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Book Reviews

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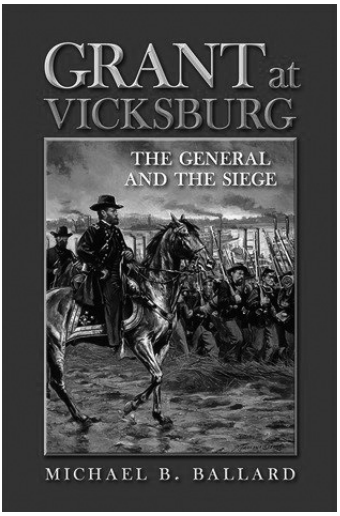
BOOK REVIEWS

Grant at Vicksburg: The General and the Siege.

By Michael B. Ballard.

Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2013. Illustrations, maps, notes, index. Pp. xiii, 232. $32.95 cloth, $32.95 e-book. ISBN: 9780809332403.



Twenty years after the end of the Civil War, with the advantage of hindsight and the knowledge of Confederate defeat, Ulysses S. Grant noted in his memoirs that "the fate of the Confederacy was sealed when Vicksburg fell" (*Personal Memoirs of U.S. Grant in Two Volumes*, 1885). The Union army's six-week siege of Vicksburg, Mississippi, the Confederacy's last real stronghold on the Mississippi River, ended with the city's surrender to Grant on July 4, 1863. Civil War historians such as Edward C. Bearss, James Arnold, Terrence Winschel, and Timothy B. Smith have explored the military campaign, while a long list of Grant biographers have produced a glut of studies on the man himself.

In *Grant at Vicksburg*, Michael B. Ballard, professor and archivist at Mississippi State University, offers an insightful hybrid of both military history and biography. Ballard is no stranger to the Vicksburg story having previously authored books on Grant, the Vicksburg campaign, and a biography of Confederate General John C. Pemberton (Grant's opponent during the siege). His thesis is that Grant's Vicksburg experience—particularly the administrative, tactical, and psychological challenges—prepared the forty-one-year-old general to lead the Union to ultimate victory over the Confederacy. The mental and emotional clouds that hung over Grant's head following his army's near-disastrous victory at Shiloh in April 1862, disappeared after Vicksburg, leaving the general with a newfound sense of confidence and determination that served him well for the remainder of the war.

Ballard organizes his book chronologically, analyzing both Grant and military affairs from the failed Union attacks against Vicksburg's fortified defenses in late May to Pemberton's surrender of the city and, finally, the Rebel army's evacuation of Jackson, Mississippi, in mid-July. Throughout the narrative the author focuses on several key events. He argues that Grant's obsession with Confederate General Joseph E. Johnston's whereabouts and the constant rumors that Johnston's army was marching to relieve Vicksburg needlessly distracted the Union general. Yet, this experience taught Grant to be more concerned with the execution of his own plans and less preoccupied with those of the enemy. Ballard devotes an entire chapter debunking the legend that Grant became drunk during an inspection trip up the Yazoo River. He is particularly critical of popular writers such as Shelby Foote and Samuel Carter III as well as historian and Grant biographer William McFeely, all of whom embraced the story without question according to the author. Ballard details Grant's combative relationship with subordinate general John A. McClernand, a weeks-long feud that ended with McClernand's removal and Grant gaining more experience dealing with insubordinate officers. And, while biographical material tends to dominate, the author devotes a sizeable portion of the narrative to combat maneuvers and tactical decision making.

Grant at Vicksburg contains a number of notable strengths and several weaknesses. For the most part, Ballard seamlessly weaves biographical information together with the military operations, one supporting the other. He describes the role African-American soldiers played during the campaign and takes head-on the issue of racism within Union ranks as well as Federal soldiers' occasional violence against blacks. Ballard's overarching thesis is largely successful; his evidence that the campaign shaped Grant's post-Vicksburg prosecution of the Union war effort is convincing. Like many battle narratives, this one lacks a sufficient number of maps; but this reviewer is rarely satisfied in that area. The author also relies too heavily upon the passive voice, a stylistic approach that strains the narrative and sometimes lacks clarity.

Important to note, the author is overwhelmingly positive in his evaluation of Grant, often making excuses for his failures and arguably exaggerating Grant's place in history. Ballard's assertion that Grant was the "greatest Union general of the Civil War, and perhaps the greatest general period" may raise a few eyebrows among military historians and fans of other generals (62). Readers who prefer pure battle narratives devoid of socio-political arguments will probably be disappointed. Conversely, those who favor military biographies mixed with a healthy dose of combat will find Ballard's book an enjoyable read.

TOMMY C. BROWN
Auburn University

A Voice That Could Stir an Army: Fannie Lou Hamer and the Rhetoric of the Black Freedom Movement. *By Maegan Parker Brooks (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2014. Index, bibliography. Pp. 314. $60 cloth, $60 e-book. ISBN 978-1-628646-004-9.)*

Fannie Lou Hamer led a remarkable life, from her early years as the youngest of twenty children of sharecroppers to her later years as a fearless voter registration proponent and to her final years as a venerated leader and cultural critic. Maegan Parker Brooks's rhetorical biography of Fannie Lou Hamer is a meticulous piece of scholarship. In order to benefit maximally from this work, there is a method that citizen, student, and researcher alike should use. They should first listen to the many audio recordings strewn about the internet, and then read the primary documents in *The Speeches of Fannie Lou Hamer: To Tell It Like It Is* (2010), which is a collection of thirty speeches compiled by Davis Houck and Maegan Parker Brooks. Parker Brooks offers a convincing analysis, but independent inquiry would be valuable as well.

