

Reviews

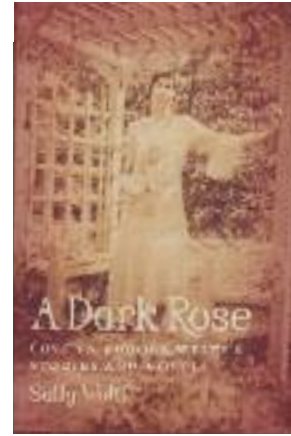
A Dark Rose: Love in Eudora Welty's Stories and Novels. By Sally Wolff. (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 2015. Pp. ix-xxv+199, contents, preface, notes, works cited, index. \$48, hardcover)

Welty's love of flowers and the natural world has been a popular topic in recent Welty scholarship. As a result, Sally Wolff's *A Dark Rose: Love in Eudora Welty's Stories and Novels* is a nice complement to other book-length studies on Welty that deal with gardening and the natural world. Patti Carr Black, along with artist Robin Whitfield, offers a series of illustrated passages from Welty's texts that reflect on such aspects of nature as flowers, birds, the sky, and trees in *Eudora Welty's World: Words on Nature* (2013), and Julia Eichelberger focuses on letters that Welty wrote to Diarmuid Russell, her literary agent, and John Robinson, a longtime friend, in *Tell about Night Flowers: Eudora Welty's Gardening Letters, 1940-1949* (2013), letters that not only comment on Welty's growth as an artist during the 1940s, but that clearly demonstrate the importance of gardening and the natural world in Welty's life. The garden at Welty's home in Jackson, Mississippi, is the subject of Susan Haltom and Jane Roy Brown in *One Writer's Garden: Eudora Welty's Home Place* (2011). Wolff's text segues into this garden, offering a Preface, "Reminiscences," that treats her personal friendship with Welty and relates an afternoon she spent working to restore Welty's backyard rose garden that had fallen into disrepair, armed with a knowledge of roses gained from her own mother, Elaine Wolff. Wolff continues to draw upon her nineteen year friendship with Welty throughout

A Dark Rose, thus offering an intimate glimpse into Welty's life and work.

Wolff's title comes from a term used by Welty in *Losing Battles*. In her "Preface" she identifies "[a] dark rose" as "a complex, autobiographical image of the author and a metaphor for the provocative commingling of the comic and tragic in Welty's life and art" (p. 6). Wolff provides a thoroughly researched and insightful analysis of Welty's multidimensional exploration of love, "both the tragic and comic states—the light and dark sides" (p. 4) as well as love's ambiguity, complexity and mystery, whether in relation to marriage, divorce, or spinsterhood, even murder and rape. In her thoughtful examination of Welty's oeuvre, Wolff aptly points out that most of Welty's novels and stories treat either the presence or the absence of love, and the symbolic rose, which appears frequently, "represents devotion, home, love of family, lost youth—and grief" (p. xix). It is "the 'dark rose'" which "metaphorically illustrates the dichotomies and contradictions Welty sees in love—faithfulness, hope, joy, and sharing balanced against loss, grief, and aloneness" (p. 5), a process that both "complicates and authenticates Welty's writings about love" (p. 94).

Over half of the volume is devoted to Welty's many short stories. In the first three chapters, Wolff treats the stories from *A Curtain of Green* and *The Wide Net*, noting that these first two story collections contain love-related themes that are important to Welty's later work. She provides close readings of a plethora



of texts, for instance, stories like “The Winds” and “A Memory,” where an understanding and knowledge of love is important to the female characters, or “A Piece of News” and “The Wide Net,” which portray complicated marital problems involving reconciliation, or “Petrified Man” and “Lily Daw and the Three Ladies,” where communal settings offer women an opportunity to “gossip about love” (p. 87). Woolf returns to Welty’s stories in chapters seven and eight, treating *The Golden Apples* and *The Bride of the Innisfallen*, two collections that alternate “between the stories of thwarted and anticipatory relationships” (p. 146). Other chapters are devoted to Welty’s novels. *The Robber Bridegroom*, *Delta Wedding*, and *The Ponder Heart* all treat marriage as does the later *Losing Battles* and in the context of a number of aspects of love. *The Optimist’s Daughter* is examined in conjunction with *One Writer’s Beginnings*, two autobiographical works that Wolff considers “Welty’s tour de force” (p. 177) as they allow Welty’s “most complex depictions and assessments of love” (p. 177).

The autobiographical nature of Welty’s work is not only considered in the section on *The Optimist’s Daughter* and *One Writer’s Beginnings*; biographical threads are woven throughout *A Dark Rose*. The rose garden of Welty’s mother, Chestina, surfaces in the story “A Curtain of Green” and Chestina’s devotion as a mother in *Delta Wedding*. Ohio, Welty’s father’s place of birth, is alluded to in “The Winds” and *The Optimist’s Daughter*. Welty’s early work for the Works Progress Administration (WPA) during the Depression era is important in stories in which Welty treats rural life. Her journey to New Orleans with Carvel Collins is central to “No Place for You, My Love,” and her relationship with John Robinson is significant in “Death of a Traveling Salesman,” *Delta Wedding*, and *The Optimist’s Daughter*. The Welty family roses are firmly implanted in “Kin” from *The Bride of the Innisfallen* in addition to other works.

Valuable as well are the connections that

Wolff makes between Welty and William Faulkner. An established Faulkner scholar, Wolff draws parallels between Welty and Faulkner’s works, pointing out, for instance, the connections between stories like Welty’s “Flowers for Marjorie,” “Clytie,” and “A Curtain of Green” and Faulkner’s “A Rose for Emily” or similarities between characters such as Welty’s Clytie in “Clytie” and Faulkner’s Quentin Compson in *The Sound and the Fury* or Mrs. Larkin in “A Curtain of Green” and Faulkner’s Addie Bundren in *As I Lay Dying*. There are links, also, in the locations used by both writers. “The post office in Welty stories functions much as the general store or porch does for Faulkner” (p. 77), notes Wolff. In other places, the two writers vary, such as in their views of the past and the role of memory in works like *The Optimist’s Daughter* and *Requiem for a Nun*.

Throughout the volume, Woolf treats a variety of topics close to Welty’s heart—family, community, human relationships, war, death, fertility, isolation, judgment, myth, vulnerability, gardening, and nature, among others—and shows how these topics turn into main themes and motifs that are skillfully intertwined with Welty’s interest in love and the metaphor of the dark rose, which she identifies as “Welty’s distinctive signature” (p. 199). Petal by petal, Wolff gently but insightfully dissects the many roses that make up the Welty canon and encourages us to immerse ourselves in the world of Welty’s literary garden.

--Catherine Calloway



***A Lucent Fire: New & Selected Poems.* By Patricia Spears Jones. (Buffalo, NY: White Pine Press, 2015. Pp. 192, notes, acknowledgements. \$17.00, paper)**

The title of Patricia Spears Jones's *A Lucent Fire: New & Selected Poems* is well chosen. While it originates from a line in one of her poems, "Why I Left the Country: A Suite," this title works on another level to meet the challenge of putting together a selection of poems. Jones's book captures how a fire burns. It is all one fire, rooted in one source, but it flares with different shades and forms. As such, *A Lucent Fire* is illuminating.

A Lucent Fire begins with a few of Jones's early poems, continues with selections from her books *The Weather That Kills*, *Femme du Monde*, *Painkiller*, *Repuestas*, *Swimming to America*, and *Living in the Love Economy*, and ends with new and uncollected work. Often, this kind of sampling shows how each book has had a different focus or approach to form. Instead, Jones's selection reveals a poet with a distinct voice whose subjects and style have always been diverse, and her book titles serve as keys to the overarching themes in her work.

The speakers in *A Lucent Fire* inundate us in the American experience. "The Birth of Rhythm and Blues" takes root with a speaker conceived and born in Arkansas. That origin is connected to American music, "Southern mostly, Black absolutely" (p. 35). "Arkansas, Mississippi, Tennessee / and Texas" might have "lonely roads," (p. 35), but the poem reveals how this evolves into a force larger than the speaker and her mother (with the connection to the poet presented in the accompanying notes), an experience that is part of what changes the course of America and empowers *A Lucent Fire* to employ diverse American artists and American places in exploration of American issues of race, gender, and class.

