrative. This mixing of the old and the new is best exemplified by the author's praise of the city of Helena-West Helena for promoting itself as a major heritage site and taking in the views of both the North and South as well as those of White and Black Southerners. Civil War enthusiasts in both Arkansas and outside the state will certainly enjoy this book for not only its treatment of Confederate monuments, but also for the numerous photographs taken by the author that accompany the text.

--Edward Tenace

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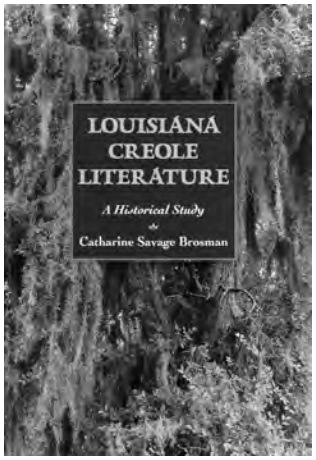
Louisiana Creole Literature: A Historical Study. By Catharine Savage Brosman. (Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 2013. Pp. 187, notes, selected bibliography, index, $55 hardcover)

Until recently, the vast majority of Louisiana's Creole literature was neglected or misunderstood by most scholars and literary critics. Since Louisiana is the only former French colony within the boundaries of the United States, its position within the context

of American and even Southern literature is quite unique. In many ways, Louisiana shares closer ties with the French Caribbean and European traditions than it does with the rest of North America. Much of Louisiana's repertoire was written in French, making it a challenge for critics who lack fluency in the language to fully assess the literary quality of the works. Other critics have simply been too intimidated or overwhelmed by the complexities of *créolité* to attempt an analysis of this body of literature.



Scholarly interest in French literature and long residence in New Orleans, coupled with a familiarity with the region's literary landscape and acquaintance with several local authors, led Catharine Savage Brosman, professor emerita of French at Tulane University, to finally fill the void. Her much-needed work entitled *Louisiana Creole Literature: A Historical Study* not only provides an important historical overview of the state's diverse Creole population, but also, and perhaps more significantly, offers a survey and analysis of their literary contributions.

The very term "Creole" begs explanation and still raises questions regarding skin color, heritage, and ethnic origins. Brosman wisely opens her exploration of Creole literature with two chapters devoted to providing the historical and cultural background of Louisiana's Creole people. She acknowledges that for some, the term Creole refers exclusively to white children born in the New World, but whose parents hailed from the Old World, especially France. For others, Creole means "African mixed with whatever landed here [in Louisiana]" (p. 6). By discussing the shifting definitions of the term over time and broadening the scope to include Creoles who identified themselves as such, Brosman sets the stage for an excellent survey of some of the most popular and obscure Creole writers of the past three centuries.

Brosman arranges the subsequent eleven chapters in chronological order, beginning with the earliest priests and explorers who documented their New World experiences and concluding with twentieth and twenty-first century poets and prose writers who struggled to find and maintain their Creole voice amidst the cacophony of American and Southern literature. She notes, however, that although Louisiana Creole literature "constitutes a discrete body of writing and a rich literary legacy, not just a miscellany, one must recognize that it is not coherent and unified in all aspects, nor should the materials be forced into tight categories." She proceeds to explain that "between Francophone poet Adrien Rouquette (born 1813), a defender of white Creole society, and the popular Anglophone novelist Anne Rice (born 1941), who drew a sympathetic portrait of mixed-race Creoles in the 1840s, there is a broad gulf, not just chronological" (pp. 21–22).

Perhaps one of the greatest strengths of Brosman's survey is the manner in which she discusses the various time periods, cultural mores, writing styles, and personal backgrounds of the different authors in order to illuminate collectively the distinctive aspects of the Creole literary tradition. Brosman structures the majority of her work to resemble a series of encyclopedic entries about numerous Louisiana authors. Loosely arranged according to chronological and thematic order, she provides the literary and historical context for each author, then a short biographical sketch, a summary of their major works, and a comment or two regarding the significance or impact of their contribution, as well as how their writing fits into the larger picture.