This rhetorical biography has two functions. First, it regards Hamer's speeches endogenously—Hamer defined herself as rhetorical in evolving ways throughout her activist career. Second, the rhetorical biography maps exogenous or contextual factors that evolve throughout Hamer's career as well. The author makes deft use of "bottom up" and "long view" approaches to document recovery. Concerning the latter, periodization is often too restrictive to be meaningful. Concerning the former, local events take precedence over oft-lauded national events, though Parker Brooks analyzes national events well.

Chapter 1 focuses on Hamer's informal education among family, school, and church. Chapter 2 covers the early recruitment years when the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee was just beginning to develop and benefit from her immense capacities. Chapter 3 focuses on Hamer's evolving rhetorical strategies as she achieved prominence during the 1964 Democratic National Convention. Chapter 4 adds a realistic human depiction to common takes on Hamer's simple, honest sharecropper and warrior personas. Chapter 5 was easily the most interesting chapter to this reviewer. The chapter recounts Hamer's steady ideological trajectories as the movement imploded all around her. Bowling league, feminist, anti-Vietnam, and Black Power Democrats fragmented, inviting her in all directions. She remained her evolving self in thoughtful dialogue with all factions. Chapter 6 is the cautionary tale of Ms. Hamer's tragic demise, which bears a strong resemblance to the life of Carolina Maria de Jesus, whose diaries were published as *Child of The Dark* several decades ago. The afterword is a thoughtful analysis of the trajectories of Hamer's immense corpus.

Parker Brooks's research is fruitful, allowing for thick description and myriad new avenues of inquiry. There are too many new research questions springing from these pages to give adequate treatment, but one such question is too intriguing to put aside. Are Hamer's accomplishments the surprising result of a poor sharecropper's life that middle-class blacks overtook as they rose precociously to prominence? Or is it simply that the new, formally educated middle class did not recognize that she was a member of the club?

It is an exaggeration to describe Hamer's pedigree as Delta gentry, but consider: 1. The Townsends reputedly raised twenty children, receiving a modest $50 stipend on each occasion of birth (the equivalent of roughly $1,500 in 2014 dollars or a total of $30,000) if twenty children were indeed born. 2. Her father seemed able to accumulate wealth, though others undermined him after the fact. 3. The Townsends raised twenty children. If even just five of them reached adulthood, surely this indicates a modest threshold of wealth. 4. Both Townsend parents seemed able to work long, physically demanding days, perhaps like unheralded former athletes; the mere act of surviving double digit births seems to corroborate this as well. 5. Mr. Townsend was a minister, which indicates elevated status in virtually every denomination. 6. Hamer herself lived in a nicer house than other sharecroppers due to her position as a measuring broker trusted by planters and sharecroppers alike. 7. Perry "Pap" Hamer, her devoted husband, was skilled enough to operate heavy machinery including tractors, which requires training and in some cases a license. 8. Many friends and enemies described Hamer as stout, and she had diabetes, a horrible disease that can strike amid plenty. It is too early to make a more elaborate argument about Hamer's socioeconomic status because of the need to know more about the lives of her nineteen siblings.

One other subject deserves mention. Hamer's voice will draw people in from all sides of the arguments on reproductive rights and will add compassion to what is ordinarily a flinty, unpleasant encounter—rarely a dialogue.

Parker Brooks's rhetorical biography of Fannie Lou Hammer succeeds in pulling together enough information for scholars to engage and analyze. Read it soon but perhaps not before the research suggested above in order to engage fully the personal and historiographic diversity of this remarkable woman.

David Dixon
Saint Joseph's College, Rensselaer, Indiana

A New Southern Woman: The Correspondence of Eliza Lucy Irion Neilson, 1871-1883. *Edited by Giselle Roberts. (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2013. Acknowledgements, illustrations, notes, index. Pp. viii, 306. $49.95 cloth. ISBN: 9781611171037.)*

In *A New Southern Woman*, Giselle Roberts compiles eighty letters written by Lucy Irion Neilson between her wedding day in 1871 and September 1883 to illuminate how women rebuilt their lives and white femininity in the New South. Through the letters, readers get to observe the everyday life of Neilson, her sisters Cordele and Lizzie, and niece Bess, and to catch glimpses of how the community of Columbus and the region of north Mississippi adapted to a range of postwar issues, from emancipation to the revivalism led by a new minister at the Columbus First Presbyterian Church. Roberts argues that white women, like Neilson, created new identities that built on the freedom and independence of wartime gender roles and allowed for fluid movement between older notions of the domestic ideal and new "outward-looking" and "proactive" endeavors that could include activism at the school house or church, and even political activities, so long as their efforts helped to support white supremacy and patriarchal authority.

For the most part, however, Neilson remained squarely in the traditional role of devoted wife, mother, sister, and exacting mistress—her experience hewed closely to home and hearth, and in matters of race her greatest concern was how to get the upper-hand in dealing with the freedwomen working for her. The strength of the collection is in how it chronicles the common desires of the Irion women, who, whether interacting with family, husbands, neighbors, or newly-freed people, tried to adjust to the new demands of white womanhood, while maintaining their place of privilege and furthering their family's claim to civility.

Neilson was born in Tennessee, the eighth child and the youngest, to a prosperous, slave-owning family who lost it all by 1848, due to the father's mismanagement. The Irion children spent much of the rest of their lives trying to rebuild a sense of family and establish themselves in the upper echelons of white society in their new home of Columbus, Mississippi. The right education for the younger generation was important to new notions of white femininity, but so was looking the part. Neilson reported her dismay to Lizzie when Bess and her new husband, Frank, showed up to visit—for which Neilson had prepared "nice elegant entertainments"—with nothing fit to wear (237). The situation was dire enough that Lucy spoke to Bess and Frank separately about the problem, reprimanding Bess for being stingy with regard to her personal upkeep and Frank for not having done something about it before their arrival. Interludes like these make clear that claims on respectability and refinement were felt to be tenuous, and redress needed to be swift and unambiguous.