Such American women are women of



the world, and Jones uses the American as her speakers' entry point into the world at large, taking us around the world and throughout time. In such an existence, questions are as natural as breathing. *A Lucent Fire* is full of questions, not only in the three poems included from *Repuestas*, but immediately in the book's first poem with "Who owns the Sun?" (p. 18) and "Ancestress in woodblock / What has Jesus done for you?" (p. 19). The speaker wonders everything from "What is the color of Paradise? How would we know?" (p. 190) to the nature of civilization in "What the First Cities Were All About." "But joy, where is it?" (p. 146) asks "Life Lessons."

A Lucent Fire faces the issue of economy, wealth and resources, and how we manage what we have, and it is particularly poignant when it comes to the issue of love. The two "April 1994: Two Deaths, Two Wakes, Two Open Caskets" poems as well as the two "My Angel" poems with the Passover poem that follows are only a few of many that deal with this subject. Jones deals honestly with suffering and danger. The book includes "The most beautiful woman in the room nailed to a wall" (p. 84) in "Laura," AIDS in "San Francisco, Spring 1986," fear in "Painkiller," and pain in "Second Person, Hurting."

No matter what the risk, Jones is not afraid to touch. She wants the shoe of racism and sexism to "pinch like hell" (p. 83) in "My Matthew Shepard Poem." The sensuality of poems such as "Encounter and Farewell" and "5:25 A.M." is palpable. "What Beauty Does" begins a journey in "pine, sage, and cypress" (p. 171) to transcend scenery. While this poem entertains as Jones often does with "I almost bought a foot long sausage. I almost bought a gun. / I did buy cowboy postcards, mostly made for fun" (p. 172), its appeals to the senses to reveal "Where people steal / a drop of ore, / a native lower, / a piece of splendor / day in and day out" (p. 174).

A Lucent Fire demonstrates how the poem's form can represent the poet's voice on the page, the long line, the short, the pacing,

the pause. The poems command the pages, with subject dictating the form. Some of Jones's poems have long lines, lush with words. Other poems have a compressed form, like a hand balled into a fist. Set form is handled deftly, as shown in "Mythologizing Always: Seven Sonnets." The repetition of the line "Who is the Saint of" and the phrase "Shall we" (pp. 101-102) in "All Saints' Day, 2001" taps the power of the call and response. Two different forms often appear next to each other, creating additional effect through juxtaposition. "New Blues" extends across the page and wraps into itself, right after "What the God of Fire Charged Me" with its tighter form, sometimes only a few words per line. Likewise, the lavish lines of "Notes for the Poem, 'Beloved of God'/A Memory of David Earl Jackson" are followed by the tight "How He Knows Me." Throughout *A Lucent Fire*, such organic forms allow each poem to use its space to its advantage.

To be lucent means to give off light, and Patricia Spears Jones's poems do more than that, not only through the multitude of experiences that they share, but in how the different parts of the flames work together in one fire.

--Angie Macri



***Underwater Panther.* By Angie Macri. (Cape Girardeau, MO: Southeast Missouri State University Press, 2015. Pp. 87, notes. \$14, paper)**

Considering its overall level of education and lack of support for the arts, Arkansas is home to a surprising number of poets and writers with national, and even international, reputations. Add to this ever-expanding, state-wide list the name of Angie Macri, an Illi-

nois transplant now living in Hot Springs. Ms. Macri's debut collection won the Cowles Poetry Book Prize, and she also recently received a fellowship from the Arkansas Arts Council.



While much of her poetry focuses on landscapes, rivers clearly dominate her consciousness and imagery. Rivers meander throughout this collection, and Macri's sensual, but plain-spoken, language breathes life into them, much like the fog in a T. S. Eliot poem:

With the text of a breath, the Mississippi
reads her shore . . .

The orchards, the penetrating roots
of roses rubbed along her back
as she stretched out, relaxed
and wide. The clouds opened
as white as the mouth
of the snake, and she slid by
into cotton. (p.16)

To Macri's eyes, the American landscape is a mysterious creature, breathing and shifting on its own. I lost count of how many times the name Kaskaskia is evoked, but it seems central to this overall sense of wonder. Not surprisingly, Kaskaskia refers to both a river and small village (population 14!) in Southern Illinois that was virtually destroyed by the Mississippi River near the end of the Nineteenth Century, and was evacuated again near the end of the Twentieth Century when both the Mississippi and Missouri rivers ganged up on the poor town. Macri is deeply intrigued not only by the place but by its history as a home to Native Americans and French settlers.

. . . They marked time
with a bell brought upriver hand
over fist on bateau. It was lost

to floods more than once, yet found,

and it (the vine) filled the land.

We traced back those names: LaBrier,
Montroy, Doza, Picou. Mass
was said for French and Kaskaskia
and all mixed blood. (p.40)

Beyond the people, this is a land inhabited by birds, panthers, mounds, train tracks, coal mines, the bones of mastodons, blue-eyed Marys, leopard frogs, earthmovers. It is a common landscape for most of us, but under the keen eye of Macri, we are transported to a deeper vision of what is right in front of us. The various aspects of the land become characters within these poems. Human characters emerge, but they are vague: shapeless, unnamed (for the most part), and often filtered through the gauze of the coal mining culture:

The wife looks for her breath.
Her husband mines the vein, loading
cars powered by steam. . . .

Ten men were killed in January
and six burned in December, the govern-
ment
recording clothes, face and back,
face, neck, and right hand, and so on.
(p.51)

“Marie Scypion” proves to be an exception, as she is a defined persona, half-slave, half-Natchez. And in one of the most powerful poems of this collection, with its jarring shift from first person to third, we are led down the path of a mother and her children turned into mere property: “Apart from you, may my blood become the Mississippi / that bears grain and fur to the mouth of the sea.” (p.36)

The panther is the one character that shows up regularly throughout this collection, as big cats will: unexpectedly and brimming with mystery. *Underwater Panther* opens with the tale of a panther dying near the river Kaskaskia, but later as the narrator learns to drive an automobile she spots another.

Under unborn stars below Orion’s belt,

between County Line and Eden,
I saw the panther once.

... the panther raised its head with slowness
born of nothing to lose, eyes illuminated
beside a creek ... (p. 65)

Ultimately, this is a fine and rewarding first collection of poetry that reinvents a familiar landscape in language that is rich, moving, and sharp. It also features a gorgeous cover painting by Arkansas artist, Kathy Strause, whose work has been featured in a number of venues and galleries throughout the state. This is a book worthy of occupying the bookshelf of any Arkansawyer serious about poetry. Ms. Macri’s career as a poet is off to a promising start.

--Marck Beggs



***The Big Jones Cookbook: Recipes for Savoring the Heritage of Regional Southern Cooking.* By Paul Fehribach. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015. Pp. ix-xxiv + 265, preface, acknowledgments, notes on sources, index. \$30.00, cloth)**

From cornbread to cracklings, *The Big Jones Cookbook* is a love letter to southern food. Always mindful of each dish’s historical origins, chef and author Paul Fehribach believes heirloom regional southern cuisine has the chops to stand on par with the other great world cooking traditions. He delights in history and shares the stories and traditions of the South’s regions through their varied, and sometimes forgotten, dishes. Fehribach’s affection for the people of the past, who often developed dishes out of seasonality and scarcity, is infectious. All of the diversities that make this homegrown American food tradition great are brought into

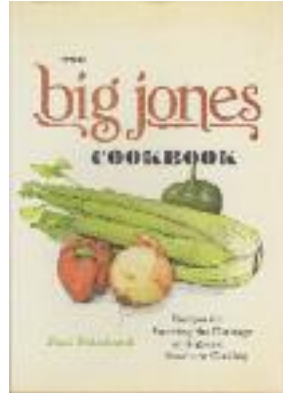
focus, causing the reader to feel both appreciative and hungry.