While Brosman's work contributes significantly to a broader understanding and appreciation of Creole literature as a whole, she does not romanticize the tradition as so many others

have done. She recognizes and identifies mediocrity when appropriate, making statements such as "the novel is without literary genius and is excessively moralizing" (p. 51). She seeks to distinguish fact from myth despite the use of old fictional devices such as "found manuscripts" and "fireside tales," inserting comments such as "either or both statements might be true; probably neither is" (p. 107). Brosman also challenges critics who impose their modern sensibilities on literature from another era. For example, she observes that while feminist critics extoll the writings of Kate Chopin, "in comparison with various Continental and British women of roughly the same period or much earlier, Chopin was not bold and was never revolutionary" (p. 123).

Although Brosman explicitly states in her preface that her intended audience is "literary scholars, historians, and aficionados in America, Great Britain, and elsewhere in Europe" (p. vii), her work would also appeal to anyone interested in gaining a better understanding of how cultural stereotypes are developed, reinforced, or debunked by literature. Those interested in minority or ethnic studies would also find this to be a compelling examination of how writers have treated racial and cultural complexities over time.

Brosman's work introduces readers to Louisiana's Creole literature through the eyes of those intimately acquainted with the region and its people. Brosman cites a variety of authors, including those who were famous and obscure, dark-skinned and light-skinned, native and non-native, male and female. Whether these writers expressed themselves in French or English, venerated or vilified Creole culture, published volumes of historical significance or wrote just a handful of poems, Brosman effectively demonstrates how they all contributed to Louisiana's Creole literary repertoire.

--Elista Istre

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Game Changers: The Rousing Legacy of Louisiana Sports. By Marty Mulé. (Lafayette, LA: University of Louisiana at Lafayette Press, 2013. Pp. x + 213, photo credits, $39.95, hardcover)

During this digital age it is common to Google answers to questions to which you do not know the answer. What about the questions that you do not know to ask? *Game Changers* by Marty Mulé has a plethora of information about the history of Louisiana sports that most casual sports fans did not know occurred. This book is an overview of historical people, places, venues, and events that graced Louisiana. Mulè has broken the book down into sections by sport: football, baseball, men's basketball, women's basketball, boxing, horse racing, golf, track and field in that order. It closes with a bonus section titled "Lagniappe," and a tribute to the Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame. The order of the book suggests the order of importance of the sports, with football being the first section and over half of the book dedicated to the sport. This is not surprising since football is king in the South. Baseball and men's basketball also have a significant amount of the book contributed to them with the rest of the sports garnering as few as five pages. *Game Changers* would be a great book for any fan of Louisiana sports.

This is not a typical record book dedicated

to records and statistics. It is a storybook collection of one- to three-page stories detailing coaches, players, games, records, and venues. The collection came through stories that the author wrote at the *Times-Picayune* and other stories that he researched or were told to him. As a sports fan in general, but not one specifically of Louisiana sports, I found the best feature of the book to be that it tells stories of the most important events and people and does not just state facts and numbers. That makes for an enjoyable read. For example, one such story titled "The Homecoming" (p. 56) details the evening of September 25, 2006—the Monday Night Football game in which the Saints returned to the Superdome for the first time since Hurricane Katrina. That was a very important time in American history and sports played a huge role in the recovery of New Orleans during the devastation of Hurricane Katrina.

As a coach I found great pleasure in reading about coaches who are extremely successful but do not get much national recognition. There are sections dedicated to coaches like Eddie Robinson of Grambling and Arnett W. Mumford of Southern who combined to win fourteen National Black Championships and more than five-hundred football games. Even more important than the documentation of their success on the field is the impact that these coaches had on their players during such difficult times of racial tension. They taught their players to be great young men on and off the field. There is a section dedicated to high school coach John Thomas Curtis of Curtis Christian School who is only one of two coaches to win over five-hundred football games at any level. In a state mostly known for Louisiana State University; it was enjoyable to read about other important figures from small colleges and high schools.

Most people think of the New Orleans Saints and LSU Tigers when you mention Louisiana sports. Even though this book does pay tribute to those programs, it also gives due recognition to Tulane, McNeese State, Grambling, Louisiana Tech, Southern University, Northeast Louisiana, Southwestern Louisiana, and others. Homage is paid to the great athletes that were born and played in Louisiana or took their talents elsewhere. Figures like Terry Bradshaw, Eli and Peyton Manning, Karl Malone, Robert Parrish, Will Clark, Kim Mulkey and Willis Reed to name a few. The number of professional athletes produced by such a small state is topped by only a couple of states that are tremendously larger in population. That alone is a testament to the rich history of Louisiana sports. It would be remiss not to mention athletes who were born outside of the Pelican State but chose to attend school in Louisiana or play for a Louisiana sports team. Players like Pistol Pete Maravich, Shaquille O'Neal, Drew Brees and others are also recognized for their contribution to the state.