One of the many themes to emerge in Neilson's letters is the careful attention paid to maintaining and strengthening family bonds, despite long absences, conflict regarding property, and hurt feelings. Along with detailing local and family events, much of the content of her letters to Lizzie and Bess, her most frequent correspondents, is spent complimenting them, remarking on the spiritual devotion their letters evidenced, or on a pleasing turn of phrase that Neilson liked, and in all ways, letting them know that they were foremost in her heart and mind. While Neilson was remarkably explicit about her affection and devotion to family, other relationships can be only glimpsed. Readers may be frustrated by the brief reference made to servants and former slaves known to the family, but the letters provide enough detail to demonstrate Neilson's dedication to establishing her authority over her female domestic servants, for which she seeks advice from her older sister in how to outmaneuver the freed women and compel their submission to her understanding of when and how they should work.

The volume holds appeal to undergraduate and graduate students interested in social history of the era and women's history. Scholars and the general audience will appreciate the organization of the letters, the introduction, and the notations that Roberts provides for each section. By not correcting Neilson's use of language, unorthodox punctuation, or use of abbreviations, the letters better reveal Neilson's mood and meaning. Such decisions credit the editor and help ensure that the goal of the series, "to enable women to speak for themselves," is achieved (ix).

Erin Kempker
Mississippi University for Women

Pageants, Parlors, and Pretty Women: Race and Beauty in the Twentieth-Century South. *By Blain Roberts. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2014). Acknowledgments, illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. Pp. ix, 363. $39.95 hardcover, $29.99 e-book. ISBN: 978-1-4696-1420-5.)*

In *Pageants, Parlors, and Pretty Women*, Blain Roberts tackles the complex regional history of female beauty. Building upon the work of historians such as Anne Firor Scott, Deborah Gray White, and Tara McPherson on southern women, and Kathy Peiss, Maxine Leeds Craig, and Tiffany M. Gill on beauty history and politics, Roberts investigates the connections between gender, race, representation, and power in the twentieth century American South. Roberts charts the evolution of southern ideas about beauty from the late-nineteenth century to the 1970s, with the goal of showing how southern women "mediated the crises of modern southern history" through changes in racialized and class-based expressions of, and thus behaviors surrounding, beauty (5). She does this through an admittedly "segregated approach" in which she separates the changes in white and black beauty cultures over the course of the first half of the twentieth century into different chapters, only bringing them together in her final chapter about the civil rights era (13).

Roberts's analysis begins around the turn of the twentieth century with the reactions of white southern women to the modernization of beauty culture. The classist, "natural beauty" ideal of the "southern lady" and the financial barriers to beauty-based consumerism among rural women served as initial obstacles to the widespread adoption of cosmetics in the region. Eventually, however, the cosmetics industry learned to manipulate the ideal of the lady for widespread appeal. According to Roberts, the result was a set of cross-class beauty behaviors that eclipsed socioeconomic divisions between white women, therefore bolstering Jim Crow.

During this era, black women in the South also had an evolving relationship with cosmetics. African-American women who used cosmetics and hair products like straighteners constantly courted accusations of trying to "look white," but Roberts ably shows how black beauty parlors could also serve as community centers and springboards for progressive politics and so-called "racial uplift" in the first half of the twentieth century. Roberts devotes two chapters to public evaluations of racialized, regional beauty through contests and pageants. White beauty pageants grew out of efforts to modernize rural culture, providing a new version of ideal southern femininity, while black pageants emphasized the politics of respectability through representations of virtuous femininity.

Roberts's best chapter is her last one on the politicized uses of ideas about beauty during the civil rights era. With emphases on female racial and sexual purity, white beauty contests served as lovely enactments of the very ugly politics of massive resistance to the civil rights movement. The meaning and process of black beauty pageants changed as well, as younger black women shed the traditional appeal to racial respectability in favor of the more physically natural and politically charged Black Power aesthetic.

This final chapter will be of specific interest to Mississippi readers and scholars. Although Roberts uses examples of beauty practices from Mississippi throughout the book, her strongest comparison comes at the beginning of this chapter, cleverly entitled "Bodies Politic." Roberts contrasts Lynda Lee Mead, a white University of Mississippi student and Miss America 1959, who argued publicly that Mississippi had "nothing to apologize for," with the experiences of Anne Moody, a former beauty queen who went straight to a black beauty parlor for cleansing—both physical and psychological—after being attacked at a sit-in in Jackson in 1963 (192-193). The difference was stark: "One woman had beamed beneath a sparkling tiara," while "the other, dirty and disheveled, retreated to a place where she could be made presentable again" (193). Of similar interest to Mississippi readers is the section on the "multitude of Ole Miss beauty queens" who, by "adding beauty and decorum" while spouting vague pleas for "cordiality" and "getting along," attempted to beautify the reactionary, violent atmosphere of the state in the 1960s (204-206).

Although Roberts finds some continuity over time, which she indicates through a short biography of Mary Kay Ash (yes, *that* Mary Kay) in the "Conclusion," she simultaneously stresses key changes in the politics of southern beauty. Ultimately, Roberts convincingly shows how, over the first three-quarters of the twentieth century, black and white southerners used ideas about female beauty to both uphold traditional hierarchies of gender, race, and class, and to contest these prevailing structures of power.

Keira V. Williams
Texas Tech University

Black Freedom, White Resistance, and Red Menace: Civil Rights and Anticommunism in the Jim Crow South. *By Yasuhiro Katagiri. (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2014. Acknowledgements, illustrations, notes, index. Pp.xi, 392. $47.50 hardcover. ISBN 9780807153130.)*

This well-researched monograph emphasizes southern segregationists' connections with northern-based "Red-baiters," and historian Yasuhiro Katagiri has added another volume on southern anticommunism and massive resistance. Katagiri's major historiographic intervention involves the North-South network of anticommunists who attempted to "nationalize their resistance not only to irresistible tides of social change but also to federal authority" (xvii).