Written, in part, as a service to his restaurant patrons, the book makes available some of the most requested recipes from the revolving menu at Big Jones. Fehribach has always made a habit of sharing his recipes, all but his top-secret recipes for fried chicken and his meticulously perfected cornbread. In *The Big Jones Cookbook*, all is revealed.

As a child, Paul Fehribach received an early education in seasonal eating. He fondly recounts contributing wild blackberries to the flurry of activity that was his extended family's shared farm kitchen. The ancestral family farm that fed five generations still inspires him. In *The Big Jones Cookbook*, Fehribach advocates for home cooking. Even if busy lives necessitate that the new family table be located inside the four walls of a restaurant, he believes that the ethics of generations gone by can be learned from when shared through an honest meal. When a dish is prepared by someone who knows its origins and painstakingly prepares it in a way that harkens back to the disciplines of the past, it can nourish the consumer, both body and soul.

A native Indianan running the Southern flavored kitchen of his Chicago restaurant, Chef Fehribach isn't tethered by southern roots to any specific region, leaving him free to explore all of the South's offerings without bias, as an enthusiastic student of the institution:

The South has such an incredibly diverse geography—from the Tidewater to the swamps and the Sea Islands of the Low Country and Florida; the rolling hills of the Deep South to the Caribbean-esque Gulf Coast with its wildlife, world-class fishing and those storied swamps and bayous of



south Louisiana; the mind-bending flatness of the Delta; all of the nuances of the interior states of Tennessee, Kentucky and Arkansas; and then the Appalachian Mountains, one of the most biologically diverse and majestically beautiful tracts of land on Earth. (p. xiii)

The Big Jones Cookbook acts as a primer of Southern cuisine; each recipe is deliberately laid out to tell a story. In the text leading into a recipe, the author thoughtfully recounts the origins of each dish. Each one honoring the time, place, and developer, be they a French Quarter restaurateur, a coastal fishing community, a subsistence farm family in the mountains, or the masterful work done in an antebellum slave kitchen.

Historic, thoughtful cooking is the hallmark of the Big Jones restaurant's offerings, partially recounted in this book. In keeping with Fehribach's desire to retain the integrity of the food's origins, the menu is subject to change in tandem with the weather and the seasons. He writes about how he values his personal, local relationships with those who produce and harvest the food that comes into his kitchen.

Once the products arrive, they are treated in much the same way as one would imagine Fehribach's great-grandparents to have done. He believes the ingredients and preparation are integral to the story being told in each dish. "Sure it was a lot of work, but in many families throughout history, the joy of a beautiful meal has always been worth the work of getting food to the table. I argue all the time that the labors of eating well are a far more worthy use of time than most of what we do these days" (p. xv). More than a work of academia, *The Big Jones Cookbook* shares many practical cooking tips to guide the reader in achieving the true spirit of the dish; sometimes, that means lard.

Though many camps of Southern cooking traditions agree to disagree about some things—sugar in cornbread, chicken and dumplings with homemade noodles or lumps of spongy dough, the addition of tomatoes to a gumbo disqualify-

ing the dish as a gumbo altogether—Chef Fehribach makes heirloom Southern food relatable and attainable. Not only has he made a record to preserve the fading food disciplines of America’s Southern heritage, he provides a compelling starting point to assist the reader in renewing the important institution of the family table.

--James Moore



***Oil and Water: Media Lessons from Hurricane Katrina and the Deepwater Horizon Disaster.* By Andrea Miller, Shearon Roberts, and Victoria LaPoe. (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2014. Pp. vii-xv + 156, appendix one, appendix two, appendix three, notes, index. \$54, hardcover)**

Somewhere between 2005 and 2010, between Hurricane Katrina and the Deepwater Horizon oil spill, the world changed.

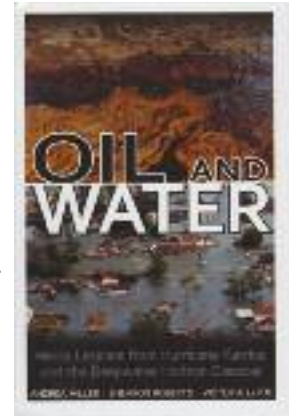
When the hurricane hit, intrepid reporters for the *New Orleans Times-Picayune* valiantly kept the newspaper office open, using old-fashioned gumption and new-fashioned technology to tell the stories of the people of the city and their struggles with the disaster. They won a Pulitzer for their efforts.

Five years and several layoffs later, shrunken news media staffs, unable to get to isolated fishing towns in the bayous, fought over access to handouts from government agencies and British Petroleum executives trying to minimize the public fallout from the disaster. Nobody won any major prizes covering the Deepwater Horizon spill.

By luck and design, the authors of *Oil and Water* describe the change and how it happened. The authors, Andrea Miller, Associate

Dean for Undergraduate Studies and Administration at the Manship School of Mass Communication at Louisiana State University; Shearon Roberts, Assistant Professor of Mass Media at Xavier University; and Victoria Lapoe, Assistant Professor of Journalism and Broadcasting at Western Kentucky, are obviously academics, but they take an accessible approach that makes the work readable to general audiences.

The book, to use academic terms, is both quantitative and qualitative. The first part provides survey information of readers and journalists, based mostly in Baton Rouge, on how they view media coverage in general. Not surprisingly, readers bemoan the decline of independence and perceptions of quality in their news media, and journalists see the decline of jobs and access to sources.



The rest of the book is more an ethnography. The authors interview journalists, officials and audience members, all of whom note how the economics and the content of the local media has changed from independent voices to partisan ones.

The switch from the first chapter, which reads like an academic paper, to the later chapters, which read more like popular non-fiction, can be a bit jarring. But that’s just a quibble. Overall, *Oil and Water* describes in depth and detail what has happened to the media in Louisiana. But it’s more than that. It’s a microcosm of what has happened in every community in America.

--Jack Zibluk



Hispanic and Latino New Orleans: Immigration and Identity Since the Eighteenth Century. By Andrew Sluyter, Case Watkins, James P. Chaney, and Annie M. Gibson. (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2015. Pp . ix-xvi + 152, figures and tables, foreword, acknowledgments, conclusions, notes, works cited, index. \$32.50, paper)

The city of New Orleans has become the center of recent scholarship focus, including *The Accidental City: Improvising New Orleans* (2012) by Lawrence N. Powell and *Populating the Barrera: Spanish Immigration Efforts in Colonial Louisiana* (2014) by Gilbert C. Din. The Franco-Spanish and Afro-Caribbean historical background as well as the Creole culture and the diversity of its population have characterized the extraordinary and colorful city for centuries. Following the Treaty of Paris 1763, the French territory of Louisiana, located east of the Mississippi River, came under Spanish rule. The crown immediately understood that populating the colony was key to maintaining its influence in the region. Today, in addition to the Cabildo, the seat of Spanish colonial government in New Orleans, diverse structures, monuments, and plaques remain part of the city's historic French Quarter landscape. As suggested in its title, *Hispanic and Latino New Orleans* explores the "Spanish" heritage and identity in the contemporary city. Combining their respective research and expertise, the four authors uncover the complete story that started from the immigration and settlement of a variety of Hispanic populations that emerged during the eighteenth century to the surging Hispanics and Latinos in post-Katrina Southern Louisiana. Simultaneously, the work provides a sophisticated analysis as the authors uncover

the complex relationship between ethnicity and racialized categories peculiar to New Orleans. Adding to the literature of Spanish Louisiana's history, the authors connect the "Spanish" sides of the city to Latin America rather than Spain. The study shows an interesting contrast between 1970s New Orleans, with a few people of Latino-Hispanic ancestry, and the recent and increasing numbers of immigrants from different parts of Latin America and the Caribbean.