This book offers the opportunity to read not only about the infamous tales in Louisiana sports history, but also about the little known people, events, and places that have shaped the sports narratives we know today. Billy Allgood, for example, whose story is detailed in the section "The Face of the Wildcats" (p. 200), is a prime example of a man whose name many people may not recognize but who made a tremendous impact. It's these little known stories that make this book so significant because they present players and coaches who are not the most famous, but who were still able to make significant contributions to other peoples' lives and the state of Louisiana. In this way, I found the book to be inspiring: we can all be *Game Changers* no matter where we are.

--Sarah Condra

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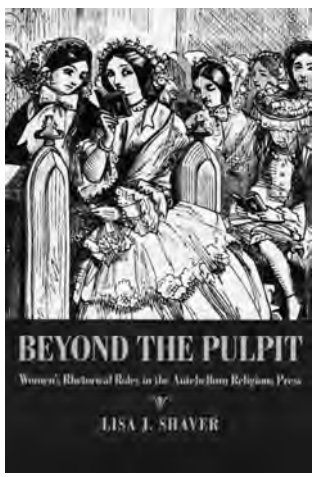
Beyond the Pulpit: Women's Rhetorical Roles in the Antebellum Religious Press. By Lisa J. Shaver. (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2012. Pp ix +

135, notes, bibliography, index, $23, paperback)

For more than a decade now, scholars of rhetoric have been working furiously to recover the (deliberately or unintentionally) forgotten words of women rhetors, especially those working at the forefront of radical social change, from abolition to women's suffrage. The result has been a number of important books and articles on figures such as Frances Willard, Sojourner Truth, and the Grimke sisters. Such efforts are important not only because they remind us that women have, in fact, been rhetors—and important ones, ones whose words moved people and made social change happen—but because they hint at the huge number of women whose words have yet to be recovered.



In *Beyond the Pulpit: Women's Rhetorical Roles in the Antebellum Religious Press*, Lisa Shaver, professor of English at Baylor University, moves the focus of women's rhetorical recovery from the once high profile (even if they were forgotten for a century or more before their recovery) women rallying constituents, leading marches, and smashing saloons to those who are less "'loud'" (p. 119)—and here Shaver means that literally, focusing on those who sat in the pews of mid-19th-century Methodist churches, listening (rather than speaking) to mostly male preachers and also to women missionaries, writers, and teachers. What role did these women play as rhetors? As audiences for books and magazines aimed for both a broad range of Methodist readers and specifically for them, as women? The case that women have been overlooked as rhetorical leaders has been well-established, even as their rhetorical recoveries are progressing, but the influence of "women in the pews" on religious rhetoric and, in particular religious publications, has yet to be fully explored. Shaver strikes out in that direction with great success. The result is a book that would easily be taught in graduate courses in history, women's history, periodical studies, and religious studies—and would be, due to Shaver's diligent and careful archival work, an excellent text to analyze in a research methods course.

Shaver's work troubles some easy dichotomies that have often been used to understand women's rhetoric. Typical narratives of women's history place women in the private, domestic sphere of home, where they (often unhappily) cared for children and provided spiritual nurture, serving an expressive role in the family, while the public sphere of work, the marketplace, and social organizations was reserved for men. By choosing church, a "liminal space between separate spheres," as her area of study, Shaver immediately calls the clean division between those spheres into question (p. 14). Because spirituality was within the realm of women (even if the most visible church leadership was male), women's activities there, perhaps especially the seemingly innocent act of writing for other women in space dedicated to the "ladies" pages of church publications, allowed them "to emerge from the domestic sphere and engage in social activism that contravened accepted gender norms" (p. 71). In particular, church publications published extended obituaries ("deathbed memoirs") written by the friends or family members, as well as ministers, of deceased women. "Depictions of their holy lives and holy deaths, as well as their own voices, were used to instruct and motivate the living to cultivate a textual church community," giving these saintly Methodist women the power to preach posthumously, according to Shaver (p. 35). Given, though, that male pastors and publishers often stood as gatekeepers