Visiting dozens of archival repositories in mostly southern states, Katagiri details the rise of Methodist anticommunist strategists Myers G. Lowman and Joseph Brown Matthews. For many scholars of anticommunism and massive resistance, these names are nearly synonymous with the Dies Committee, the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC), and the opposition to the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Lowman commanded the fiercely anticommunist Circuit Riders, Inc., from Cincinnati, Ohio, while Matthews turned from the Popular Front and missionary work to public relations for HUAC and the southern states' "little HUACs"—or legislative investigating committees (31, 36-39, 62).

Katagiri's strength is showing how southern segregationists—people at the top of the white supremacist political food chain such as Tom P. Brady, William Rainach, William J. Simmons, James O. Eastland, and Eugene Talmadge—organized, finding common cause with professional anticommunists such as Lowman and Matthews, among others. In the former Confederate states, Katagiri reveals how segregationists shaped their own anticommunist rhetoric by picking the brains of Lowman and Matthews. Charges of communism levied against civil rights organizations including the Southern Conference Educational Fund (SCEF) and the Southern Regional Council (SRC) developed alongside school desegregation crises in Little Rock, New Orleans, and Clinton, Tennessee, which rallied white supremacist political elites. Lowman and Matthews provided support and information for the legislative agencies and sovereignty commissions battling racial integration in schools.

It is a chore to examine anticommunism and defense of segregation in a single volume. Questions remain such as whether anticommunism functioned only as a weapon, and here Katagiri's work could have benefitted from a tighter conceptualization. The weapon-based thesis diminishes the complexity of ideology and reduces historical actors to monolithic, calculating, and pragmatic automatons (xvii). Analyses of southern anticommunism must examine the possibility that it was the core of segregationists' understanding of rapid domestic social and economic changes—most of which affected the South—between 1932 and 1968. Anticommunism was an expression of how militant segregationists—of William Rainach and James O. Eastland's ilk—understood and dealt with the blows levied upon the social and economic structure of southern society. After all, Katagiri quotes Citizens' Council founder Robert B. "Tut" Patterson, who exclaimed "racial integration would 'utterly destroy everything that [he] valued'" similar to the lifestyle changes associated with the transition to a communist system (18). The book is replete with similar statements from well-known and obscure white supremacists, suggesting strongly that they understood racial integration as synonymous with communism.

It is likely that anticommunism was more than a weapon since these kinds of charges have demonstrated remarkable staying power despite the demise of international communism. As the black freedom struggle rekindles with protests against police misconduct, opponents quickly denounce activists as communists. Many conservative Americans and their political representatives have too often labeled Barack Obama as a socialist, if not a communist. A better historical analysis is needed to demonstrate anticommunism's appeal as a rhetorical device, so the historian must retrace its ideological development and dissemination to the rank-and-file. Scholars should analyze anticommunism's appeal in the context of massive resistance and political realignment to fully appreciate the breadth of the charge "communist!"

Another shortcoming in this otherwise exceptionally researched monograph is temporization. In the 1930s, Matthews became an anticommunist by working for Texan Martin Dies, the architect of the Dies Committee—progenitor of HUAC. Yet, Texas is less important than Arkansas, Louisiana, Tennessee, and Mississippi in the author's analysis (40-41). Katagiri acknowledges that 1930s-era segregationists charged the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union and the Highlander Folk School (founded in 1932) with communism (130-31,106). Thus, southern anticommunism melded with white supremacy long before the classical phase of the civil rights era, which is the author's focus. Regardless, Katagiri's latest volume is a welcomed "sequel" to his work on the Mississippi State Sovereignty Commission (xiii).

KEVIN BOLAND JOHNSON
Grambling State University

Natchez Country: Indians, Colonists, and the Landscapes of Race in French Louisiana. *By George Edward Milne. (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 2015. List of figures, acknowledgments, notes, bibliography, index. Pp. xi, 293. $84.95 cloth, $26.95 paper. ISBN: 9780820347509.)*

In recent years, scholars have paid increasing attention to the ways that indigenous people used racial categories historically to define relationships with "others" and to establish internal political identities. Building upon these works—in particular that of historian Nancy Shoemaker—George Edward Milne tackles the question of "why the Indians decided to become 'red' in Natchez Country and why they decided to do so in that particular place with such determination" (2). The answer, Milne asserts, lies in their "unique spatial conditions" (5), which included "authority-bestowing terrain features" (6) and a zone of interaction that gave them ample opportunity to observe the racial discourse of Europeans. Using archaeological evidence, writings, maps, charts, and census data, Milne reconstructs the landscapes of race in colonial Louisiana.

When French explorers entered Natchez Country in the late seventeenth century, they encountered a world strangely familiar. Like Louis XIV's France, the Natchez were ruled by a powerful Sun King. Built environments—like the palace at Versailles and the temple mounds of the Grand Village—solidified sovereign power. Both societies had nobles and commoners who defined their status through kinship. They both used religious rituals to unify their people. These similarities helped the French and the Natchez to fit one another into their "respective epistemological categories" (16). The French viewed the Natchez as the most "civilized" sauvages they had encountered, while the Natchez saw the newcomers as another group of refugees to incorporate into their chiefdom.

The "accommodations born of perceived resemblances," however, were not to last (51). Tensions over trade, land use, and diplomatic protocol led to conflict, particularly between satellite Natchez towns and recent French arrivals. Natchez villagers employed "graduated acts of violence" to bring French colonists under control (9). The Natchez leader, Great Sun, tried to mitigate the effects of this violence, to affirm his authority over the outlying villages, and to preserve his partnership with the French through careful negotiation. Over time, however, Great Sun recognized that the French were not taking up the role of subordinate refugees after all.