An interdisciplinary synthesis, the book is structured around the different Hispanic and Latino communities that played a role in shaping the eccentric city. The authors' use of the word *Hispanic* designates the cultural groups with common Spanish heritage, while the term *Latino* is restricted to the geographical areas identified as Latin America and the Caribbean. The book also attempts to shed some light on the complex term *Creole* and explain its evolving meaning over time and space. Presented in a chronological order (from the eighteenth to the twenty-first century), each chapter focuses on tracing the story of a particular community through the centuries. For instance, chapter one explores the Spanish efforts to stop aggressive Anglo-American encroachment onto their Louisiana territory by recruiting groups of Hispanic settlers, including Andalusians from Malaga and Granada, as well as the *Isleños* from the Canary Islands, and the evolution of these communities throughout the next centuries. The second and third chapters focus on the Latino Cuban and Honduran communities that arrived in the nineteenth century as New Orleans became the US gateway to the Caribbean and Latin America and the networks established from the neocolonial era and well into



recent times. Meanwhile, chapter four discusses the long formed, but less prominent, Mexican community that moved into the city following the Mexican-American war and how it has been able to increase in number and influence, beginning in the mid-twentieth century and even more since Hurricane Katrina. The immigration of Brazilians that became prominent after Katrina, and their role within the contemporary discussion over Latino identity, is covered in chapter five. Finally, the closing chapter surveys the emergence of other smaller (though critical to the book's central argument) communities, including Central Americans (Nicaraguans, Guatemalans, and Salvadorans), South Americans (Colombians, Peruvians, Ecuadorians, Argentineans and others) as well as Puerto Ricans and Dominicans from the Caribbean. These small communities arrived mainly during the second half of the twentieth century and after Katrina, which coincides with an economic and political immigration movement experienced throughout the United States.

The authors utilize a successful comparative approach as they consider the interactions and relationships between these communities to explore the larger debates about immigration and national identity. Based on previous interdisciplinary research conducted by genealogists, amateur historians, and academics, and relying on various sources, the work provides a comprehensive understanding of the "Hispanic" and "Latino" side of New Orleans. The welcome study combines interviews, statistical analysis, and graphs, as well as an historical narrative to explain the co-relation between Katrina flooding and the geographical movement of the studied communities. Taken separately or as a whole, these chapters provide a deeper understanding of "Spanish" immigration, influence, and identity in New Orleans from colonial to present times, but also introduce general readers to a wide range of subjects including, ethnicity, race, gender, and assimilation.

--Sonia Toudji



***Eighty-Eight Years: The Long Death of Slavery in the United States, 1777–1865* by Patrick Rael. (Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 2015. Pp. vii-xix + 329, list of figures, acknowledgments, prologue, notes, index. \$32.95, paper)**

Eighty-Eight Years offers a sweeping history of slavery's demise in the United States, expertly placed in the context of the Atlantic World. It is a striking synthesis that also carries its own powerful interpretation, standing out even among the seemingly endless number of works that have been written on the subject of American slavery. Patrick Rael walks the reader from the colonial era through Reconstruction, using a tightly packed, yet readable, narrative that never



loses sight of two important questions: First, why did it take so long for slavery to end in the United States? And, how did this process differ from the death of slavery elsewhere in the Atlantic World? Rael offers one simple and significant answer that covers both: the inordinate power of slaveholders. The so-called "slave power," a conspiracy decried by abolitionists and Free Labor advocates, was more than a nineteenth-century political boogeyman, Rael shows. The slaveholding elite possessed "an advantage unreplicated in most other slave societies in the New World" (p. 3).

One lasting way in which slaveholders maintained their grip on the nation came in the form of the “enormous gift” (p. 72) bestowed them by the constitutional convention of 1787—the Three-fifths Compromise. By allowing 3/5 of the enslaved population to go toward overall population count determining representation in the House of Representatives, the founders provided inordinate political power to slave states in the young country’s national government. Slave regimes elsewhere in the Atlantic World never received such an advantage. The American slaveholding elite thus wielded great power in the new Republic. For example, they protected the trans-Atlantic slave trade for twenty years, and when that trade finally ended (with little fuss, as the slave population had become self-sustaining), they ensured that any slaves confiscated in the execution of the ban were very likely transferred to the domestic slave trade. The slave power also protected militias to ensure a force to guard against and quash slave rebellion.

But the other portion of the United States’ divided house, the “free” North (which ended slavery slowly and created a racial caste), harbored anti-slavery activism that would only grow with time as the gnawing contradiction of slavery and the nation’s founding ideals persisted. The challenge to the slave power slowly mounted, with African Americans at the core. Rael rightfully emphasizes the part black rebels and runaways in the South and black abolitionists and activists in the North played in bringing down slavery in the United States (a topic in which he has already demonstrated his expertise—see, for example, *Black Protest and Black Identity in the Antebellum North*). Abolitionists and Americans against slavery’s spread became only more vocal as time went on in regard to the expansion of slavery and the great power of slaveholders in a supposedly free society. The actions of slaves to free themselves provided evidence that abolitionists—black and white—could use to make their case against slaveholders’ claims that the institution was be-

nign and civilizing. Runaway slaves and abolitionists tested the enforcement of the 1850 Fugitive Slave Act, for example, which required residents of free states to comply with efforts to recapture people who had fled from slavery. Slaves’ actions forced public debate on the law, and stoked northerners’ disapproval. Rael’s narrative strikes balance in demonstrating the work African-Americans did in undermining slavery and forcing public debate while doing justice to the many obstacles to those efforts.

Eventually the conversation forced by black and white agitators broke the existing party system. As the slow process of limiting slavery and the slave power seemed to be working—evidenced by the 1860 election of a presidential candidate who energetically opposed slavery’s westward expansion and whose name had not even appeared on the ballot in many southern states—the slave regime took the drastic choice to create the Confederacy, causing war. In the contest that followed, formerly enslaved people became soldiers for freedom. This transition from slave to soldier had occurred elsewhere in the Atlantic World, but never on such a scale. Victory and freedom remained complicated, however. In fact, as Rael shows in his discussion of Reconstruction and Redemption, although African Americans had enjoyed years of citizenship and political participation, white conservatives rolled back the progress in the South. Freedpeople, active and organized though they were, found that northern Republicans’ resolve against political attacks, unfavorable court rulings, and the KKK’s terrorism waned over time. Northern activists failed to press beyond ending the institution of slavery. The southern racial caste system persisted, much as it had following northern states’ emancipations decades earlier. Rael explains that white racist conservatives recaptured the post-Civil War South so effectively that the very memory of slavery itself is still affected. Many people today are unaware of slavery’s role in the conflict because it was erased by the losers of the war and replaced with the more palatable narrative of states’ rights.

Certainly anyone seeking a better understanding of American slavery's long life should read the book. Educators, even those already generally familiar with the topic, will find rich material to spruce up courses on American history and the history of slavery, especially within Rael's Atlantic context. Finally, the story told in *Eighty-Eight Years* presents a wise lesson from the past—change comes slowly, incompletely, and at great cost when a wealthy elite class has embedded its interests into the nation's fabric as deeply as slaveholders did in the United States.

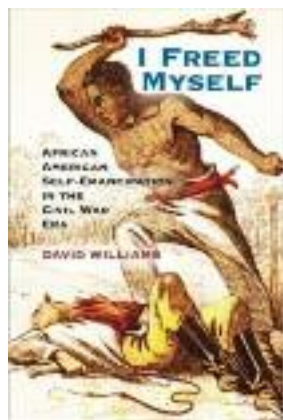
--Kelly Houston Jones



***I Freed Myself.* By David Williams.
(New York: Cambridge University
Press, 2014. Pp. xii-x + 243, index.
\$27.99, paperback)**

More books have been written about the American Civil War than about any other time in our nation's history. Few of these works have examined life as it was on the Confederate home front during the war. Even fewer have examined the uprisings among slaves in the South during the conflict and how such acts of defiance actually helped to speed up the final outcome of the war.

As a youngster during the Civil War Centennial, I was taught President Abraham Lincoln freed the slaves. In his book, David Williams challenges that notion and suggests all Lincoln really did was sign a piece of paper, which meant absolutely nothing in the states



that were in rebellion. After reading *I Freed Myself*, you will be convinced black men and women had far more to do with gaining their freedom than we as American History students ever learned in class.