or filters, much as white abolitionists "vouched" for the words of enslaved African Americans in slave narratives, Shaver may be overstating the power that Methodist women had to shape the lives of those who read their memoirs. Indeed, while Shaver makes a clear argument that everyday women's rhetoric was influential in shaping antebellum Methodism and attitudes toward women in the broader culture, it is hard to measure how much of the changes Methodism, one of the most dynamic religions on the American landscape at the time, was undergoing were due to women and how many were due to forces outside of Methodism itself, much less how much of the broader cultural change was due to Methodist women. Shaver is not writing social science, of course, and there may be no way to measure which social changes inside and outside of the church were due to which sources. A scholarly project comparing the patterns that Shaver sees among Methodist women to other religious women—for example, Mormon and Baptist women, who were also part of upstart churches at the time—would be useful to see if women in other traditions were likewise accessing a public sphere through the presumably constraining venue of religion.

This, really, is the central puzzle for those studying women's history: In what proportion did gendered religious roles create situations in which women were "both empowered and contained" (p. 133)? Religion, in particular, has often been viewed by feminist scholars as inherently conservative, but many 19th-century women rhetors did not see the same conflict between religion and emancipatory rhetoric or politics. Even those making less bold claims, like the women writing the ladies columns in religious magazines, may not have been able to access that public without religion, even if that religion did reinforce notions of the Angel of the House. As Methodism, an upstart religion of the frontier that allowed embodied expression of religious fervor, lost its wildness and became domesticated, women continued to make up the bulk of worshippers but were dismissed from the pulpit. Shaver finds them there, "beyond the pulpit," speaking, generally, to themselves, saying words that validate their place within the kingdom of God here on earth.

--Rebecca Barrett-Fox, Ph.D.

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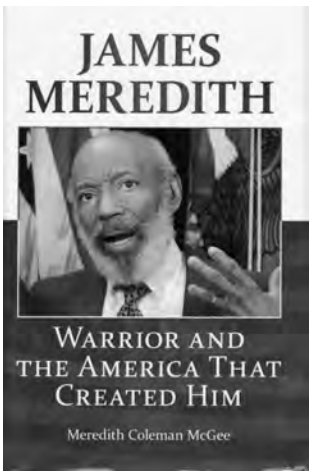
James Meredith: Warrior and the America that Created Him. By Meredith Coleman McGee. (Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger, 2013. Pp 169, appendix, notes, index, $48, hardcover)

James Meredith is a maverick and idiosyncratic figure in civil rights folklore; although, it should be noted that he characteristically eschews the "civil rights" label. He is best known for integrating Ole Miss in October 1962 amid scenes of violence and discord at that venerable southern higher education institution. Later, his 1966 Meredith March Against Fear through the Mississippi delta, which led to him being shot though not seriously injured, moved the major civil rights leaders and organizations of the time to rally to continue what began as a one-man protest. It was on that fateful march that Stokely Carmichael popularized the term "Black Power," which many historians have viewed as a significant movement turning point.



In both episodes that frame his fame, Meredith plowed his own furrow and was often cantankerously at odds with would-be support-

ers as well as foes of his actions. Meredith's life after has proven no less controversial. Among other noteworthy instances, he worked as right-wing U.S. Senator Jesse Helms's domestic advisor from 1989 to 1991, endorsed Grand Wizard Klansman David Duke for governor of Louisiana in his 1991 failed run ("I can't say that a man can't change," Meredith said [p. 133]), and refused to turn up for the fiftieth anniversary commemorations of his entry into Ole Miss—"I ain't never heard of the French celebrating Waterloo," he told the press, describing his memorial statue on campus as "hideous." His recent 2012 memoir, *A Mission from God*, reflects Meredith's earnest belief that he is a messenger of God.