As more French colonists poured into Louisiana, they made greater demands on Natchez lands. In addition, the French brought with them African slaves and a mature discourse on race, which they solidified in the *Code Noir* of 1724. The French also began enslaving Natchez people from satellite towns. The treatment of these Indian slaves made it clear to the Natchez that the colonists perceived them as low-status, racial "others." The final straw came in 1729 when the commandant of Fort Rosalie, Étienne de Chépart, told the Natchez to abandon their sacred mounds and plaza to make room for French construction. According to Milne, "When the newcomers controlled more of Natchez Country in a manner that put authority-generating sites at risk, the People of the Sun began to fashion a 'red' identity" (163). By adopting the term "red men," the Natchez endeavored to distinguish themselves from Europeans and Africans and to unite their people behind a "portable" common racial identity to drive out the French.

On November 27, 1729, the Natchez led a coordinated attack against French colonists near Fort Rosalie. They miscalculated the French response, however, and, in the months that followed, the colonists hunted down the Indians. The French sent Natchez captives to Saint Domingue as slaves. Those who escaped dispersed among other southeastern tribes like the Chickasaws, Creeks, and Cherokees. There, Milne argues, the "red identity, which the Natchez helped to shape, spread and took on a life of its own" (205). Before long, colonists also began referring to Indians as "red men."

Although thought-provoking, Milne's thesis that the Natchez embraced a red racial category to unify their people after the French threatened their authority-generating landscape rests on thin evidence. The first recorded use of "red men" occurred in 1725—nearly four years before Chépart demanded that the Natchez vacate the Grand Village. It seems more likely that the Natchez adopted the term as a response to the *Code Noir* of 1724. Moreover, despite Milne's contention that this racial category developed first in Natchez Country, he concedes that "the Natchez cannot be identified with absolute certainty as the source of the ideology of redness in Native America" since other southeastern peoples used the term before the Natchez diaspora (214). Despite these discrepancies, Milne has produced a fine monograph that sheds valuable light on the Natchez Country and French colonialism in Louisiana. His work is a critical contribution to discussions on racial formation in the colonial South.

MIKAËLA M. ADAMS
The University of Mississippi

In Remembrance of Emmett Till: Regional Stories and Media Responses to the Black Freedom Struggle. *By Darryl Mace. (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2014. Preface, introduction, illustrations, acknowledgements, notes, bibliography, index. Pp. xi, 212. $40 cloth. ISBN: 978-0-8131-4536-5.)*

A grocery store in Money, Mississippi, a watery grave in the Tallahatchie River, a hot courthouse in nearby Sumner—these are the places that the historian Pierre Nora called *lieux de mémoire*. Such sites triangulated the abbreviated life and the reverberant death of Emmett Till, the Chicago teenager whom at least two white men murdered for ostensibly having whistled at a white woman. Because the killing occurred after the traditional forms of Southern lynching had disappeared, because the victim was only fourteen years old, because the offense (if it occurred at all) was too innocuous to have merited death, and because an all-white jury expeditiously exonerated the murderers, the case attracted extraordinary attention. The breadth of the media interest, therefore, amply justifies Darryl Mace's effort to categorize and distill how newspapers covered the case in the late summer and early fall of 1955. The press de-provincialized what in an earlier era would have been an ordinary racial crime, the sort of homicide that would have been vindicated by white supremacists and ignored by the rest of the nation. The glare of the media that Mace confirms inaugurated what the succeeding six decades have amplified: collective memory has ensured that the case never got cold. For black Americans especially, the force of communal recollections has guaranteed the significance of the death of Emmett Till.

The author argues that it "raised America's conscience" (136) and accelerated the drive for equal rights. The evidence can be located, he claims, in the press; and Mace should be commended for having examined a huge number of newspapers. They range across both South and North, Midwest and West, and were aimed at black readers as well as everyone else. Mace has amply demonstrated how widespread the press treatment was, when the corpse was discovered, when J. W. Milam and Roy Bryant were arrested and tried, when Mamie Till-Mobley came down from Chicago to testify in an atmosphere of rampant bigotry, and when justice was thwarted when the half-brothers were acquitted. The extensive recognition in the press of the lethal implications of white supremacy, thus, became the prelude for the remembrance that this book seeks to record.

But, the author has not licked the problem that bedevils all such studies drawn from primary research in newspapers. Their accounts tend to blur into one another because the number of different ways that reporters can describe the same event is finite. By dividing what amounts to the same story into regional groupings, Mace has not established sufficient variety of perspective, and, thus, the attentiveness of readers is bound to sag. Nor has the research that he has conducted in newspaper archives (the term "morgues" hints at the danger of such an approach) yielded any real surprises. The wire services, like the Associated Press and the United Press, aimed at the asymptotic ideal of objectivity, so that the passion of particular voices was deliberately suppressed in that journalistic era. *In Remembrance of Emmett Till* also cites magazines like *Jet*, which featured the terrifyingly mutilated face of the youngster, and *Look*, which recorded the confessions (for profit) of murderers who were immune from further prosecution. But, Mace's indebtedness to newspapers as sources obliges him to miss the impact of the photojournalism of *Life*, which vividly portrayed the mockery of the trial.

Though Mace promises to "expound . . . on previous scholarship" (4), the gaps in his bibliographic apparatus are large enough to be noted. One egregious instance is the omission of Davis W. Houck and Matthew A. Grindy's *Emmett Till and the Mississippi Press* (2008). Though Christopher Metress provides a blurb for Mace's book, its bibliography does not list a key work in the formation of collective remembrance about the case, *Emmett Till in Literary Memory and Imagination* (2008), which Metress as well as Harriet Pollack edited. The first monograph to recount the episode and to trace its aftermath in the civil rights movement is *A Death in the Delta: The Story of Emmett Till*, which this reviewer published in 1989. It is not cited either. Nor is confidence restored by the persistence with which Mace describes the crime as a lynching. He provides no definition. Yet, Milam and Bryant did not belong to a mob that was seeking to exact public, communal vengeance. Their motives were racial; but their method bore no resemblance to the open, blatant vigilantism that had characterized Southern lynchings, say, half a century earlier. Like ordinary criminals, the pair hoped to conceal the homicide that they perpetrated. They failed to do so, nor has it sunk into oblivion.