Williams sets the tone of the book with the story of escaped slave Duncan Winslow and how Winslow joined the Union Army and was present at the battle of Fort Pillow, Tennessee. When Confederate troops began slaughtering black soldiers, the wounded Winslow took advantage of the confusion and made his way back to the Union lines. After being released from the hospital, Winslow became a farmer near Mound City, Illinois. One day a local politician showed up in the community, trying to raise votes. During his discussion with Winslow, the candidate said, "Don't forget. We freed you people." Whereupon Winslow held up his arm showing his old war wound and remarked, "See this? Looks to me like I freed myself" (p. 1). "Generations of Americans have grown up believing that Abraham Lincoln freed the slaves with a stroke of his pen by signing the Emancipation Proclamation," Williams writes. "Lost in this simple portrayal is the role that African Americans such as Duncan Winslow played in forcing the issue" (p. 2).

In chapter after chapter of his book, Williams gives example after example of how slaves in the South helped to emancipate themselves. Such information has often been swept to the back of the dust bin of history. Backed up by a mountain of scholarly research, the author does an outstanding job shining a much needed light on the facts.

One example to note is the mention of several stories of slaves refusing to work for their masters with some even escaping off the plantation to hide in nearby caves or swamps. According to Williams, the swamps in the South hid a few communities of escaped slaves during the war.

It is interesting to note in the recent motion picture *Free State of Jones* (Bluegrass Films, 2016), the main character of the film,

Newton Knight, portrayed by Academy Award winning actor Matthew McConaughey, is led to the local swamps by a young slave girl after going AWOL from his Confederate unit and rebelling against the local authorities. When Knight arrives at the destination, he discovers several runaway slaves who are also hiding out in the swamp.

Tales of the slaves' efforts to free themselves quickly traveled to the North. "General John Logan, speaking to a crowd of potential recruits, echoed Lincoln's assertion that saving the Union, not ending slavery, was the war's primary objective. Yet, he acknowledged, 'the negroes are getting free pretty fast. It is not done by the army, but they are freeing themselves; and if this war continues long, not a slave will be left in the whole South'" (p. 5).

Freemen and former slaves flocked to recruiting stations to wear the Army blue. Some newly formed units like the 1st Kansas Colored Infantry were recruited first by the state of Kansas before they were federalized. The 1st Kansas would be the first all-black unit to fight against Confederate forces on October 25, 1862 at Island Mound, Missouri. They would make history again at Cabin Creek, Indian Territory, on July 1-2, 1863, when they would become the first organized black unit to fight alongside their white brothers-in-arms. By the end of the Civil War, ten percent of the Union Army was made up of African Americans who were credited by President Lincoln with having turned the tide of the war. One hundred and eighty thousand volunteered for service in the US Army and nineteen thousand in the Navy, of which forty thousand paid the ultimate sacrifice for liberty.

Used more for labor projects than in combat, black soldiers were initially paid ten dollars per month from which three dollars were deducted for clothing, resulting in a net pay of seven dollars. In contrast, white soldiers received thirteen dollars per month, from which no clothing allowance was drawn. Besides the lower pay, Williams points to the poor treatment black soldiers often had to endure from

their fellow Union soldiers.

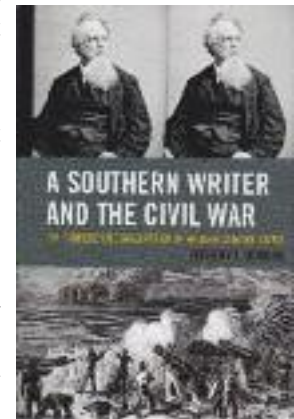
I am now a fan of David Williams. His research on this subject is remarkable. I hope to meet him one day and have him sign my copy of his book.

--Steven L. Warren



***A Southern Writer and the Civil War: The Confederate Imagination of William Gilmore Simms.* By Jeffery J. Rogers. (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2015. Pp. vii-x + 194, acknowledgments, bibliography, index. \$85, hardcover)**

Jeffery J. Rogers has compiled a thorough study on the literary, personal, and political contributions of William Gilmore Simms to South Carolina before, during, and after the Civil War. In his discussion Rogers makes him out to be a faithful supporter of the development of a southern Confederate identity during the war. The focus on Simms's life during wartime centers on the impact that Simms had with his writing in the Southern Antebellum. Not only does Rogers vibrantly explore the significance of this southern writer's contribution to the war effort and its aftermath, but also how Simms's vision and words centered on South Carolina during a tumultuous time in American history. The aim of the book is to illustrate Simms's contributions not solely based on the relationship he had to Confederate iden-



tity but to put to rest the negative impression historiographers have had of him and his writing during this time. By particularly looking at his contributions to the problems the South was having, Rogers discusses how Simms was a strong and influential person in the Southern Antebellum and an author who should not be overlooked in American Literature and history.

Throughout the book, Simms's involvement in the South's political, economic, and territorial problems is thoroughly discussed as these were issues of impact that ultimately promoted the separation between Northern and Southern states. By giving an historical overview alongside the contemporaneous insights of other authors on the topic of the Southern Antebellum and Simms, Rogers locates Simms as a contributor to Confederate identity with an influence on people involved in conflicts that ultimately led to the war. According to Rogers, for Simms these issues mainly revolved around the unjust treatment of the South economically and socially.

The book treats the controversy of the south versus the north by discussing the issues of secession, unstable economic problems, and slavery that contributed to it. Simms's involvement in these issues can be seen in his accounts that contributed to the separation of the nation: he promoted an awareness of problems in his writings from a white Southern perspective that provoked the division amongst his countrymen. The events and situations that led to this separation are visible in his exchange of letters and in his published work, where his ideas and resentment of people that tried to pull down the value of southern states are clearly articulated. Southern authors were being affected by the territorial and ideological disputes within the Union, and that led Simms to feel that his voice was taken into account but not thoroughly acknowledged. Rogers pays particular attention to Simms's involvement in the movement to make of the South a sovereign state. The discussion revolves around how he became part of the growth of the Southern states as an autonomous

force. Roger shows how Simms never stopped believing in the southern cause and how he promoted a southern identity through his writing.

Rogers focuses strongly on the literary ability Simms had, particularly on his use of poetry and prose to explore his ideas concerning the larger issues affecting the South. The discussion of the novel *Paddy McGann; or, The Demon of the Stump* shows the relationship it had to other pieces of literature, making it a manuscript that depicted Southern folklore, a satire of the current issues in the United States, and his personal attack on other authors in the printed medium. *Paddy* is one of the most multifaceted pieces written by Simms, for it went against the traditional forms of writing and had a creative approach to fiction. *Paddy* was, in Rogers's discussion, "a depiction of the frontiersman which is completely shorn of all romanticism," and "his rustic life is an object of pity as well as a source of comedy" (p. 133). Simms's novel criticized the problems that Southerners were going through and did not shy from depicting any situations that persisted during the war.

Simms's poetry also shows his devotion to the promotion of a Confederate identity among white people of the South, concerned with liberating themselves from the oppressive nature of the North. One such poem was "Lyrics of the South" where "Simms addressed himself to the men of the South directly, challenging them to guard their liberties and in doing so linked the Revolutionary past he knew so well to the cause of defending Southern Rights" (p. 158). In his poetry, as in his other writings, Simms demonstrated his ability to create solidarity and unity amongst his people in the cause.

Later on in his life he wrote what was the most detailed account of the effects the war had on the Southern states: *The Sack and Destruction of the City of Columbia, S.C.* The book was published through the newspaper *The Daily Phoenix* in bits and pieces and later collected as a pamphlet with revisions and expanded parts that portrayed the problematic

time that Columbia experienced during the war. Rogers remarks that “this text offers scholars an opportunity to read the original words Simms put into print in the immediate aftermath of Sherman, prior to the modification made to the pamphlet version” (p 184). The text serves as a prime example of Simms’s ability to catalogue the tumultuous events of the civil war as they happened.

Simms’s writing found various venues of publication in his lifetime, and his contributions to the war effort, the southern cause, and his devotion to South Carolina abounded in his work. Rogers focuses on Simms’s observant eye for matters happening in the South, the nation, and the war effort, and he effectively presents how important Simms was in the formation of a vision for the future of the short-lived Confederate nation.