Meredith Coleman McGee, a niece of James Meredith, has written a maverick and idiosyncratic book befitting of its subject matter. Chapters One and Two deal with James Meredith's family background and early years. Here, McGee is at her strongest, using her family contacts to delve deep into the genealogical details. More than any of the other chapters, these add useful detail and family context to Meredith's life. Chapter Three offers a very short and somewhat perplexing overview of "Public Education in America." It is so perfunctory, at just over three pages, that it is not entirely clear why the chapter was inserted here at all, or why it deals with the very general subject matter in the that way it does, or how that material directly relates to Meredith's story. Chapter Four follows Meredith's return to Mississippi after nine years in the U.S. Air Force and charts developments in southern education after the 1954 *Brown* decision that led to him applying to Ole Miss. Arkansas readers will keenly note that in the one paragraph on the 1957 Little Rock School Crisis, McGee relegates the Little Rock Nine to a Little Rock Seven (Thelma Mothershed and Terrence Roberts mysteriously vanish) and consistently spells "Minniejean" (sic) Brown's name wrong (p. 39). This is unfortunately an accurate reflection of the sometimes vague and hazy grasp of the wider historical picture, along with lapses in attention to facts and details that hinders the rest of the book.

Chapters Five and Six deal with Meredith's ultimately successful, albeit tumultuous, enrollment at Ole Miss. Chapter Seven is another odd chapter that uses mainly oral history interviews to tell stories about the civil rights movement in Mississippi in very broad terms as a way of filling in what was happening in the state and outside of it during the early to mid-1960s. Chapter Eight does the same thing for the mid to late 1960s, which includes the story of the Meredith March Against Fear, although this gets somewhat relatively short shrift given its importance to Meredith's overall historical standing. Chapter Nine, "The Living Legend, 1966–2012," provides a selective account of Meredith's life and achievements since the 1966 march. Chapter Ten is another very short three-page chapter that deals with a very big topic, in this case "America's Economic Landscape in the Twentieth Century." The final chapter contains some musings on economic disparities in the twenty-first century by the author, assorted others, and Meredith.

All in all, the chapters make for an oddly disjointed and scattergun approach. The narrative weaves from personal genealogy to grand though often unsubstantiated statements about American education and the economy, including snippets about the civil rights movement and Meredith's role in it along the way. Although there are sixty original oral history interviews, there are few manuscript sources, and much of the rest is gleaned from selected newspaper and journal accounts, along with an eclectic smattering of scholarly monographs. Seminal books about the civil rights movement in Mississippi such as John Dittmer's *Local People* (1995) and Charles Payne's *I've Got the Light of Freedom* (2007) are among the many notable absentees that could have provided better local and state context. On Meredith's desegregation of Ole Miss, readers will want to check Charles Eagles's *The Price of Defiance*

(2009), and on the Meredith March Against Fear, Aram Goudsouzian's *Down to the Crossroads* (2014). The best starting points for James Meredith's life story are his *Three Years in Mississippi* (1966) and the aforementioned more recent memoir. McGee's book does not add anything of substance that these authors and books do not already cover, though it is useful at the margins for some of the family tidbits and background material it unearths.

--John Kirk

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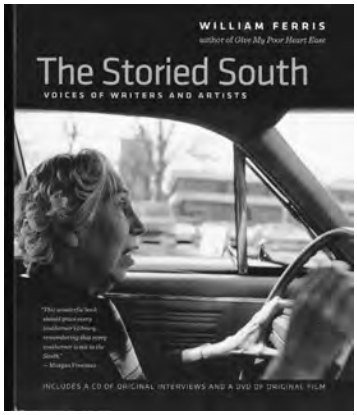
The Storied South: Voices of Writers and Artists. By William Ferris. (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2013. Pp. xii + 297, acknowledgments, selected bibliography, discography, and filmography, index, textual credits, CD and DVD contents. $35.00, cloth)

Distinguished folklorist William Ferris is the author most recently of the acclaimed *Give My Poor Heart Ease: Voices of the Mississippi Blues* (UNC, 2009). Like that text, *The Storied South* is unique. As with much of Ferris's work, it is an act of preservation, a collection of interviews, photographs, audio, and video, in essence, a window into Ferris's work as a scholar with a passion for the south and all forms of its cultural production. The interviews are organized in sections: writers, scholars, musicians, photographers, and painters. A CD and a DVD are included, with a list of the audio-recordings and film presented at the end of the book.