STEPHEN J. WHITFIELD
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The Edible South: The Power of Food and the Making of an American Region. *By Marcie Cohen Ferris. (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2014. 496 pp., 7x10, 50 halftones, notes, bibl., index. $35 cloth, $34.99 e-book. ISBN: 978-1-4696-1768-8.)*

Many books have focused on the stories of the South's bittersweet culinary past to try to make sense of the painful paradoxes that continue to inform its future: how a land so rich in agriculture could produce so much poverty, how wealthy whites feasted while the black field hands and household workers ate scraps, how red-carpet hospitality and racial injustice existed at the same place and time. Civil rights champion John Egerton was the foremost pioneer of this burgeoning genre of food writing. His 1987 book, *Southern Food: At Home, On the Road, In History*, exposed these contradictions while celebrating our most beloved food traditions, leading a passionate and growing cadre of writers, food professionals, and academics to follow in his footsteps.

Marcie Cohen Ferris's *The Edible South: The Power of Food and the Making of an American Region*, joins Egerton's classic as required reading of any serious student of the South and its foodways. Ferris, who wrote *Matzo Ball Gumbo: Culinary Tales of the Jewish South* in 2005, does not temper the heavy history lessons of her latest work with biscuit recipes or barbecue joint recommendations. This exhaustively researched tome is strictly aimed at feeding the hungry mind. Ferris combed slave narratives, pioneer journals, diaries of planters' wives, governesses' letters, cookbooks, and a multitude of other archived material and interviews for insight into the eating patterns of southerners through the centuries. These diverse perspectives show how the ruling classes used food, directly and indirectly, to control the region's poor and maintain white supremacy.

Hunger is a common thread throughout each section—Early South, Plantation South, New South, and Modern South. Jamestown colonists tell of starving settlers who "resorted to cannibalism" (11). An ex-slave recounts stealing a peppermint stick as a child and how the mistress punished her by crushing her head under a rocking chair, leaving her unable to ever chew solid food. Some slaves, we learn, joined the Union troops, not just to fight for freedom, but because they had a better chance of getting a meal from the better-supplied Yankees.

After the war, sharecroppers worked the fields. Cotton ruled, followed by tobacco. Because garden produce did not translate into cash, landowners discouraged their tenants from growing them, forcing them to subsist on corn, molasses, and other substandard carbohydrates. Many suffered from pellagra and typhoid as a result, paralleling the diseases of corn-dependent Indian tribes thousands of years earlier, as well as diabetes and other obesity-related ailments that plague poverty-stricken communities today.

Government programs and a raft of volunteer efforts brought relief to impoverished families in the twentieth century. But, bleak racial and economic disparities associated with these plights persisted—hard truths underscored by widely publicized social and nutritional studies, including those focused on the Mississippi Delta before the cataclysmic 1927 flood.

Southern food and tourism businesses tried to counter these realities by painting more inviting pictures. Dixie-themed restaurants and cookbooks featured rich menus with a "plantation flavor" (189). Labels depicting cheerful black mammies appeared on packaged pancake mixes and canned yams. Segregated hotels and inns boasted of antebellum themes, "famous fried chicken," and obsequious African-American wait staff (239). In stark contrast, reproduction photo-postcards of lynchings at barbecues and picnics attended by white spectators were the "most abhorrent artifacts of racist consumption" (189).

Restaurants became incubators for the civil rights movement. A rising black middle class challenged Jim Crow segregation laws by staging sit-ins at lunch counters reserved for white customers, sometimes with violent outcomes. Ferris takes readers into the dining rooms of restaurants that became civil rights landmarks—some for welcoming blacks and whites to the table and others for defiantly refusing.

These initiatives gave way to Vietnam War protests, spawning a nationwide counterculture movement that eventually trickled southward. Youthful activists opened co-ops and natural foods cafes; some began growing their own food. A "New Southern Cuisine" emerged, blending this environmentally conscious ethos with elements of nouvelle cuisine and authentic local flavors.

Here the narrative takes on a more upbeat and personal tone, as Ferris recounts dining experiences in contemporary high-end restaurants that support local growers and visits to farmers markets to shop for small-batch jams and spirits, largely around the North Carolina Triangle area where she lives. She tells the stories of these culinary innovators, as well as of the cutting-edge research produced by the influential Southern Foodways Alliance founded by John Egerton and others in 1999, which is now an institute of the University of Mississippi's Center for the Study of Southern Culture.

It's worth noting, as Ferris does in the conclusion, that the southern food renaissance she describes is "the domain chiefly of white, educated, politically progressive southerners, even as the racial and ethnic diversity of this community expands each year" (334). Without the regional overview provided in earlier chapters, however, it is not immediately clear how the poor and working-class masses benefit. Middle-class folks outside of these urban and academic enclaves, white or black, barely get mentioned.

I would have found the conclusion more satisfying had she included voices from more diverse, economically-challenged communities. There is no mention, for example, of the remarkable post-Hurricane Katrina rebound of New Orleans' legendary restaurant culture, made possible with the help of chefs and foodways supporters across the South. Nor does she acknowledge the infamous racially-charged fall of former Food Network superstar Paula Deen, arguably the most popular and polarizing figure in southern food history.

These quibbles, however, do not detract from the importance of *The Edible South*. Rather, we are reminded that the conversation is far from over.