--Gerardo M. Muniz Villalon



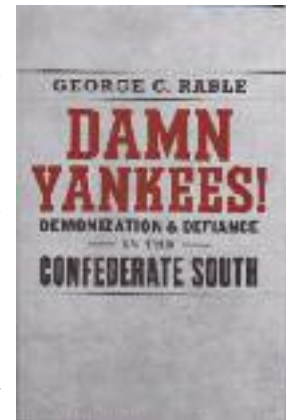
***Damn Yankees! Demonization & Defiance in the Confederate South.* By George C. Rable. (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University press, 2015. Pp. 141, introduction, acknowledgments, notes, a note on sources, index, \$38.00, hardcover)**

After reading George C. Rable’s volume on what he calls the Southern “words of war” (p.3), against the “so-called universal Yankee nation” (p.8), even one familiar with the Civil War beyond its military and political aspects realizes that the depth of hatred toward their Yankee adversaries was virtually bottomless. While Northerners attacked the effort to secede from the Union, Rable focuses on “what might be termed a standard or orthodox denunciation of the Yankee enemy” (p. 4). Such use of rhetoric

and the dehumanization that flowed from it, Rable makes clear, “undoubtedly lengthened the war (and Southern suffering)” by “shap[ing] the course of Reconstruction” and by “leaving an enduring legacy” (pp. 6-7).

Starting with the central role played by newspapers in establishing Confederate denunciations of Northerners over the course of the war, Rable properly notes that such a rhetorical base did not simply appear as of early 1861. In fact, the antebellum criticism of Southern intellectuals such as Nathaniel Beverley Taylor and William Gilmore Simms helped to lay the foundations for a nation separate from the union (p. 9). Deftly carrying such logic to its end, Rable links the use of such rhetoric, such as Northern bad manners and having no sense of tradition or place, to the sense that Southerners and Northerners were separate “races,” certainly in a cultural, but almost in a biological, sense (pp. 9-11). It is no wonder, as Rable establishes, that Southerners saw themselves as having “no affinity with the slimy, hypocritical, bigoted fanatical race that landed at Plymouth Rock” (p. 11).

Importantly for his argument that Southern anti-Yankee rhetoric both lengthened the war and helped to shape its impact, Rable extends Southern assessments of the Northern “race” by linking their proclamations of both Yankee cowardice and, more centrally, infidelity with broader terms as “rabble,” “riffraff,” “scum,” and “human vermin” (pp. 42, 30-33, 18). Rable’s exploration of such rhetoric easily moves from these expressions to the base Confederate fears that historians and literary critics have long noted: the “extermination” of Southern civilization by an inferior people with the express purpose of abolishing slavery that



would inevitably lead to “social equality,” “miscegenation,” and the “mongrelization” of “the Eden of the Earth” (pp. 90, 80, 87). Such linkage between what one might call the grand and the mundane is the principal strength of this easily accessible volume. Readers will appreciate Rabel’s argument that a given culture uses language, no matter the evidence, to establish, reinforce, and consolidate an already preconceived sense of itself. Such an analysis raises a criticism that goes beyond the historical white Southern power structure with its fears of race, gender, and class equality. Beyond the war, Reconstruction, and their still-extant impact across American life, Rabel wishes to explore the notion of American exceptionalism, shared by the South and the North even while understood and expressed in different ways. Rabel’s early decision to link “the psychological complexities of hatred” with the specific language used to condemn those who have apparently been one’s “enemy” since their arrival in the New World suggests that not only did the first Southern, and for that matter Northern, immigrants bring enmity with them, but they bestowed it upon generations of their descendants as well (pp. 2-3). Rather than escaping from the decadence of the Old World, Rabel explores the real possibility that our legacy as Americans began as we blinded ourselves, with a nod to John Ford, to a desired legend that became printed fact, but had little basis in actual reality.

In that sense, Rabel might have broadened his historical rooting of rhetoric by writing a chapter which charted how antebellum Southerners labelled Northerners as Puritans and Roundheads while insisting on their own separate ethnicity as Anglo-Saxons. Such background would have helped to contextualize how the culture of pre-1860 America was implanted from its earliest origins with the seeds of civil war. Given the past eight years, with an African American President facing a relentless series of attacks against the legitimacy of his claim to the office, such a background chapter would have made Rabel’s book that much more important.

With that caveat, I recommend Rabel’s book for libraries, scholars of all sorts, and general readers.

--Richmond Adams



***Hanging Bridge: Racial Violence and America’s Civil Rights Century.* By Jason Morgan Ward. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016. Pp. ix–xv + 326, illustrations, acknowledgments, notes, bibliography, index. \$29.95, hardcover)**

“Everybody knows about Mississippi Goddam.” Indeed, the refrain from Nina Simone’s gut-wrenching song hints at a truth known by the whole nation, a truth embraced particularly by the Magnolia State’s neighbors, where such phrases as “Thank God for Mississippi” represent a firm belief that this particular southern state has a darker history than others and that the weight of this past will, no doubt, keep it in perpetual darkness. After all, in 2014, the Equal Justice Initiative released a report on lynching in the American South and placed Mississippi’s body count at the top, with 614 dead from 1877 to 1950. No one was surprised at this, just as no one was surprised when Mississippi later opted to keep flying a state flag that prominently features a controversial Confederate symbol, even after South Carolina—the very headquarters of American secession—ceased hoisting the Confederate battle flag at its capitol in



the wake of a massacre of black churchgoers. If the south as a whole is regularly made the scapegoat of the nation, then Mississippi is the scapegoat for the south: “Everybody knows about Mississippi Goddam.”

Of course, the problem with what “everybody knows” is that the details often get lost in a broader swath of stereotype and rumor. Especially when it relates to a history of racial violence, often only the final body count remains in people’s minds—missing are the personalities and politics that perpetuated this heritage of atrocity, as well as the legacy of resistance, the stories of those who confronted the violence and undertook the hard work of changing the future. This is what makes more tightly focused studies of discrete events, or specific localities, so valuable, given how they highlight some of the interpersonal dynamics that get lost in the big picture. And Ward’s *Hanging Bridge* ranks as among the best of the best, telling a three-part story of oppression and violence in Clarke County, Mississippi, that employs as its cornerstone a rusty bridge over the Chickasawhay River known locally for the hangings that have occurred there.

The first of these hangings happened in late 1918, when two men and two women (reportedly pregnant) were lynched in Shubuta, Mississippi, for having allegedly conspired to murder E. L. Johnston, a middle-aged itinerant dentist. By the time of this multiple murder, the NAACP had experienced a surging membership that saw branches established in every southern state, and known lynching investigator Walter White was dispatched to the scene; his digging revealed that Johnston was known locally for his heavy drinking and had apparently forced himself upon numerous black women, thus flipping the script of rape and racial purity. Though the publication of lynching investigations like this could serve to embarrass the United States internationally, most white Mississippians, as Ward notes, “had gone through eighteen months of war sensing no conflict between [President Woodrow] Wilson’s

war for democracy and white supremacy” (p. 58). On the contrary, patriotic fervor stoked the spirit of vigilantism, leading many African Americans to evacuate the south altogether. This northward migration “forged a link between urban North and Deep South that would shape future civil rights battles” and extend the reach of black political influence (p. 86).

Ward’s next section covers the 1942 lynching of two fourteen-year-old boys, hanged from the same bridge, for allegedly conspiring to rape a white girl. The author again delves deep into the circumstances surrounding this murder, uncovering evidence aplenty to undermine the story circulated by white authorities, as well as illustrating the wartime changes that influenced local, state, and national politics. In the midst of World War II, the United States could ill afford damage to the image it strove to develop as an arsenal of liberty, and so the Justice Department sent agents to Shubuta to investigate, if only cursorily. The “Double V” rhetoric drew easy links between Mississippi and Nazi Germany, while the black press latched on to the lynching for signs of resistance—such as the parents’ refusal to accept the bodies for burial—that might demonstrate a “rising new spirit.”