Ferris begins with writers, those most closely associated with telling stories. This section includes interviews with Eudora Welty, Ernest Gaines, and several others. To highlight the diversity of southern writers, Ferris identifies the birth state of each author on the same pages that give their names and birth/death dates. He also tells of his relationship to each. At that point, he steps back and only the speaker's voice is heard. Ferris explains that his decision to omit his own questions was inspired by the dramatic monologue genre, which is a solo voice but one with a clear sense of audience: "The dramatic monologue develops an intimate, uninterrupted relationship between the reader and the speaker. . . . My presence in each interview and the photographs is oblique—unheard and unseen—but very much felt by the reader" (p. 20).



A case in point is the cover of the book, a charming photograph of Eudora Welty behind the wheel of an automobile, apparently caught in mid-sentence and presumably chatting with her friend Bill Ferris. Welty is the subject of the first chapter and provides a representative example of Ferris's personal connection to his material. Born and raised near Welty's home, he met her when he was a young man, interviewed and photographed her, and maintained a relationship with her through their respective careers. The longest chapter, it is a blend of three interviews conducted in 1976, 1994, and 1996. Welty's conversations with Ferris cover topics (such as region, place, stories, dialogue, music, and photography) that recur throughout. She frequently mentions her good fortune in having developed friendships with other southern intellectuals and artists. It is a motif: several of Ferris's interviewees are friends with other subjects in the book, both in their fields and across

disciplines, and all are cherished friends of his.

In a seemingly unusual move for a book titled *The Storied South*, Ferris's second section is devoted to interviews with scholars, but he explains that "each . . . frames our understanding of the southern voice and its story" (p. 113). By placing scholars second in the book, Ferris expands the definition of "writers" to include those whose work facilitates our understanding of the fine arts and humanities. Ferris continues the pattern established in the writers' section, identifying each subject by name and birthplace. The scholars who are not southerners by birth or family came to the south through interest in a variety of fields, including literature, history, music, sociology, and psychology.

The musicians' section is somewhat of an anomaly with only two entries, Bobby Rush and Pete Seeger. But the subjects are representative of specific black and white southern histories. In the 1987 interview, Bobby Rush speaks of the significance of the blues for black people and the need to keep the blues relevant for new generations. When told by a black disc jockey that he wouldn't play Rush's music because it "sounds too black," Rush says that he cried, not because the station wouldn't play his record but for the "man who does not know where his roots lie" (164). Rush elaborates, "When a man—a black man, especially—tells me he does not like the blues, he is saying he does not like his mother. That is where he comes from. How can you say you do not like where you come from?" (p. 164). The second musician in the section has a similar passion for southern music; son of musicologist Charles Seeger, Pete Seeger describes the moment his "life changed forever" when his father took him to Bascom Lunsford's Mountain Dance and Folk Festival (p. 168). In addition to falling "hook, line, and sinker in love with southern mountain music," Seeger was also tremendously influenced by working class and labor music, explaining that "these protest songs brought out a history of the South that I had not known about" (p. 169, p. 170).

The final two sections of the book are devoted to a dozen visual artists who represent a diversity of periods, regions, mediums, and styles. The subjects often mention other interviewees as both friends and influences. The three photographers have either collaborated with or been influenced by each other. Similar cross-pollination appears in the interviews with the nine painters, but more frequently across disciplines as they frequently cite southern writers as primary influences on their work. Carroll Cloar says he was more influenced by writers rather than other painters and contends that there "is an important relationship between southern writers and southern painters" (p. 217). William Dunlap echoes the sentiment and expands it: "That storytelling, that narrative business we all grew up with down South led rather easily into a whole generation of artists" (p. 227). Dunlap calls his paintings "literary" and says that he "is composing sentences and even paragraphs" in his art (p. 227). Maud Gatewood contends that painters use the same "storytelling technique" as southern writers (p. 236). Several painters name Faulkner as an influence while Rebecca Davenport talks of being inspired by Flannery O'Conner's characters, who may be "freaks" but who also have "a dignity of the human spirit" (p. 222).

In addition to being a book that preserves and represents the voices that form the intellectual foundation of southern studies, *The Storied South* is filled with warmth, humor, and fond memories. Of his partners in conversation, Ferris says, "Their stories are the water in which I love to swim" (p. 249). Thanks to his preservation efforts and generous spirit, he gives readers both the opportunity and the invitation to dive in and join him.

--Janelle Collins