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Down to the Crossroads: Civil Rights, Black Power, and the Meredith March Against Fear. *By Aram Goudsouzian. (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2014. Map, notes, acknowledgements, index. Pp. ix, 351. $30 cloth, $18 paper. ISBN: 0374192200.)*

On June 5, 1966, James Meredith began a "March Against Fear," his planned trek from Memphis, Tennessee, to Jackson, Mississippi, meant to empower southern Blacks by encouraging them to register to vote and allaying their fears of white supremacy. When Meredith was shot on the second day of the march, his intended, solitary journey once again brought Mississippi to the center of civil rights activism and national visibility. In *Down to the Crossroads*, Aram Goudsouzian recounts the March Against Fear by examining its impact on Mississippians and civil rights activists, as well as various civil rights organizations and the movement itself.

Goudsouzian uses the march to examine how the national civil rights organizations—the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), and the NAACP—as well as local organizations such as the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP) and the Delta Ministry, were struggling to survive and redefine themselves amidst legislative gains and the persistence of white resistance; reticence on the part of the federal government; the crisis in Vietnam; the successes in Lowndes County, Alabama; and the increasing popularity of Black Power. Goudsouzian's in-depth focus allows the reader to witness the involvement of local people—both long time activists and newcomers to the movement—as well as the impact the march had on communities throughout the state. In so doing, this work is rooted in the current trend in civil rights scholarship that focuses on local studies to provide a bottom up analysis and, therefore, greater understanding of the roles of grassroots activists.

Goudsouzian begins *Down to the Crossroads* by introducing the reader to the demonstration's major players—Meredith, Roy Wilkins (NAACP), Floyd McKissick (CORE), Stokely Carmichael (SNCC), and Martin Luther King, Jr. (SCLC)—the individuals whose leadership, camaraderie, political machinations and ideological and strategic differences provide Down to the Crossroads' narrative thread. With no perfunctory thesis statements or textual outlines, Goudsouzian delves right into an epistolary format, with each chapter typically detailing one day of the march as a diary entry. The use of rich source material, including contemporary press coverage, archival material, and extensive interviews with participants, allows him to provide a daily account as though he were an eyewitness to the unfolding of the march. The chronological narrative is interspersed with necessary, contextual information but never takes the reader too far from the text's focus of understanding the development and impact of the Meredith March.

The recollections of local activists and youth provide critical detail to the narrative, which balances the national leaders' perspectives and involvement. He provides much needed depth into the roles of activists like Willie Ricks, whose centrality to mobilizing people around the concept of "Black Power" during the March, is often understated. Further, despite the dominating role of male leaders, Goudsouzian does a respectable job of including the voices of women and other local activists.

Whether it is Meredith's quirkiness, King's thoughtfulness, Carmichael's charismatic radicalism, or Charles Evers's shrewdness, Goudsouzian aptly portrays their unique personalities as he recounts the negotiations among the male civil rights leaders struggling to redefine and redirect the trajectory of the March Against Fear and the larger movement while grappling with the meaning and praxis of Black Power. Additionally, he explores the activists' consideration of the roles of whites in the movement, their representation in the press, their relationship with the Johnson administration, and the best strategy by which to achieve individual and collective empowerment for black people, while never losing sight of Meredith's attempts to regain control of the march and maintain his individualism and relevance among a sea of civil rights celebrities.

Goudsouzian's well-written account reminds us that James Meredith's March Against Fear was much more than the shooting of Meredith or the call for Black Power in Greenwood, Mississippi. Indeed, *Down to the Crossroads* supports the positioning of the march as a key, transitional civil rights demonstration—the last mass demonstration on which the major organizations would work together—with a level of detail that has not yet occurred. Students of the civil rights movement will appreciate the honest examination of the gains (empowerment, the emergence of Black Power, and voter registration) and setbacks (increased repression after the march and greater divisions among civil rights organizations) as the movement shifted from civil rights to Black Power.

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After Slavery: Race, Labor, and Citizenship in the Reconstruction South. *Edited by Bruce Baker and Brian Kelly. Afterword by Eric Foner. (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2013. Acknowledgments, images, maps, notes, bibliography, index. Pp. vii, 279. $74.95 cloth. $24.95 paper. ISBN 978-0-8130-4477-4.)*

The After Slavery Project, an international collaborative research group, published *After Slavery* in 2013, to showcase ten individual essays that move beyond uniform interpretations of race, labor, and the meaning of political activity in the Reconstruction-era South. The collection challenges historians to probe the various contradictions that arose between the hope engendered by emancipation and the realities of the period after the Civil War. The essays included in the volume address local contexts, the composition of the black community, and issues of categorization in order to understand how racial and economic inequalities persisted despite Reconstruction. Editors Bruce Baker and Brian Kelly appreciate the work done by scholars such as W. E. B. Du Bois, Nell Irvin Painter, Eric Foner, and Steven Hahn in recovering the history of African-American agency that early histories of Reconstruction lacked. Baker and Kelly recognize, however, the need for new frameworks to drive the next generation of historians. *After Slavery* presents a wide range of experiences of Reconstruction that will galvanize new studies of the period.

Four essays examine small-scale events or transformations in order to show how local contexts shaped the dialogue among labor, capital, and politics. Urban spaces receive special attention. James Illingworth, Jonathan M. Bryant, and Susan Eva O'Donovan examine individual southern cities to demonstrate the diversity of the urban experience. Illingworth and Bryant focus on New Orleans and Savannah, respectively. Their studies show that the relationship between a city and its periphery could either help or hinder African-American efforts at labor organizing after the Civil War. Furthermore, the frustration created by urban-to-rural interactions frequently erupted in violence. O'Donovan's study of grapevine telegraphs in the port city of Wilmington, North Carolina, likewise illustrates how certain cosmopolitan spaces afforded black southerners power that might not have been available in isolated locales. Rural spaces were also far from homogenous, as demonstrated by Bruce Baker's assessment of Greenville County, South Carolina. Waning access to capital caused by the decline of the livestock droving trade and increased taxation on distillers pushed the white residents of northern Greenville County into Democratic politics favored by the cotton growers of the county's southern region. The book's focus on local specificity yields results that challenge narratives about the uniformity of Reconstruction in the South.