The last section centers not upon a lynching but upon the emerging civil rights movement in Clarke County. However, the shadow of the lynching bridge is ever present here; as Ward writes in his introduction, “Racial violence—both in bursts of savagery that sent tremors far beyond Mississippi’s borders and in the everyday brutalities that sustained and outlived Jim Crow—connects the generations and geographies of America’s civil rights century” (p. 7). Ward specifically highlights the work done by Head Start programs implemented under the auspices of the Child Development Group of Mississippi, revealing how this group of poor blacks receiving federal funding for projects of communal uplift constituted a significant threat to the white power structure. Too, just as the other parts of the book revealed the shape of wartime tensions, so does this section,

which focuses specifically upon the year 1966, as local, all-white draft boards now tried to send to Vietnam increasingly “troublesome” individuals engaged in activism—a rather stark contrast to earlier strategies of preventing out-migration.

Geographer James A. Tyner, in *Violence in Capitalism: Devaluing Life in an Age of Responsibility* (2016), argues that we must shift our conception of violence from an exclusive focus upon “killing” to encompass also “letting die,” the various policies that produce the same toll but lack the active agent or perpetrator. Ward calls for a similar shift of perspective in *Hanging Bridge*, writing in his epilogue, “Violence has always shaped freedom dreams in the rural South, but the definition of what was violent proved broad and elastic. Mobs lynched, but segregation, poverty, and memory exacted a toll as well” (p. 253). Yes, *Hanging Bridge* is a book about lynching, but it moves beyond the noose and the gun to illustrate how such acts existed alongside a broader continuum of violence—and, moreover, how this broader continuum was resisted in ways both subtle and dynamic. As it turns out, what everybody knows about Mississippi is rather limited. Ward reveals that we have so much more to learn.

--Guy Lancaster



***Arkansas Women and the Right to Vote: The Little Rock Campaigns 1868–1920.* By Bernadette Cahill. (Little Rock: Butler Center Books, 2015. Pp. 115, endnotes, appendix, acknowledgments and call to action, bibliography, index. \$24.95 paper)**

In *Arkansas Women and the Right to Vote: The Little Rock Campaigns 1868–1920*,

Bernadette Cahill takes us on a walking tour of Little Rock, complete with a map to chronicle our journey through the history of Arkansas women’s struggle for the right to vote. By focusing on Little Rock, Cahill presents a microcosm of the women’s suffrage movement that began in earnest at Seneca Falls, New York, in 1848. She places Arkansas within the greater picture of the struggle, illuminating its lost opportunity to become a trailblazing state instead of having a women’s suffrage bill laughed down in the General Assembly.

But she also points out in its favor that Arkansas was eventually the first southern state to enfranchise women to vote in state primary elections, and the second state in the South (after Texas) to ratify the 19th Amendment, which awarded women the right to vote nationwide. Until its passage in 1919, Cahill notes that in being denied voting rights, half of the American population—women—were “classed with traitors, felons, idiots, vagrants and the insane” (p. 126).

Cahill narrows the field to twenty-four brief chapters focusing on specific sites around Little Rock, including gravesites of some key players. Many of the original buildings that housed meetings, speeches, etc., are long gone. However, recognizing a particular site, even if it is a parking lot today, somehow makes historical events more real.

Also contributing to the reality of Arkansas women’s struggle for the right to vote is Cahill’s use of primary documents from the early 1900s. Along with the *Arkansas Gazette and Democrat*, she also utilizes short-lived publications such as the *Arkansas Ladies’ Journal* and *Woman’s Chronicle*, providing a window on a



long-ago time.

Some of the passages Cahill quotes are food for thought over a century later, such as this 1911 editorial from a statewide newspaper (still in existence) declaring with great authority that “the great majority of American women . . . care nothing for the right to cast a ballot” (p. 109) and that anyone causing the “agitation” simply needed to “have something to employ her mind, and, having tired of theater parties, card parties and poodles, her mind naturally reverts to the suffrage question. . . . The surest safeguard any woman can have is the protection and fidelity of some good man” (p. 109). Poodles and good men aside, Cahill takes an historian’s view of the women who were ridiculed, arrested, beaten and tortured for seeking not to be subjected to taxation without representation. Throughout the book, pictures of important individuals allow us to put human faces together with names. Ample illustrations show buildings and sites as they were then as well as those that survived.

Cahill draws direct links between the women’s suffrage movement of the early twentieth century and the mid-century fight for African-American civil rights, a campaign to which Arkansas was no stranger. She notes how the non-violent nature of the women’s movement influenced later civil rights leaders, stating that the battle for women’s suffrage was “the longest civil rights campaign in US history [and] was also the first successful non-violent civil rights campaign in American history” (p. 115).

A thread that runs throughout the book is mention of Little Rock’s formidable Adolphine Fletcher Terry, who would go on to serve as a major figure in the Little Rock school integration crisis of the 1950s. While the reader might wish for more information about Terry, there is the excellent biography by Stephanie Bayless which Cahill cites in her bibliography.

Arkansas Women and the Right to Vote: The Little Rock Campaigns 1868–1920 is a slim volume, but its brevity may serve to make

it more readable than a thick book sitting on a shelf. The chapters can be read individually or as part of the book as a whole.

There are occasional references which might have benefitted from a few background sentences, such as the *Plessy vs. Ferguson* decision, but fortunately in the case of *Plessy*, there is always *Google*. There are also some typos that can be off-putting, such as referring to JFK assassination site Dealey Plaza in Dallas as “Daley” Plaza.

Those are, however, minor critiques about a valuable book that not only lets us observe, through contemporary accounts, what happened but also what did not happen. It does not canonize the participants, showing how squabbles led to splintering the women’s rights movement into rival groups. Most significantly, it includes a call to action that might well be heeded by Little Rock tourism officials and/or graduate students: “Suffrage Walks” around significant sites in the city. Cahill’s easily-portable book would make an excellent companion.

In brief, *Arkansas Women and the Right to Vote: The Little Rock Campaigns 1868–1920* is a highly readable, fresh approach to the subject. Rather than simply citing dates and facts, Cahill takes us on a walking tour of significant places around Little Rock in the fight for women’s suffrage, which has the effect of bringing us onstage for the drama. It is well researched through primary sources that even tell us what the women were wearing while they struggled for the right to vote as citizens of the United States.

Any woman who reads this book and still does not exercise the right to vote might well recall the 1911 editorial which said few women would vote if they had the right. Cahill’s book should inspire women not to prove them correct.

--Nancy Hendricks



***Taken from the Paradise Isle: The Hoshida Family Story.* Edited by Heidi Kim (Boulder, CO: University Press of Colorado, 2015. Pp. vii-xxxv + 239, figures, foreword, acknowledgments, introduction, editorial notes, appendices, bibliography, index. \$29.95, hardcover)**

Taken from the Paradise Isle tells the story—through journal/memoir excerpts, letters, and drawings (all now in the collection of the Japanese American National Museum in Los Angeles)—of George and Tamae Hoshida and their children during World War II.

The Hoshida family lives in Hawaii; George was born in Japan and came to the United States as a young child, and his wife Tamae was born in Hawaii (a US territory at that time). After the bombing of Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, Japanese Americans living on the West Coast of the United States are sent to camps around the country amid suspicions that they would aid the enemy and show loyalty to Japan rather than the United States. In Hawaii, whose large Japanese population makes it impossible to send everyone to internment camps (only about one percent of the ethnic Japanese population was sent to camps), suspicions fall on men like George Hoshida who are leaders in the community and are involved in activities such as Japanese language schools, Buddhist or Shinto worship, and martial arts.

George Hoshida is arrested in February 1942 and sent to a series of military and Justice Department camps, where he spends nearly two years away from his wife and daughters (one child is severely disabled, and one of his daughters was born when he was away). Tamae, who is also physically disabled, eventually follows evacuation orders (unsure if they are compulsory—though they seem to have been—but wanting to be reunited with her husband) and leaves Hawaii to go with three of her daughters

(one a newborn) to the Jerome Relocation Center in Arkansas; her disabled daughter is left behind in an institution. After the couple navigates a tangle of red tape, George eventually joins them at Jerome (which had Hawaiians as about 10 percent of its popula-



tion), where they spend the rest of the war. George finally gets to meet his infant daughter, but that joy is tempered by sadness when they learn that their oldest daughter has drowned in a bathtub in the institution where they have had to leave her. The family eventually returns to Hawaii.