Outlining the diversity of black communities also upsets traditional assumptions concerning the homogeneity of the African-American experience of freedom. Gender and class sometimes created conflicting needs among freedpeople. J. Michael Rhyne's analysis of Kentucky testifies to the unique hardships black women faced in freedom, most notably maintaining stable family units despite violence, labor exploitation, and intransigent Freedmen's Bureau agents. Brian Kelly's study of South Carolina attests to the emerging class dimensions of black experiences during Reconstruction. The divergence of working class concerns, especially that of land ownership, and those of a growing black middle class doomed the Radical Republican period of South Carolina politics.

The most successful essays in *After Slavery* implore readers to reevaluate definitions that scholars take for granted in their understanding of Reconstruction. Thomas Holt's opening meditation challenges historians to view citizenship as a category that is historically contingent on time and place. Holt's directive to contextualize historical definitions complements the research of Erik Mathisen and Gregory Downs. Mathisen's study on loyalty oaths in Mississippi and Downs's focus on federal military occupation force a reconsideration of state power. Indeed, they both historicize the difficulty of on-the-ground administration of federal authority. Finally, Michael W. Fitzgerald's statistical appraisal of white terrorists in Alabama reframes the discussion on racial violence. His work suggests that multiple impulses, rather than a singular concern, drove some whites to engage in terroristic violence. Their motivations involved a matrix of socio-economic, racial, and partisan factors. Above all, the essays in the collection entreat scholars to embrace a healthy skepticism of assumed knowledge when studying the years after the Civil War.

An afterword by Eric Foner closes out a provocative collection of scholarship. He aptly criticizes the absence of national politics from the studies at hand. The collection's emphasis on the diversity of the Reconstruction period, however, makes *After Slavery* invaluable, Foner argues. The book may be daunting for those unfamiliar with the standard debates in post-Civil War historiography. For readers familiar with Reconstruction history, however, the volume offers fresh insights and questions that will send one sprinting to the archives.

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George Ohr: Sophisticate and Rube. *By Ellen J. Lippert. (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2013. Acknowledgements, illustrations, notes, bibliography, index, Pp. x, 163. $40 cloth. ISBN: 9781617039010.)*

George E. Ohr was alternatively considered both a mad potter and America's greatest potter. Since his reputation ranged from folk artist to extreme genius, author Ellen J. Lippert writes in a way that emphasizes both Ohr's sophisticated designs and the more rustic characteristics that appeared in his ceramic wares, contextualizing his work in the late nineteenth century social, economic, and philosophical milieus. *George Ohr: Sophisticate and Rube* analyzes both the life of Ohr, who lived in Biloxi, Mississippi, from the end of the nineteenth century to the early twentieth century, and his oeuvre. Lippert not only provides a biography of Ohr, but she argues for a new way to understand Ohr's artwork that meticulously connects his ceramic vases to his personal experiences, including his exposure to the Chicago World's Fair and his interactions with other potters working in different regions. The author suggests that any straightforward interpretation of Ohr is too simplistic because of his efforts to gain diverse experiences that would inspire his creativity.

This book is divided into two sections. The first section focuses on Ohr's personal life and how his experiences and interests affected his work. Lippert's in-depth study of specific cultural, social, and economic changes in the South during the late nineteenth century, especially as connected with popular literature, suggests an origin for his unique ceramic designs and sophisticated visual displays. Ohr's ceramic wares look somehow twisted and peculiar in form, but, because of a metallic-luster glaze, they convey an extremely smooth surface texture, contrasting with the underlying material of rough, red earthen clay collected from near his studio. These remarkable characteristics promoted Ohr's reputation as a mad potter who created bizarre ceramic shapes with rustic and metallic glazes that were interpreted as southern folk art.

Lippert's thorough research on the broader cultural spheres that informed Ohr's work helps readers to challenge this stereotypical "folk art" interpretation. Lippert convincingly argues that Ohr's peculiar attitude and appearance, including his notorious mustache, cannot be considered substantial evidence of his idiosyncrasy but that these physical characteristics were strategically implemented as part of Ohr's own plan of self-promotion. Lippert's research shows that Ohr's "rustic" style ceramic wares cannot simply be considered folk art or grotesque. She proves that Ohr's artwork delivers a sophisticated aesthetic based on his cultural context in the late-nineteenth century.

In the second section of the book, the author analyzes Ohr's most important ceramic works, including their forms, colors, and designs. Based on the arguments of the first section, she interprets Ohr's pottery as simultaneously being sophisticated and rustic, as well as embodying the cultural prosperity developing in the South at this time. Because of Ohr's high level of skill, he gradually gained fame as a genius potter and is considered by some to be an early leader in the development of American Abstract Expressionism, which was more famously expressed by the likes of Jackson Pollock. Separating her arguments from the dominant scholarship on Ohr, Lippert suggests that he was a sophisticated, aware, and seemingly paradoxical artist who symbolized late-nineteenth century cultural developments.

Some biographical books stray from their investigations of an individual's life and works or simply provide historical events in a chronological way. *George Ohr: Sophisticate and Rube*, on the other hand, maintains a careful focus on Ohr's life and art in an attempt to answer the question of why he created such peculiar ceramics wares. Lippert provides a meticulously researched investigation, including a wide spectrum of cultural context that guides the reader to understanding Ohr's artistic choices in terms of a high-art paradigm. Readers are able to perceive Ohr's selections of types of clay, designs, and glazes, not simply as superficial decisions, but as the embodiments of Ohr's own personal message challenging the status quo in the South.

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