Before his death in 1985, George diligently worked on his memoir (using his journals from the time as a basis), wanting to leave a record for his descendants. He wrote in the original memoir that he was aware of “defects” in the writing but wanted to have the memoir in a readable form before his health failed. Charmingly, he asks readers to read with a pen in hand, correcting as they go.

Fortunately, editor Heidi Kim has done all that work for us, presenting a fine story, with the letters, memoir, and George’s drawings woven together expertly. She silently corrects some of the language while leaving enough alone to convey the true voices of George and Tamae (who were required by the government to write their letters in English; Tamae’s is limited). Kim has also added helpful explanatory notes and additional sources for those interested in an in-depth investigation of the myriad issues surrounding Japanese internment.

In the memoir, George refers to himself in the third person as “Yoshio” to, as he explained, achieve greater objectivity as he tells his story. The memoir is enjoyable to read, full of detail, but it is easy to get a bit bogged down in reading

the letters, which George and Tamae fill with a lot of comforting words for each other, imploring each to stay healthy and not to worry. While these platitudes can be monotonous for the reader, they were no doubt soothing for the two to read during their separation. The letters are also less compelling to read for logistical reasons—they could not have many details about the war or the camps in order to get past the censors, they exhibit a lack of knowledge about what was going on (through no fault of the letter writers!), and they often contain inquiries about other letters due to the sporadic nature of wartime mail. While reading the letters, the reader can feel their frustration.

The most poignant parts of the story involve separation during important events—birth, illness, and death. Tamae is without her husband through most of her pregnancy and for the birth of their daughter; a man in camp with George falls ill and eventually dies without his family present; the Hoshidas' daughter dies in an institution and they cannot attend her funeral. Despite these tragedies, there are bright spots, too: Tamae sends George flowers to celebrate their ten-year wedding anniversary, and they have a lovely reunion at Jerome in Arkansas, with George arriving by train late at night and finding Tamae (who had fallen asleep waiting for him) in her barracks in the morning: "They stood there for a moment, which seemed like ages, staring at each other—unable to speak. Finally Yoshio heard himself speaking, 'I'm back!' And they found each other in a passionate embrace" (p. 222).

The writings often delve into the complicated issues surrounding what it means for people in George and Tamae's situation to feel that they are truly American. George contemplates going to live in Japan after the war, but Tamae—who had never been to Japan—strenuously objects, saying that they should stay in Hawaii and continue to live as Americans. George eventually decides that he owes America a greater debt than he owes Japan, having spent most of his life in America. He also

evinces pride in Tamae's family members who are in the US armed forces, saying, "As American Citizens, it is their duty to fight even their ancestral country. Hope they will show that they do have the stuff in them and that Japanese blood is good blood and not a traitor's blood" (p. 177). The memoir also deals with some other complicated racial issues when George arrives in the South. In Little Rock, during a train delay, they are told to go to the whites-only waiting room, "but the men felt uneasy in there and preferred to go inside the blacks' room" (p. 220). In return for sketching a picture of one of the African American cooks on the train, the men received star treatment: "It seemed that these black people, being discriminated against by the whites, must have felt special kinship to them as fellow minorities, and this was one of their ways to show comradeship" (p. 220).

There are many high-quality books about Japanese internment, including memoirs, but this book covers lightly trod territory, such as Hawaiians facing internment and the internment story from a woman's point of view (through letters and through parts of the memoir that tell Tamae's side of the story). Also, of the two Arkansas camps, Rohwer generally receives more attention, so it is valuable to have more written about the Jerome camp. While giving a lot of historical detail, the book offers a truly intimate and memorable look at one family's struggles, heartbreak, and joy.

--Ali Welky



Emmett Till in Different States. By Philip C. Kolin. (Chicago, IL: Third World Press, 2015. Pp. vii-xii + 72, chronology, notes. \$18.95, paper)

Philip C. Kolin's *Emmett Till in Different States* opens with a four paragraph, thirty-one sentence prologue in which each sentence is taken "verbatim from one of the numerous accounts of the trial in the Southern press in 1955" (p. 3). Not surprisingly, these sentences serve up a mixture of fact ("The judge allowed the defense to record Mrs. Bryant's testimony with the jury out of the room") and prejudice ("The mother of the boy will probably be safer in Mississippi than she has ever been in a gang-infested Chicago"), and the prologue concludes with this telling summation: "It is best for all concerned that the Bryant-Milam case be forgotten as quickly as possible. It has received far more publicity than it should have gotten" (p. 4).

In the poems that follow, Kolin not only positions himself against this call to forgetfulness, but he does so in a way that challenges the univocality of the southern press circa 1955, encouraging us to see the "Bryant-Milam case" from multiple perspectives of time and place, as well as race, gender, and agency. For instance, in the two opening poems, "Facts about Me" and "Emmett's Wallet," Kolin gives the first word to the deceased Emmett Till, but the subtle shift between titles—where Kolin employs "Me" to position Till as the subject of a poem that Till narrates about himself and then uses "Emmett" in the next title to position the young boy as the object of a poem that he similarly narrates—alerts us to the deft play of perspectives that will mark the poems to follow as the murdered boy fluidly assumes "different states" throughout the collection. In addition to having Emmett Till give his own story in twenty-one poems, Kolin lets other first-person voices emerge, with the boy's story told by figures as varied as Mamie Till, Moses Wright, Mahalia Jackson, and Carolyn Bryant, as well other more imaginative first-person personas such as "Emmett's Sister," "A Black Man From Chicago," and even the "Chicago River." These voices are juxtaposed with third-person poems of varied omniscience, as well as two first-per-

son poems of indeterminate agency whose "I" remains unfixed, and two first-person plural poems, one told from the collected perspective of the all-white jury, the other from "Emmett Till's Brothers," those "Graveless" lynching victims whose "sole obituary / [is] etched" in Emmett's casket photo (p. 34). Together, these poems challenge the opening gesture of the prologue, providing "numerous accounts" that truly embody numerous perspectives, and do the work of remembering rather than forgetting.

It is a testament to Kolin's gifts as a poet that a coherent vision of Emmett Till emerges from this dazzling multiplicity of perspectives. That vision achieves its best expression in "Emmett Weeps over Chicago," which finds the slain boy lamenting not over the city of his youth but over a "new Chicago" with its "slain children" who "wait / for eyewitnesses to recover from their memories / So many unwritten lives" (pp. 60-61). Noting that his "voice is well-trained in the chords of sorrow," Till promises that he will sing a "fated ballad" of these "lost children sketched in chalk," a task that requires

Keening
 Accusing
 Recounting
 Honoring
 Memorializing
 Hoping, joining, rebuilding (p. 61)

What Emmett Till promises in this poem, Kolin delivers throughout his collection. Like Till, Kolin is well-trained in the chords of sorrow, and he too weeps over the slain as an eyewitness to horror, accusing when accusation is needed, recounting when objectivity is required, honoring when honor is due. Through these different states of telling, Kolin is able to fashion a larger narrative of "rebuilding," one that not only works against forgetting but also in favor of hope and redemption. With each poem, Kolin does for Emmett Till what Emmett Till wants to do for the "generation of hemorrhaged children" (p.60) in his "new Chicago":

that is, to speak what remains unspoken, and through that speaking to challenge our indifference to suffering and injustice.

With *Emmett Till in Different States*, Philip Kolin adds his voice to a rich poetic tradition. The best of these poems, such as “Uncle Moses’s Dream,” “Searching for Emmett Till in the Loop,” and “The Judgment of Carolyn Bryant,” deserve to be read in conversation with the Till poems of Langston Hughes, Gwendolyn Brooks, and Audre Lorde, and the full volume is exceeded only by Marilyn Nelson’s *Wreath for Emmett Till* in ambition and execution. Above all else, however, these poems capture Kolin’s singular understanding of history, one that is unafraid of sorrow yet always emboldened by hope. That message is as important now as it has ever been.

--Christopher Metress

